Achumawi Database

Summary of February 2022 work

You can download the current backup from

- http://zelligharris.org/Achumawi/achumawi-db.html

I have updated the webonary at

- https://www.webonary.org/odissi/

Here are a few interesting excerpts from the work this month.

1. *ṗaḥ / ṗḥ* 'front surface, face'
2. Angulo's *ḥ* vs. 'glottal catch'
3. Epiglottalized consonants?
4. *iḥwaaẏí* and *iq̇waaḥí*

1. ṗaḥ/ṗḥ 'front surface'

When this is the only root it has the CC form:

ṗḥ	front surface, facing	*iṗḥe*	in front
		iṗḥáté	in front of
		iṗḥiimí	facing thither
		iṗḥáẏtu	from the front, in front of
		tiṗḥááti	face, turn toward
		iṗḥiċci	facing upward
		q̇aaċííca iṗḥiċcí	name: sanding stone cliff (*q̇aċ* = 'sanding stone')
		iṗḥááké	flint [has flat surfaces]

With a root preceding, it has the CVC form

ṗaḥ	(ce 'visual' ṗaḥ '(close?) surface'	*tíncéépaḥ* *tíncéépááḥa*	shut your eyes!
	ku 'press' *ṗaḥ* 'face' *k^{h}ay* 'from below'	*tikuuṗaḥk^{h}aykáké*	rub eyes w/ something in hand

When the root preceding the CVC form is *su* ‘feel, sense’, it appears that the core culture value of industriousness imparts a feeling of urgency to what one is facing or turns to do, hence, ‘hurry’.

ṗa̍h̍	hurry (su ‘feeling’ + ṗaḥ ‘facing’?)	*sasúúṗáa̍h̍í*	I hurry
		tisúúṗáa̍ha	hurry!
		súúṗa̍h̍ ml̍éénáa	I’ll come back in a hurry
ṗh̍		*tisúṗh̍áánínní qa tiil̍aaci*	fed (horses) in a hurry (*tiil̍aaci* = ‘share, portion’)
		tisúṗh̍áála aamím	hurry right now!

2. Angulo’s ‘glottal catch’ vs. *ḥ*

Identifying the *ṗah̍/ṗh̍* root in these examples brings me to revisit my rectification of some of de Angulo’s material. He used some of these words as phonological examples in his Grammar, and in some cases that was my only guide to rectification, until now.

On p. 79 of the Grammar, de Angulo correctly identifies the role of the epiglottis in producing *h̍* (he writes it as a pharyngeal spirant *ḥ*), even as he contradictorily says it is ‘entirely laryngeal’. He seems to say that plain *h* is an allophone, and he describes a voiced allophone *ɣ*. This passage is as follows:

> The *ḥ* is highly characteristic of Achumawi. It is entirely laryngeal, and is made like an ordinary English *h* except that the walls of the larynx are strongly constricted while at the same time the epiglottis is pressed against the rim of the glottis, so that the air is pushed through with a marked noise of friction. It is also of much longer duration than the ordinary *h*. The ordinary *h* occurs in Achumawi, but appears to be only a softening of the former. Corresponding words in Atsugewi have an ordinary *h*. Corresponding words in Shasta have *x*.
>
> There is in Achumawi a “sonant” equivalent of the *h*. It is produced exactly like the *ḥ*, except that the vocal cords are made to vibrate at the same time. It sounds exactly like the Arabic “rain”. It is quite a distinct sound, phonetically, from the *ɣ*, but since the true *ɣ* does not occur in Achumawi we have used this symbol to represent it. It occurs but rarely.

He gives no examples here, but we would expect this to apply to the ‘hurry’ and ‘face’ verbs. Next on the same page, he describes what he thinks of as a different sound which also involves the epiglottis:

> The “glottal catch” is extremely strong. It is not merely a strong attack before a vowel, or a sudden closure of the epiglottis after a vowel. The walls of the larynx are pressed together

tightly (with the epiglottis also closed firmly) for quite a long time. Then everything is released suddenly, so that some of the air in the mouth cavity is sucked backward into the larynx with a sort of click. In Shasta and in Atsugewi this noise is usually replaced by *k*. In Achumawi, when this glottal catch is followed by a vowel, the effect is sometimes undistinguishable from the *ɣ* described above. Examples *sèsú'pá·'í* I hurry, *tíndzé'pá·'à* shut your eyes!, *tíllásíní·'ì* a myth.

Since 1970, I have thought that this was a description of *q̇*. However, now I know that the first two examples are *sasúúṗááḣí* (or *sisúúṗááḣí*) 'I hurry' and *tíncééṗááḣa* 'shut your eyes!'. Bauman's *wilsine'q* 'story teller' (which I have rectified as *wíllásíníq̇*) supports a rectification of de Angulo's *tíllásíní·'ì* as *tíllásínííq̇i*. Bauman is unlikely to have misheard a final *ḣ*, which, as de Angulo noted, is more clearly articulated, a "change from sonant to surd (in the case of fricatives in final position, *sesúṗa·ẏí* = I hurry, *lésúpáḥ* = let me hurry!) " (p. 93a). In practice, he sometimes heard (or rectified) both *q̇* and *ḣ* as a 'glottal catch'.

For verification, I reviewed the source transcriptions of words with the *ṗaḣ/ṗḣ* root.

The table below shows the source transcriptions for a set of examples. Those marked CG (Craven Gibson) are from my very first notes in the summer of 1970. Those marked de A are from de Angulo's Grammar. Examples 4 and 5 are from the 'glottal catch' passage from p. 79, quoted above; 6 and 7 are from the 'creation story' fragment by Jack Folsom (Hammawi); 8 and 9 are from the "sonant to surd" discussion in the description of the 'collapsed' (volitional) stem on p. 93; 10-12 are paradigmatic examples from p. 99 showing his rectification to a 'glottal catch', contrary to his earlier representations; 13 (item 299 from Citation forms) is my record of Aurelia Raglin (AR).

1	*sasúúṗááḣí*	I hurry	CG	*sèsú?pááxí*, *sèsú?pááɣí* [with dot under x, ɣ]
2	*tisúúṗááḣa*	hurry!		*tìsúúpááxà*
3	*tisúṗḣáála aamím*	hurry now!		*dìšúppḣáálà*
4	*sasúúṗááḣí*	I'm hurrying	de A	*sèsú'pá·'í*
5	*tíncééṗááḣa*	shut your eyes!	de A	*tíndzé'pá·'à*
6	*ḳínceeṗááḣí*	shut your eyes.	de A	*kíndze'pá·ḥí*
7	*tíncééṗááḣa ṫáq^{h}á*	shut your eyes again!		*tíndzé'pá·ḥà*
8	*sasúúṗááḣí*	I hurry	de A	*sésú'páɣí*
9	*ḭisúúṗáḣ*	let me hurry!		*lésúpáḥ*
10	*tisúúṗááḣí*	hurry	de A	*-ésú'pá·'-*
11	*sasúúṗááḣí*	I hurry		*-ésú'pá·'*
12	*ḭisúúṗáḣ*	I'll hurry!		*-ésúpá'*

13	*sisúúṗááḣí*	I hurry	AR	*sesúṗa·ẏí* [rectified]

When Aurelia said the word translated 'I'm hurrying', I wrote *sesúṗa·ẏí* and without *ḣ* after the laryngealized *ṗ*. It is possible that *ḣ* was lenited before the low-pitch unstressed *a* vowel so that I didn't hear it. I assume instead that I mis-heard an instance of the 'sonant' (voiced) allophone that de Angulo describes (example 6 , and which is also in my early notes with Craven), and have now rectified this example accordingly, with high pitch on the CVC form of the root as in the other examples. Aurelia was not as confident a speaker as others.

These are now all written with *ḣ* in the database.

It is possible that *iṗḣo* 'fat, grease' is related. A fat person or animal presents a broad surface of skin.

3. Epiglottalized consonants?

Today while finishing this report I looked briefly at the notion that our laryngealized consonants might be produced with an epiglottal gesture. This would be consistent with the epiglottal spirant *ḥ*, and could explain the pecularities of *ṡ*, and why the laryngealized oral stops *ṗṫċḱq̇* are not 'popped' ejectives like the glottalized consonants of neighboring languages. When the gesture for *ḣ* is familiar, it is not difficult to extend the epiglottis farther and completely stop the airflow (epiglottal stop *ʔ*). The sound of the release has a higher pitch than that for glottal stop (acoustic energy between 1800 and 2400 Hz), and there can even be some laryngealization due to the effect on supralaryngeal air pressure. However, there is an audible transition before front vowels which is not heard in e.g. *ṗííṁííṁé* 'wheel', so this turned out to be intriguing but unsupported speculation, except possibly for *ṡ*.

4. *iḣẇaaẏí* and *iq̇ẇaaḷí*

There was some uncertainty whether or not these two words, *iḣẇaaḷi* "light, agile, light-footed" and *iq̇ẇaaẏí*, 'weak', had the same root, and therefore the same consonant cluster.

The analysis of *iḣẇaaẏi* as the root *ḣaw/ḣw* plus *ẏ* 'stative' is straightforward. The story of early settlers in Goose Valley has *ticaḣwaẏċúci má ánca ticaḣwaẏtiimi* 'pick up (*ċú*) lightly (as though light) and carry out (*t* + *-im*)', and Radin has *kiċiḣwáẏti* 'you kick (*ċi*) light object'.[1] It is possible that *háwát* 'light-colored rabbit sp.' contains the *ḣaw/ḣw* root. *Ḣaw/ḣw* is the root in words for 'breath' and 'whisper'. In *wit^{h}aḣẇí* 'deaf' (Curtin), the loudness of *t^{h}a* 'utter, shout, hear, obey' is reduced by deafness to a whisper.[2]

1 Because Radin wrote *ga'ts'eḥwàti,* one might consider *kiċiḣwáti* 'kicked round about', but *ḣw* + *wat* > *ḣwát* is unparalleled, I have no other examples of reducing *ww* to *w*.

A semantic contiguity of ‘light’ and ‘weak’ is plausible. Had I misheard *iq̇ẇaaẏ́í*, ‘weak’, or made a mistake in rectification?

I took a look at the original field transcriptions. Two instances have a plain *q* which, as the first member of a cluster, would be an affricate or spirant. One is from Bauman’s word lists, where laryngealization is not always recorded. The other is apparently my mishearing of Lela Rhoades. On that page of field notes, immediately after *iqẇaaẏ́í* [sic] ‘weak’, the next word on the page is *iḣẇaaẏ́í* ‘agile, light-footed’, which conveniently confirms the contrast of uvular *q̇ẇ* with epiglottal *ḣw*. (She glossed this one instance of *iq̇ẇaaḭ́* ‘strong’, apparently overextending the contrast, and may have emphasized the affricate release allophone of *q̇* before consonant for the same reason.) Every other instance in the database has laryngealized *q̇*. (The glottal stop in de Angulo’s *è’wà·lí* ‘weak’ is no surprise, see Section 2.)

I did not find convincing evidence of a *q̇aẇ/q̇ẇ* root, only *tineq̇aaẇi* ‘wrap up’ and *q̇ǻáẇa* ‘chin’ (which is also recorded *k̇ǻáẇa*). So this leaves me wondering about a *q̇*V/*q̇* root. We shall see. The *q* in *iqpiimí* ‘Wintu’ was resolved last month.

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2 This *t^{h}a* is the root in ‘pound’ (e.g. pound seeds, salmon flour, but especially acorn), which makes noise. Curtin wrote *witaqwi yä'liu*. His *q* usually represents some kind of back spirant or fricative, but he even used *q* for laryngealization: his *isĕ́qdu* "wall" is *issáẏ́tu* < *issi* + *áẏ́tu*, “on the middle side”. Since Achumawi houses had no interior partitions, this appears to be a neologism on the analogy of *iphaẏ́tu* < *iphe* + *áẏ́tu* “on the front side of”, *iqqúsáẏ́tu* < *iqqús* + *áẏ́tu* “on the back side”. On the same visit to Round Valley Curtin heard *isiwi-túil* ‘middle finger’, which I take to be *issi wáẏ́tu íl* “middle-side [of the] hand” where in Fall River 90 years later they said *issi tuci*.

ṗas/ṗs

This root is similar to the *ṗaḥ/ṗḥ* root. It is possible but not at all obvious that they are related.

ṗas	eye, face	*tikúúṗascumáké'*	put (poultice) on eyes
		ṗassílóo	buckeye
		yúúl̓aṗas	ripe buckeyes, ripened on ground
		yááṗáási	has blemish/sore/disease on face
		timaaṗáási	acne, rash
ṗs		*icaṗsááci*	wash face

sácusṗiimi	I stop running
sátasṗiimi	I stop (working, gambling, fighting)
sácasṗiimi	I turn it loose (I stop grasping)
sátasṗiimi	I quit doing it
sápl̓asṗiimi	I stop sucking on it
sásl̓isṗiimí	I quit drinking
sátusṗiimí qa támmí	I quit eating
sásl̓asṗiimí	I stopped sucking
wápl̓asṗiimí	he stopped sucking (his thumb)
sálásṗiimí (qa 'ó tissi)	I stopped singing
sálásṗiimí qa téési	I stopped singing
sátasṗiimi qa túnní	I quit coming
sátasṗiimi qá tupte	I quit going
sátasṗiimi qá tum̓m̓ááti	I quit sleeping

saṗ saṗ ticúúci.	scrape a hide
siṗ siṗ ucí', taatéimi	(slender thing) slip through wáliisíṗtéimi slip (babies) out

aqcúúci	extent, being high
aqmi	width
aqmiimí	resembling
aqtánumi	depth
aqtéimi	having a hole beneath
aqtúúwaỳkiˀ	underneath

aḥtúúké	full
ỳaḥtúúkí	
aḥtúúṁi	full
aḥti	blood
tílayaḥtúúṁi	tell an old story
ċé ḳucí tilayaḥtíwci	don’t get into an argument