CHASTA COSTA AND THE DENE LANGUAGES OF THE NORTH[1]

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ALL English scholars are familiar with the fact that the growth of a language is evidenced not only by the alterations in the material make-up, the morphology, of its component parts, but by the remarkable evolution which those parts occasionally undergo in their meaning while they remain unaltered in their structure. For instance, the word "villain" had in Chaucer's time a quite different value from that which modern usage attributes to it. No Christian of our days would feel flattered by being called the "villain of the Lord," an expression which originally meant the "servant of the Lord."

Likewise, instances of such alterations in the meaning of words are not wanting in American aboriginal philology, though said alterations may not be the result of time, but rather due to other circumstances such as, for instance, linguistic borrowing or changed cultural environment.

An example will make my meaning clearer. There never was any buffalo within British Columbia. When Cree-speaking half-breeds reached the northern interior of that region, in the wake of the Northwest Company traders, they told the natives of a wonderful animal they called *mustus*, which roamed by the million over the immense plains east of the Rockies. Later on, domestic cattle were introduced in the same country and dubbed *mœstus* by analogy with the game the natives had heard so much about—the *u* of *mus* being altered to *œ* conformably to the requirements of the Déné law of phonetic sequence.

So that with time *mœstus* came to be universally understood of domestic cattle, instead of the buffalo to which alone the name is

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[1] A further discussion of *Notes on Chasta Costa Phonology and Morphology*, by Edward Sapir. See p. 347 above.

strictly speaking applicable, and when the Carrier had to refer to the latter they called it *tlokœt mœstus*, or prairie cattle (lit. grass-on cattle). Meantime, buffalo remained *mustus* to the Cree who, in turn, gave the name of *awokhâni-mustus*, slave ox, to domestic cattle.

Here we have, therefore, significatory evolution resulting from the importation of a loan word. In Dr Sapir's "Notes on Chasta Costa Philology and Morphology," there are several terms or roots the meaning of which seems to have undergone an analogous transformation, through the action of time, contact with alien populations or the shifting of environment, unless, of course, we choose to ascribe it to imperfect information on the part of the essayist.

A characteristic instance of this I find in the word *tclac*,[1] which Sapir gives us as the equivalent of the English term "bird." This is evidently none other than the Carrier *tśœš*, which in that language means not "bird" but "feather-down." Is it possible that in this instance a part of one thing should have come to represent the whole thing? This seems to be all the more likely as that one thing is too well known to have ever been taken for another by Dr Sapir's informant.

Color would also seem to be lent to this probability by the fact that *pœn*, which means "roof" in Carrier, denotes a whole house in Chasta Costa. However, it would require no great flight of the imagination to see in that word something like a reminiscence of the time when a Déné habitation consisted almost entirely of a double shelter in the shape of a roof squatting on the ground, as we still see some in the recesses of the North.

A still more curious terminological mutation, which affects both the structure and the sense of a word and is perhaps the result of accident or of growth along lines unknown in the latter regions, is to be found in the Chasta Costa possessive form of the term for "dog," *li*, whose variants are everywhere unimportant. In the

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[1] The exclamation mark denotes the "click" in Dr Sapir's texts, and with him as with me *c = sh*. Dr Sapir's *a* is my *œ*, almost the sound of *u* in "but," more exactly that of *e* in the French *je, te, le*.

South as in the North, the sibilant *l* is converted by the possessive into a common *l*; but the analogy does not go any further. According to Sapir, this possessive entails in Chasta Costa the accretion of a sort of suffix which he writes *tcle*, the equivalent of my *tse*. Now *łitse* means in Carrier, not somebody's dog, but she-dog! Is this again a mere accident, the result of word development or of some other cause?

Another change of meaning in a vocable, coupled, this time, with an anomalous formation, which is perfectly recognizable to a Carrier I find on p. 311 of Dr Sapir's "Notes." There he gives us *t'enī'lat* as the equivalent of the English "you drown," and to this he adds, by way of comparison, the verb *tc'nnûllat*, which he represents as the Kato synonym of "it floated there." This circumstance is virtually a voucher that our author is conscious of a diversity of significations: to drown is evidently not to float.

But if we turn to the Carrier of the North we meet with a somewhat homonymous counterpart of the former term in *thénîltlat*, which means not "you drown," or "you float," but "you sink," or rather "thou sinkest."

This may not be the exact synonym of Dr Sapir's verb, though it is nearest to it in meaning; but how are we to explain that the act of drowning is rendered in Chasta Costa by a word the two roots of which seem self-exclusive, while the principal one refers to an act which is the opposite of drowning, namely that of floating?

Thé- and *-lat* are self-exclusive, I have said. For the former, at least in the North, does not merely mean "in the water," as Sapir would have it—*tha-* p. 302, which he gives as "referring to the water,"[1] has really that signification—but it hints at the "bottom of the water" (from the Carrier *theʀ*, "water-bottom"), while *-lat*, as we have seen, is expressive of the act of staying on the surface of the same.

Thénîltlat, on the other hand, is easy of explanation and of quite logical construction. The desinence *-tlat* refers to any pre-

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[1] Carrier *nœcya*, "I walk along;" *nœ-tha-dœcya*, "I walk in the water, I wade." Compare: *tha-ʀœł*, "deep" (water); *thé-husʀa*, "shallow" (may be analyzed: the bottom, *thé-*, near the surface, *-ʀa*).

cipitate action, and, closely analyzed, the whole verb amounts to thou art precipitately brought to the bottom, that is, thou sinkest. "I drown" is said in Carrier *thû sœzœlreh*, "water kills me."

Apropos of water, Sapir gives the verbal stems *-êl* and *-al* as representing the acts of bathing and coming, respectively, while to him the desinence *-ya* is synonymous of going or coming.[1]   There must be a slight inaccuracy here. The first of those desinential radicals (*-êl*) certainly wants the initial hiatus (˙); for his *nadaɣîlêl*, "we are bathing," is none other than the Carrier *nœtsœl·il*, which has the same value.

As to the verbal stem *-al*, which he believes to mean "to come," I more than suspect that it is but a corresponding form of *-ya*, which he represents as expressing the idea of "going, coming," and should be *-yal*.   In the first place, the difference between going and coming flows in Déné from the apposition of locative adverbs, or results from a diversity of prefixes, not of a dissimilarity of desinential roots.   The suffix *-ya* denotes merely the action of moving about on both feet as a man (there is another for the walk of birds).   Such is the meaning in Carrier of the word *nœcya*.

But another form of the same verb, which I call the actualizing form, changes this term and its characteristic desinence into *œcyal*, which means "I am actually walking" (with both legs).   This form is also commonly used in connection with locative adverbs, as in the phrases: *tiz înyal*, "come here"; *hwœz înyal*, "go there"; *˙œn înyal*, go on (which recalls Sapir's *ʌn ɣî˙˙al*, the equivalent, he claims, of "come on").

Dr Sapir furthermore quotes the verb stem *-t!o* (*-to*) as denotive of the act of swimming, while, according to him, that of paddling is rendered by the radical *-xe* (*-ʀe*).   Now, in most northern Déné dialects, the former (*-to*) refers to paddling, while the latter indicates the act of navigating, or moving about in a canoe.   Are those roots, with their changed value, new evidence of evolution in the meaning of words?

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[1] P. 323 of his essay.

The verbal stem *-lal*, or rather *-tlal*,[1] to which our author attributes the sense of "to sleep," has in Carrier the value of "to dream of" (with a complement).   Might not Dr Sapir's informant have misunderstood his questioner and thus unwittingly misled him? If not, such changes in the meaning of words or roots otherwise so closely related are well worth a moment's reflection.

If Dr Sapir will allow me, I will also observe that the desinence *-tc'ac* (*-thæc*), which he gives as a distinct verbal element,[2] is nothing else than the plural stem of the same verb *nanisthi*, whose derivative *nthæsthih* effectively means "to lie down, go to bed."   That plural stem is in Carrier *-thés* for the present, *-théz* for the past, and *-thæs* for the proximate future.

Likewise, Sapir's verbal desinence *tθ!i* (*tṣ̌i*) is simply the plural form of the verbal stem *-ta*, "to sit," which he gives elsewhere as *-dā*.

Our essayist very properly represents[3] the root *-xwi* (*-ᴋwi*) as denoting the idea of vomiting, and compares it with the Carrier substantive *ᴋu*, "vomiting."   He will be pleased to learn that the former is *-ᴋwe* in the Lower Carrier dialect.

Elsewhere he speculates on the value of the verbal elements *l* and *ł*, and, p. 332, he goes to some trouble in order to explain the passive form of the Chasta Costa verbs.   Unless I am very much mistaken, what he adduces as the equivalent of "I am seen, you are seen, he is seen," etc., really means simply: "people see me" (French: *on me voit*), "people see thee," etc.

It may be of interest to state that in Carrier the passive form

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[1] As may be seen by Sapir's rendering: *t'tlal*, p. 315.   The double consonants *tl* and *ts* (both of which may be affected by a click) are of frequent occurrence in Déné and form as many indivisible groups.   The syllables of all Sapir's verbs in the first person plural are wrongly cut up: the *t* which he attributes to the penultimate syllable should commence the last one: *-tlal, -tsæl, -tlat, -thæc,* etc.   Hence several of his verb stems on pp. 323–26 are incomplete.   For instance, *-se,* "to cry," should be *-tse* (Carrier *-tso,* though the first person singular of the verb is in *-so*); *-si,* "to cause," should be *-tsi* (Carrier *-tsi,* same remark as to first person sing.); *-lo,* "to laugh," cannot be understood without its *t,* as is shown even by the examples the Doctor adduces in explanation.   Were he familiar with the Dénés' syllabic way of writing their own language, he would have been spared this little inaccuracy.

[2] P. 326.

[3] P. 325.

very often results from a mere change from the second to the third conjugation. Here is an example:

Active	*Passive*
æs·en, I do (something)	*æz·en*, I am done, etc.
ĭl·en, thou doest	*ĭl·en*
æ(yæ)l·en, he does it	*æl·en*
ætşæl·en, we do	*ætşæl·en*
æl·en, you do	*æl·en*
æRæ(yæ)l·en, they do it	*æræl·en*
ĭl·en, both of us do	*ĭl·en*

When the verb under its active form belongs to the first conjugation, its passive is sometimes represented by a verb which has nothing but the radical desinence in common with the active, and which offers the strange characteristic of being at the same time pluripersonal and unipersonal. The following will be clearer than all possible explanations:

Active	*Passive*
uḵwéssi·, I love him	*sḵéidĭntsi·*, I am loved, etc.
uḵwéĭntsi·, thou lovest him	*nḵéidĭntsi·*
yæḵentsi·, he loves him	*uḵwéidĭntsi·*
uḵwétşĭntsi·, we love him	*neḵéidĭntsi·*
uḵwéhtsi·, you love him	*nuḵwéidĭntsi·*
Riḵentsi·, they love him	*pæḵéidĭntsi·*
uḵwéĭtsi·, both of us love him	*neḵéidĭntsi·*
uʀwa·dæsni, I call him, etc.	*sʀa·hwotni*, I am called, etc.

In the first verb *u-* is the third personal pronoun in the singular, which is here the complement of the verb *-ḵéssi·*, which cannot stand alone;[1] *ḵwé* is the postposition *ḵé*, "by attraction to," inflected into *ḵwé* by the stronger vowel *u*; the first of the two *s* represents the first person singular present (which would be *æs*, were it not for the contact with the stronger vowel *e* immediately before); the same pronominal element of the first person (*s*) in turn modifies into *-si·* the verbal stem *-tsi·*, denoting badness, avarice. This verb, therefore, stands for *uḵwéæstsi·*, and, considered in its component parts, yields the literal meaning of: "by attrac-

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[1] Unless it is immediately preceded by its complement, formed of a single word.

tion to him I am bad," or avaricious, that is, I feel so much inclined towards him that I cannot share him with others.

As to the passive form of this verb, it is in reality a regular phrase commencing by the personal pronouns (*s-*, *n-*, *u-*, *ne-*, *nuh-*, *pæ-*), to which is added a unipersonal verb. For instance, the first person can be thus decomposed: *s-*, "me;" *ķé-*, "by attraction to," *idîntsi·*, "one is avaricious."[1]

The same analysis applies to *uкwa·dæsni* (lit., him for-the-want-of I-say something) and to *sкa·hwotni* (me-for one-says something—with a very impersonal meaning), in both of which verbs the reader will not fail to remark the elision of initial *æ-* of *ædæsni* and *æhwotni* represented as usual by the hiatus.

Such passives, however, are not very numerous in Carrier. Their verbal part *-idîntsi·*, *-hwotni*, varies alone according to the tense: past, *sķéidantsi·*, *sкa·hwodani*; proximate future, *sķéidæthîtsi·*, *sкa·hwodæthatnil*; eventual, *sķéidutsi·*, *sкa·hwodôni*. The negative furthermore affects not only those verbal forms, but even the postposition *-ķé* of the first. *Sķéidîntsi·* then becomes *sķæleidîtsi·*, etc. But enough of this. Entering into the question of the intricacies and niceties of the Carrier verbs would lead us too far.

Lastly, many other verbs obtain their passive merely by changing the second conjugation into the first. Ex.: *nainælnéh*, he distinguishes it; *nanišno*, it is extinguished. It is only right to remark that in such cases the equivalent of our passive is just as much of a primary form as that of our active, both being independent of each other.

If we are to believe Dr Sapir, the Chasta Costa radical *-ţo* expresses the ideas of both swimming and sucking. The former is rendered by *-pe*, *-pi* in Carrier and the latter by *-ţuk* (which is an instance of onomatopeia). According to the same authority, *-na* represents as well the act of drinking as that of lying on. In Carrier "I drink" is said *æsnai* when the verb is transitive, while the same language boasts an infinity of roots corresponding to the English "he or it lies on," which change according to the nature of the

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[1] The *d* of *dîntsi·* refers to self-interest, and belongs to a characteristic form which affects most of the Carrier verbs.

subject. We are also told that in Chasta Costa the desinence -*lec* .
does duty for "to wager" and "to smoke." In the first case, the
Carrier equivalent is -*le*, if the verb is intransitive, and, as to the
second, it all depends on what is meant by smoking. If this refers
to the favorite pastime of the votaries of the pipe, the Carriers have
the root -*ḷæt* (another case of onomatopeia) therefor. If Dr Sapir
means the act of treating with smoke, for instance, meat, those
Indians then say: *tsæl æssi*, "I make, or cause to be, soot;" if the
complement is a skin, they change this into *ḷæt pe æstléh*, literally
smoke with I make.

To the root -*ya* our essayist attributes an even larger number of
significations. It refers, he says, to locomotion, manducation, and
the feeling of shame. Normal human locomotion on both legs is,
in fact, expressed by -*ya* in Carrier; but the act of eating is rendered
by the desinence -·*al* among the northern half of the tribe, while
the southern part of the same replace it by the root -*yî*. On the
other hand, the Chilcotin word for eatable is *tsiyan*, and the general
root for manducation is -*yan* in that idiom.

As to the verb "to be ashamed," it is in Carrier one of the two
or three whose structure exactly tallies with the English synonym.
Yuya æstli, "ashamed I am," is what they say, and in some com-
pounds the root for shame (substantive, not verb) is *ya*.

With regard to the plural of verbs Dr E. Sapir writes: "Among
deictic elements are further to be reckoned certain prefixes that
serve to indicate either plurality as such or more specifically third
personal plurality."[1] Whereupon he gives us a few examples of
verbs commencing in *ya*-. A word or two on this subject, such as
we find it in the Carrier and other Déné dialects of British Columbia
may be of interest to him, and possibly to others as well.

In the first place, the third personal plural of all the Carrier
verbs is rendered by the particle ʀ-, ʀæ- or ʀi- prefixed to, or
coalescing with, the pronominal element—the equivalents of the
Chilcotin *qe*- and *qæ*. Added to this is the particular inflexion of
the desinential radical for each of the three plural persons when it
is a question of a verb of human locomotion on both legs (-*ya* = -*til*

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[1] "Notes," p. 306.

in the plural), of locomotion on all fours (-*kret* = -'*as*), of running (-*kraih* = -*ras*), of station (-*ta* = -*tse*), of cubation (-*thi* = -*thés*), of natation (-*pi* = -'*il*, first conjugation for the singular, third for the plural), of navigation (-*ke* = -'*il*, first conjugation for both singular and plural), of physical feeling (to suffer, to swoon: -*zit* = -*téh*), of ejection with a human complement (to throw: -*néh* = -*til*, first conjugation for the singular, second for the plural), of bursting into laughter (-*tsit* = -*kæk*). The verbs of flotation make their plural as the verbs of navigation.

All of these plural desinences, and indeed the singular desinences as well, furthermore undergo material changes according to the tense.

Then there are the objective verbs, some of which have for all their tenses a desinential plural of their own. Ex.: *nenæs'aih*, "I put (in a certain place) a single object with no special characteristics;" *nenæstle*, "I put many such (in the same way)." *Aditai*, "it (a single unspecialized object) is put in a hole;" *adilya*, "several such objects are put in the same place."[1]

We now come to the real verbs of plurality. They are characterized by the element *næ-* (*ne-* and sometimes *no-*, when in direct contact with stronger vowels) introduced before the pronominal syllable, the reduplicative prefix, or again the negative particle. Here are a few instances:

Common Verbs	*Verbs of Plurality*
tha-dæssel, I cut up in various lengths with an axe	*thanæ-dæssel*
thænna-skræs, I wash (linen, skins)	*thænnænæ-skræz*
pe'-dæstcæz, I bind it	*pænc'-dæstcæz*
ltsé-sæ'a, it is straight	*lsénæ-sæ'a*

As may be seen in the case of *thænnaskræs*, the pluralizing form sometimes affect the verbal desinence. It changes that of the present, and the two futures into that of the past, which then remains unchangeable.

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[1] It will be noticed that the plural-forming particle of the third person is wanting in this verb. It is used only in connection with human subjects, and even then it disappears whenever the subject is itself in the plural. Ex.: *tedækul tsiyauh hwenti*, "all the girls went away" (instead of *hweRantil*).

Should the subject or complement be evidently plural or imply such number, the verb of plurality is not resorted to, unless one wants to draw attention to the fact that he refers to a multiple object or several persons.

Another kind of pluralizing verbs, which are perhaps the ones Dr Sapir had in mind when he penned the above quoted remark, do indeed commence with the prefix *ya-*; but they mean much more than the common verbs of plurality of which I have just given a few instances. They refer not merely to several, but to all. In other words, they imply totality rather than simple plurality. The very substantive verb to be (*œstli*, I am) can be thus affected. *Rĭnli*, "they are;" *yaRĭnli*, "they are all, or at least in very large numbers."[1]

Sometimes the prefix *ya-* denotes also a repeated action (especially if followed by the crement *-das-*) rather than a plural complement. Examples:

Common Verbs	Verbs of Totality
œsṭah, I cut with a knife in a slashing way	*yasṭah*, I cut to pieces with a knife
œsqul, I tear	*yasqul*, I tear to pieces
thœsκat, I throw away with a shovel	*yaidasκat*, I throw away on all sides with a shovel, I scatter, etc.
dœsnat, I split	*yaidasnat*, I split in very many places

Oftentimes these verbs combine the crement *nœ-* indicative of plurality with the prefix *ya-* which denotes a large number, or even totality, and may furthermore take the pluralizing particle *Rœ-* proper to the third person plural, as may be seen in the following:

ltcan, she is with child	*yanoltcan* (contraction of *yanœRœltcan*), they are all with child
ucyul, I blow repeatedly on (as a shaman)	*yanœpucyul*, I blow repeatedly on all

The desinence of the first verb means "womb" in Carrier. Déné phonetics always contract *œRœ-* into *o-*; hence the peculiar form of totality noticeable in that verb. In *ucyul*, the real signification

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[1] Strictly speaking, they imply totality, but the Indians are so addicted to the practice of exaggerating that such verbs practically refer to large numbers only.

of which is "I exorcize" in English, we have still another category of verbs, the frequentative. The original form of the same is *œcyuł,* "I blow." When one is told that the pretended exorcism of the shamans consists in incessant blowing on the part of the body which is affected by disease, he will realize the appropriateness of the frequentative form to express the nature of their operations.

In *yanœpucyuł* we have a further instance of a weak vowel (*œ* of *pœ,* "them") disappearing under the influence of a stronger vowel (initial *u* of *ucyuł*). That compound stands for *yanœpœuc-yuł.*[1]

Very often also the verbs have not only a pluralizing but a totalizing form, as is the case in the following: *thaʀœniŝnai,* "they are drunk;" *thanoniŝnai,* "many are drunk;" *yathaʀinatnai,* they are all drunk; *œʀœniŝtœt,* "they are drunk with tobacco;" *noniŝtœt,* "many are drunk with tobacco," *yaʀinatœt,* "they are all drunk with tobacco."

The dissection of these two series of verbs is quite interesting. The desinence *-nai* of the first denotes the act of drinking, while the prefix *tha-* indicates that something stronger than milk, namely "fire-water," has been absorbed. *ʀœ-* is the usual particle of the third person plural, and *-niŝ-* shows that the above mentioned potations have been excessive, being attended with fatal results.[2] The reader will not fail to remark how this accretion *-niŝ-* is converted into *-na-* under the influence of initial *ya-* of totality (*yathaʀinatnai*). ·

In the second verb *-tœt* is onomatopeic. It denotes the act of smoking, and is intended to reproduce the peculiar noise made by the lips when pulling at a pipe. As to *noniŝtœt* the reader will have guessed that it is a contraction of *nœʀœniŝtœt,* prompted by the phonetic rule already alluded to.

Before dismissing the question of the verbs in *ya-* referred to

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[1] Were not the frequentative form intended, the sequence of two vowels in *u* would be against the principles of Carrier phonetics.

[2] These verbs belong to still another class, that of the verbs of error, which denotes an action with unforeseen, or fatal, results. Almost all the Carrier verbs can be clothed with this significant form, which, in common with the frequentative and other forms, constitutes a new series of verbs.

by Dr Sapir, it may be worth the while to observe that, independently from the value of that prefix as a multiplicative element, it is also the root of numerous verbs meaning "to land, to go (or take) ashore." Here are some examples illustrating that new rôle:

yasæsкeh, I land in a boat.
yasæcyaih, I land on foot (as on the ice).
yasæzkraih, I land while running.
yasæskuh, I land in a sleigh.
yasæstzût, I land while skating.
yasæzkret, I land on all fours.
yasæzкuh, I land on one leg.
yasæstlat, I land floating on the water.
yasæspih, I land swimming.
yasæsṭah, I land in a balloon, flying.
yasæstzas, I land hopping about like a bird.
ya·næs·æs, I land while limping about.
yadæzquh, I land while throwing out the throwing stick (game).
yasæzqéh, I land under the influence of anger.
yasæstcih, I land with head erect.[1]
yasæztlas, I land on crutches.[2]
yadæzthis, I land with a walking stick.[3]
yasæstzit, I land while chasing large game,
        etc., etc.
ya-tsi·-dæs·aih, I, being a worthless fellow, land on foot.[4]
ya-кé-næz·ih, I land by stealth.[5]
ya-cæn-dîjyaih, I land on foot and while singing.[6]
ya-tso-dîjyaih, I land on foot while crying.[7]
ya-tsé-sæztlés, I land nodding right and left.[8]
ya-kwæ-distéh, I land on my knees.[9]

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[1] The desinence -*tcih* of the present becomes in the past -*tcæn*, which means "stick, tree," and hints at the subject of the verb landing while "stuck up" as the trunk of a tree.

[2] From the root -*tła*, "posterior," because in such a case the person seems to an Indian to be walking with his posterior instead of his legs.

[3] From *thæz*, "walking stick," which is the desinence assumed by the verb for the past tense.

[4] From the root -*tsi·*, which, as we have already seen, is the Carrier for "bad."

[5] Literally: I land hiding (*næz·ih*) my feet (*кé*).

[6] *Cæn* means "song."

[7] From the root *tso*, "crying."

[8] From *tsé-*, equivalent in compounds of -*tsi*, "head," and -*tlés*, stem of the verb "to throw."

[9] From -*kwæt*, "knee."

ya-ĸet-uzæzĸeh, I land in a canoe with the intention of buying.[1]
ya-tsé-næstaih, I land on foot under the influence of fear.[2]
ya-na-tsé-næstaih, I land again on foot under the influence of fear.[3]
ya-na-hwe-næsga. I commenced again to land on foot,[4]
 etc., etc., etc.

The compound, *dō-at-ṭi*,[5] leads me to remark on the evident inferiority of the Chasta Costa compared with the northern Déné languages, especially those of British Columbia. "Not-wife-he has" appears almost childishly simple in construction by the side of the negative forms prevailing there.   Indeed, this phrase recalls to mind the similarly inelegant mode of expressing themselves adopted by the Sekanais of Bear lake (Fort Connolly), British Columbia, when they attempt to speak Carrier. *Awontuh ˙at æṭi*, "no a wife he has," they would then say instead of the classical *au ˙at l̃ṭih*, which contains three distinct negative elements: first, *au*, "not;" second, *l̃-*, made up of negative *l* and pronominal crement *æ* inflected into *ḭ*; and, third, the verbal stem *-ṭi* altered into *-ṭih* by the same negative prefix.[6]

Moreover, if, as is well known, the natural tendency of languages is to disintegrate with time their constitutive elements, that is, to pass from synthesis to analysis, the material presented to the public by Dr Sapir, meagre as it may be, suffices to prove that the Chasta Costa dialect is much less primitive, because more analytic, than the Déné idioms of the Canadian North.

To mention but one point of the grammar of the latter, they form their futures by means of particular inflections, or even

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[1] From *ĸet*, which denotes the act of buying.   The *uzæs-* of the verb furthermore indicates that the person has "arrived" at the place.

[2] This is one of the verbs of error, as can be seen by the particle *tsé-*, which inflects the *-cyaih* of *næcyaih* into *-staih* (*næstaih*).

[3] The reduplicative prefix *na-* is here introduced.

[4] To the reduplicative particle the initiative prefix *hwe-* is here added.   The verb is in the past tense (*-qa* instead of *-taih*, which is itself altered from *-yaih* by *na-*), because such verbs are never used in the present tense.

[5] See footnote 82, p. 337.

[6] Strange to say, while, considered in its constitutive elements, this compound should mean "he has no wife, he is unmarried" in Carrier as well as in Chasta Costa, usage has given it the sense of "he did not get married" in the former dialect, since "he got married" is said *˙a-ṭi* (with a contraction similar to that of the Chasta Costa).

excrescences, of the pronominal crements. Thus the proximate future of the Carriers changes the present *œs·œs*, "I sneeze," into *œthîs·œs*.

Quite often also, the desinential radical of said verbs undergoes itself a characteristic transformation indicative of the new meaning assumed. For instance, *dœsni*, "I say," becomes *dœthasnil* in that same future.

On the other hand, the Chasta Costa decomposes and scatters, as it were, the elements of its verbs, much after the way the modern Romance languages have treated the parent Latin. Thus to form the above mentioned future it simply adds the suffix, or rather separate particle, *thé* to the present.[1] No more any of the two or three original inflections of the·Déné negative, no more any internal growth, but instead an independent monosyllable, for the future: such are, indeed, unmistakable tokens of analytic disintegration which bespeaks unfavorable ground or unpropitious environment for the life of the language.

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[1] The words Sapir gives as synonymous of "I shall sneeze, I shall look at him," etc., should be translated: "*If* I sneeze, *if* I look at him," etc., in Carrier, *thé* and *te* being in that language the conjunction *if*.