

NOTES AND REVIEWS

WAS CIGUAYO A WEST INDIAN HOKAN LANGUAGE?

When speaking of the Greater Antilles, Bartolomé de Las Casas, early sixteenth-century chronicler of the Caribbean, reiterates many times in his *Historia de las Indias* (1875:1:326, among others) that *en todas estas islas hablaban una sola lengua* "in all these islands they speak one language." This statement has been quoted and requoted by every researcher in Antillean studies to set pen to paper and accorded, out of context and without investigation, an undeserved literalism.

If Las Casas's oft-repeated phrase is viewed in ANY context in which it actually occurs, quite a different meaning emerges than the literalism given it. The *una sola lengua*, a Northern Maipuran Arawakan language today referred to as Classic Taino, was the language of the numerically dominant population of most of the Greater Antilles—Hispaniola, eastern Cuba, sporadic settlements to the west of Oriente province in central and western Cuba, the southern Lucayan Islands (Turks and Caicos), and Puerto Rico (Granberry 1987). Classic Taino existed in a number of regional dialects, of which that of the Kingdom of Xaraguá on Hispaniola was considered the most elegant and prestigious (Las Casas 1875:1:486). Another, non-Classic, dialect, referred to as Ciboney Taino by this author, was the everyday speech of western Hispaniola, most of eastern and central Cuba to the west of Oriente province, the central and northern Lucayan Islands (the Bahamas), and probably Jamaica (Granberry 1987).

Classic Xaraguá Taino also served as a second language for speakers of other languages within the region and was, as well, the lingua franca of politics and government, commerce, and culture (in the ordinary sense). Its use, from what Las Casas has to say, seems to have closely paralleled that of Norman French in post-1066 England. It was, in short, the only language which almost everyone could at least understand and many speak, the general and official language, but it was not everyone's native or home language, and it most DECIDEDLY was not the only language spoken in the Greater Antilles. To so state simply reveals the researcher's ignorance of the primary documents and of the copious lexemes which have survived from those and toponymic sources—close approaching 2,000 in number. With regard to Hispaniola, Las Casas explicitly says:

There used to be three distinct, mutually unintelligible languages on this island. One was that of the people we called the Lower Macoris, and the second that of the neighbors of the Upper Macoris [i.e., the Ciguayo], whom we divided into four and six provinces. The other language was universal to the entire country and was the most elegant, with the largest vocabulary, and the sweetest sounding. Of the latter the speech of Xaraguá, as I have said earlier, carried the greatest prestige and was the main dialect. (Las Casas 1875:5:486.)

(Tres lenguas había en esta Isla distintas, que la una a la otra no se entendía; la una era de la gente que llamábamos del Macorix de abajo, y la otra de los vecinos del Macorix de arriba,

que pusimos arriba por cuarta y por sexta provincias; la otra lengua fué la universal de toda la tierra, y esta era la más elegante y más copiosa de vocablos, y más dulce el sonido; en esto la de Xaraguá, como dije arriba, en todo llevaba ventaja y era muy más prima.)

Ciguayo, the language of concern in this brief note, was, at the time of Spanish intervention, spoken only on the Samaná peninsula in far northeastern Hispaniola. The name Ciguayo was applied to those people by speakers of Classic Taino and probably means something like 'People of the Back-Country' (*si* 'rough, rugged' + *wa* 'country, land' + *yu* 'people, tribe') (Granberry and Vesce-lius, ms. *a*; ms. *b*). We do not know what they called themselves. That the Ciguayo language was specifically neither Taino nor Macoris is indicated by the following statement, which is one among several to the same effect:

It should be noted that a large section of this coast—more than 25 or 30 leagues and a good 15 or even 20 wide up to the mountains which make a Great Plain of this part of the north—used to be populated by a people called the Macoris, and another [called] the Ciguayo, and they had *languages* [italics added] different from the general language of the island. (Las Casas 1875:1:434.)

(Es aquí de saber, que un gran pedazo desta costa, bien más de 25 or 30 leguas, y 15 buenas y aún 20 de ancho hasta las sierras que hacen, desta parte del Norte, la gran vega inclusive, era poblada de una gente que se llamaban mazorijes, y otros ciguayos, y tenían diversas lenguas de la universal de toda la isla.)

Las Casas makes it clear that Ciguayo was apparently in moribund condition when he first arrived in Hispaniola in 1502 and an extinct language at the time of his writing:

... it has been many years, and there is no one today whom I can ask [about the language of the Ciguayos], since it has now been over fifty years since I conversed [with them], many times with both generations. ... (Las Casas 1875:1:434.)

(... ha tantos años, y no hay hoy uno ni ninguno a quien lo preguntar [acerca de la lengua de los ciguayos], puesto que conversé, hartas veces con ambas generaciones, y son pasados ya más de cincuenta años. ...)

Las Casas's *Historia* was begun in 1527 and most of the essential writing was done while he was living in Hispaniola, before his final departure for Spain in 1547. The manuscript was completed in Spain in 1559, but Las Casas continued to rewrite until 1563, three years before his death at the age of ninety-two. If the above section was written before he left permanently for Spain in 1547, then he is indicating that the Ciguayo vanished as a separate entity about the time of Columbus's arrival in 1492. Since we know that the Taino were battling the Ciguayo rather furiously at the time the Spanish arrived (Las Casas 1875:2:164 et seq.; 5:484), it seems more likely that the above section was written after Las Casas's return to Spain. We are in any case left with an almost extinct people and language by the early years of the sixteenth century.

We have for Ciguayo only a single attested lexical form, hardly the stuff that analytic linguistics—whether synchronic, comparative, or reconstructive—is made of. I am fully aware of the fact that no empiricist of repute should come to a final

conclusion based on such data. No one, consequently, feels more uncomfortable about the suggestions made here than their author. Nonetheless, even a single lexeme is data, and in this case the only data we have. It should not simply be disregarded. The analysis suggested here hangs together, and I will, therefore, put my head on the chopping block and state that my suggestions should be considered a legitimate, at least partly testable, empirical hypothesis.

Our single Ciguayo lexeme is, in Las Casas's orthography, <tuob>:

Here [in that part of Hispaniola inhabited by the Ciguayo] they don't call gold *caona* as in the main part of the island, nor *nozay* as on the islet of Guanahani or St. Salvador, but *tuob*. (Las Casas 1875:1:434.)

(Aquí [en la parte de la isla habitado por los Ciguayos] no llaman caona al oro como en la primera parte desta isla, ni nozay como en la isleta de Guanahani o Sant Saldavor, sino tuob.)

And:

He [a Ciguayo Indian] would call gold *tuob* and would not understand *caona*, as they called it in the major part of the island, nor *nozay* as they call it on San Salvador and on the other islands. . . . (Las Casas 1875:1:282.)

(Llamaba [un indio ciguayo] al oro tuob y no entendía por caona, como le llamaban en la primera parte de la Isla, ni por nozay como lo nombran en San Salvador y en las otras islas. . . .)

Inasmuch as Las Casas goes to great extremes to indicate which vowel in a cited native word bears primary stress, unless it conforms to normal Spanish stress expectations—penultimate if the final syllable ends in a vowel, *n*, or *s*; otherwise on the ultima—we can assume that *tuob* was stressed as *tuób*. This in turn indicates a likely pronunciation of [twób], since Spanish then, as now, regularly used orthographic postconsonantal <u> to represent [w].

Such a [CCVC] or orthographic <CCVC> or <CVVC> form could not, even in the wildest stretches of linguistic imagination, be interpreted as an Arawakan form, Taino or otherwise. Phonologically the canonical form in all Arawakan languages is [(C)VCV], some words beginning in a vowel, others in a consonant. Consonant clusters, especially word-initial ones, do not occur, and words borrowed from other languages are uniformly regularized to conform to the norm—Garifuna (Island Carib) /isíbuse/ 'mirror' from Spanish *espejo*, or /isúbara/ 'cutlass' from Spanish *espada* (Taylor 1977:78). All syllables are open and must end in a vowel. The same CVCV pattern is, to my knowledge, normative for all languages of northern South America regardless of family or putative phylum affiliation. The only nearby South American language family approaching a closed-syllable CVC norm is Gê, far removed geographically from the Antillean center. There is, in any case, no lexical form in any of the languages of South America from which [twób] could logically derive either phonologically or semantically.

The closest language stocks that regularly show a CVC norm are Mayan and Tol (Jicaque) of Yucatan and central and northern Honduras respectively. Consonant clusters, however, are rare in Maya, and word-initial [tw-] specifically does

not occur. It does, though, in Tol (Fleming and Dennis 1977:122), where it is one of only two allowable types of syllable-initial clusters—a consonant followed by semivowel [y] or [w], a phonological C(S)VC lexical pattern. The semivowel [w] serves, in fact, as a third-person possessive infix in Tol, indicating that the resultant lexeme is semologically nominal. The canonical form, then, for such a Tol noun would be [CwVC], which is exactly the form of Ciguayo [tʷób].

Tol is probably a Hokan language (Langdon 1979:593) and therefore ultimately related to that spectrum of languages on the Pacific littoral from northern California and Oregon to, possibly, Yurumango on the Pacific coast of Colombia. I am, of course, well aware of the “catchall” character of both the doggedly stuck-to Hokan and Penutian macrophyla. I would, however, agree with those who see at least a core of linguistic reality in both phyla, in spite of the inclusion over the years of a good many unlikely candidates for membership. It is generally clear that whatever reality Hokan has, it represents a very early linguistic stratum in the Americas, one whose languages have often been replaced or displaced later by speakers of unrelated languages.

If Tol is indeed a Hokan language, and if the peculiarities of the CwVC pattern are meaningful, then [tʷób] not only fits that pattern but it also has a convincing etymology in both Central American and broader Hokan. The Tol word for ‘rock/stone’ is [pe] in the eastern dialect (Fleming and Dennis 1977:122), which in the now-extinct western dialect was /be/ (Conzemius 1922:166). As Lyle Campbell indicates (1977:967), this coordinates with the Hokan Chontal of Oaxaca (Tequistlatec) form /-bik/, with the same meaning. Campbell reconstructs the Proto-Tol form as *pe.

Langdon (1979:636–39) presents her own Proto-Yuman reconstructions along with Proto-Pomo reconstructions by Sally McLendon and Robert Oswalt. Proto-Pomo has *q^ha²be or *q^ha²bé ‘rock/stone’, while Proto-Yuman has *²-wi(·)(y). The comparison of the protoforms indicates that the second basic root of the lexeme consists of a bilabial plus a mid-to-high front vowel, the bilabial either a stop or a semivowel, voiced in all instances. The basic Hokan root, that is, would seem to have been *b/we ~ b/wi. The lexemes cited above are bimorphemic. The initial *q^ha²- element in Proto-Pomo, of normal CVC form, also appears in Proto-Pomo *q^hahca or *q^hahká ‘flint’ and in the Yavapai Yuman form /²ahk^wa/ ‘metal’. That is to say, the full Hokan lexeme for ‘rock/stone’ seems often to be compounded of a root indicating specific rock type—metal, flint, etc.—plus the generic root meaning ‘stone’.

If these parallels and assumptions are valid, it is not then unlikely that Ciguayo [tʷób] ‘gold’ means some kind of rock or stone, the initial root consisting of [tʷV-] and the second root consisting of [-b(V)]. The two are connected by the third-person possessive infix [-w-] ‘its’. The second base matches well, both phonologically and semiologically, Proto-Tol *pe and a western dialect Tol /be/, as well as common Hokan *b ~ w + e ~ i. It is impossible to say with certainty what the meaning of the first root [tʷV-] was, though the base /tʷi/ in modern Eastern Tol means ‘heavy/something heavy’ (Dennis and Dennis 1983:39). Ciguayo <tuob> MAY have meant simply ‘heaviness + its + rock’, i.e., ‘heavy rock’.

My suggestion, a testable hypothesis, is that Ciguayo was the last surviving remnant of a much earlier and more widespread Antillean Hokan language,

having its origins somewhere along the coast of the Gulf of Honduras, its closest relative being Proto-Tol. Given that we know there were two subsequent population movements into the Antilles, the position of the few moribund historic Ciguayo speakers at the furthest extreme in the Greater Antilles from a putative Central American source, forced back into the geographic cul-de-sac of the Samaná peninsula, is, furthermore, quite in keeping with anthropological migration theory (Dyen 1956). Since the eastern and western varieties of Tol seem to have diverged from each other between 1,000 and 1,600 years ago (Campbell 1979:919), it is likely that the period we are talking about would be at least 4,000 to 6,000 years ago.

The language data also fit well with archaeological data from Cuba and Hispaniola. We know that the earliest inhabitants of both islands came from the Belize region of the Central American coast, around the Gulf of Honduras, sometime around 5000 B.C. (Coe 1957, Hahn 1960:268–80, MacNeish 1983:38–48, and Rouse 1986:129–34). Their archaeologically definable culture goes back to Belizean sources around 7500 B.C. These people(s) brought with them a tool-kit referred to variously as Casimiroid (Rouse 1986), Seboruco-Mordán (Kozłowski 1980), or Mordanoid-Cordilleroid (Veloz Maggiolo 1975). That tool-kit survived until the arrival of the Guiana Arawaks, ancestors of the speakers of Classic Taino, about the time of the birth of Christ.

At least one other group of migrants entered the islands between the arrival of the Casimiroids and the Guiana Arawaks. These were the people who introduced the Ortoiroid tool-kit. Their ultimate source was the Venezuelan littoral, and they began their movement northwest into the Antilles around 2000 B.C., reaching Puerto Rico by approximately 1000 B.C., to judge from radiocarbon dates (Rouse and Allaire 1979:114). They added many innovations to the Casimiroid tool-kit over that long period of time, but the Casimiroid basics survived. A Casimiroid substratum, in fact, was evident as late as Taino times and, in isolated regions such as far western Cuba and the Samaná peninsula, well into historic times (Osgood 1942, Krieger 1929, and Hahn 1960).

A suggested Central American, Hokan origin for the Ciguayo language is therefore quite compatible with the known Central American origins of the Casimiroid series tool-kit and its historic survivals. While it is true that the question of Ciguayo language affiliation can never be solved with finality, additional archaeological work both around the Gulf of Honduras and in the Greater Antilles—with emphasis on the Samaná peninsula—would greatly enhance either the viability of the linguistic hypothesis or its lack of viability.

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AGENT IN PASSIVE SENTENCES IN YAQUI AND GUARIJÓ

Almost forty years ago, Archibald A. Hill (1952) published an article in this *Journal* correcting a scholarly error concerning Cherokee, an error which concerned so-called primitive languages, that had been quoted and requoted since the middle of the past century. In this same vein, Escalante (1990) has recently provided readers of this *Journal* with a welcome contribution in which he has set the record straight concerning the use of an agent in passive sentences in Yaqui. A