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THE MISCONNECTION OF GUALE AND YAMASEE WITH MUSKOGEAN

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1. Introduction. In a recent article, Broadwell (1991) claimed to have discovered new evidence that “establishes conclusively that . . . Guale and Yamasee must be recognized as Muskogean languages.” He has not done so. I shall show that (a) the forms that Broadwell cites are simply Creek, not from a language “quite close to Creek”; and (b) there is no evidence that these forms were collected from speakers of Yamasee or Guale; and (c) Yamasee and Guale remain *nomina nuda* in the sense of Girard (1971), that is, “names for which we have no linguistic evidence.”

Broadwell noticed seven lexical items quoted in a nineteenth-century biographical sketch of Tomochichi, a chief who dealt with the English colonists at Savannah on the coast of Georgia in the 1730s. He compared these forms with modern recordings of Creek and several other Muskogean languages, and decided that they are from a language that, with Creek, forms what he calls the “Northern Muskogean” subgroup (adopting the label from Munro 1987, and in fact also from Swanton 1922:11, although the latter put the “Guale Indians and Yamasee” in his “Southern division”).

2. The Salzburger sources. Broadwell takes his evidence from an account by C. C. Jones (1868) which is at least three steps removed from the primary sources. The passages he cites are in a long quotation that Jones credited to an 1846 pamphlet which in turn was a reprint of an “Extract” published in English in 1734 from a journal kept in German by Johann Martin Bolzius (or Boltzius), who was the chief pastor of the Protestant Salzburger refugees who emigrated in 1734 to Oglethorpe’s new colony of Georgia. Another journal, also in German, was kept by the commissary of the emigrants, Baron Philipp Georg Friedrich von Reck. As published by Urlsperger in 1735–41, these two journals overlap, containing many similar or identical passages.¹ While the original manuscripts presumably survive in the Franckeschen Stiftungen, Halle, comparison of the published

¹ On the relations between Bolzius, von Reck, and Urlsperger, see G. F. Jones (1969) and Hvidt (1980).

versions is sufficient to demonstrate how Broadwell has gone wrong and to show that the language involved was Creek.

Six of the seven forms cited by Broadwell after Jones are written in Greek letters because, as Bolzius (1734:35) explained, “the *Indian* language . . . can best be written with *Greek* Letters, because of the long and short Vowels; and some of their Sounds, cannot be expressed by any other alphabet but the *Greek*.” In a parallel passage von Reck (1735:192) wrote, “their language can most conveniently be written with Greek letters, because a few words of that language occur in it, and various letters cannot be pronounced except in the Greek language. The pastors have been told a few words of their language, and have written them thus with Greek letters.”²

3. Sequential misreadings. Comparison of the seven forms in the published sources (table 1) shows a series of misprints and miscopyings, especially of the Greek letters.³ When these are straightened out, the forms are clearly Creek, quite well written.⁴ The term for ‘Supreme Being’ is clarified by the literal translation that was omitted by Jones but was given in his source. In the forms written with Greek letters, Broadwell misread as lambda a slightly antique form of tau in the word for ‘stockings’ (which should be ‘leggings’), and failed to recognize the omicron-epsilon digraph in ‘dog’. Misreading a variant form of beta as sigma in ‘sun’, Broadwell inadvertently corrected an error in his source. Jones (1868) himself made

² “Ihre Sprache . . . am bequemsten mit Griechischen Buchstaben geschrieben werden können, weil einige Wörter aus dieser Sprache darin befindlich, und verschiedene Buchstaben in keiner andern als der Griechischen Sprache ausgesprochen werden können. Die Herren Prediger haben sich einige Wörter aus ihrer Sprache sagen lassen, und mit Griechischen Buchstaben also angezeichnet.” This idea was evidently adopted by at least one of the Moravians who worked among the Indians near Savannah between 1735 and 1740, for there is a Creek vocabulary in a very similar Greek-based orthography in the Moravian archives (Anonymous 1740).

³ In table 1, I provide transliterations of the Greek in order to identify the odd forms of tau and beta used here and sometimes elsewhere in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (e.g., in Lancelot et al. 1746, Moor 1813, and Rost 1829; 1856), and to identify the ligature of omicron and epsilon. The transliterations given after Broadwell (1991) are his. Elsewhere in the table I do not follow him in transliterating chi with *x*, since that letter is needed for xi.

⁴ The Creek forms are from Haas (1939), Loughridge and Hodge (1890), and Gatschet (1888), in the orthography of Haas (1977). I thank Karen Booker for correcting my misspellings of these eight forms. She has also pointed out that the word provided for God was evidently **soto(h)laykati*: (*sota-oh-leyk-ati*: [sky-on above-sit (sg.)-quotative]), ‘he (it is said) sits above on the sky’. Booker has provided (personal communication) morphological analyses of the words for ‘shoe’ and ‘leggings’, making even more positive their identification as Creek: *isti* ‘person’ + *ili* ‘foot, leg’ + *payk* ‘one put inside’ + *a* ‘nominalizer’; *hafi* ‘thigh’ + *ati-hk* ‘more than one put inside’ + *a* ‘nominalizer’.

TABLE I

Broadwell (1991)	<i>sotobycate</i>	'God'	τύχα <i>túxa</i>	'fire'	ασσε <i>asse</i>	'sun'	ζυκκο <i>zukko</i>	'house'	ςιλλιναχα <i>sillinaixa</i>	'heel'	αφαλιχα <i>afalixa</i>	'stockings'	ιφεκα/ιφεα <i>ifeka/ifea</i>	'dog'
Jones (1868:46, 48)	<i>Sotobycate</i>	'Supreme Being; who is in all places'	τύχα <i>túcha</i>	'fire'	ατ'εε <i>abbe</i>	'sun'	ζυκκο <i>zukko</i>	'house'	ςιλλιναχα <i>sillinaixa</i>	'heel'	αφατι'χα <i>afaticha</i>	'stockings'	ιφεα <i>ifoa</i>	'dog'
Bolzcius (1846:21, 24)	<i>Sotobycatè</i>	'Supreme Being; who is in all places'; literally, 'He who sitteth Above'	τύχα <i>túcha</i>	'fire'	ατ'εε <i>abbe</i>	'sun'	ζυκκο <i>zukko</i>	'house'	ςιλλινακα <i>sillipaika</i>	'heel'	αφα'ι'κα <i>afai'ka</i>	'stockings'	ι'φεα <i>ifoa</i>	'dog'
Bolzcius (1734:36, 44)	<i>Sotobycatè</i>	'Supreme Being; who is in all Places'; literally, 'He who sitteth Above'	τύχα <i>túcha</i>	'fire'	ασσε <i>asse</i>	'sun'	ζυκκο <i>zukko</i>	'house'	ςιλλινακα <i>sillipaika</i>	'heel'	αφα'ι'κα <i>afai'ka</i>	'stockings'	ι'φεα <i>ifoa</i>	'dog'
von Reck (1735:192)	<i>Sotobycate</i>	'ein oberes Wesen; der, welcher droben sitzet'	τύχα <i>túcha</i>	'Feuer'	'άσσε <i>hásse</i>	'Sonne'	ξυκκο <i>xúkko</i>	'Haus'	ςιλλιπαίκα <i>sillipaika</i>	'Schuh'	ι'αφ'ι'κα <i>hapsaika</i>	'Strümpfe'	ι'ι'φ'κα <i>ipsouka</i>	'Hund'
Creek	<i>sotá</i> <i>laykiid</i>	'sky' 'to sit'	ιό'ι'κα <i>io'ika</i>	'fire'	<i>hási</i>	'sun'	<i>co'kó</i>	'house'	ι'σιλλιπα'γ'κα <i>sillipa'g'ka</i>	'moccasin, shoe'	<i>hafati'ika</i>	'leggings'	<i>ifá</i>	'dog'

several other errors, misreading kappa as chi in three forms ('fire', 'heel', 'stockings') and pi as nu in the word translated 'heel' (which should be 'moccasin'). The 1846 version that Jones copied was a quite accurate reproduction of its 1734 original, the only significant miscopying being reading a double sigma as a double beta in the word for 'sun'. The version in von Reck (1735) is worse in three respects: in 'Haus' chi was read as xi, in 'Strümpfe' and 'Hund' phi was read as psi, and in 'Hund' a superfluous kappa was inserted. But von Reck's versions are also helpful, in recording initial *h* by rough breathing in 'Sonne' and 'Strümpfe', and in giving a better translation for the word for 'moccasin'. Thus simple historical and philological methods applied to the sources reveal that these are just ordinary Creek words, not words from a language closely related to Creek as Broadwell would have it.

4. Languages near Savannah. The information about the Indian language near Savannah was recorded by Bolzius and von Reck in their journals under dates less than two weeks after they first arrived in America in March 1734, and yet they knew that the language was Creek.

The region had been depopulated following the Yamasee War of 1715–17, when the remaining Yamasees evacuated to Spanish Florida. Oglethorpe had established his settlement at Savannah about a year before the Salzburgers arrived, at a site ceded to him by Tomochichi, who had himself moved there with some one hundred of his people only about 1730. Tomochichi was from the Lower Creek town of Apalachicola, which was originally a Hitchiti-speaking town located on the Savannah river about fifty miles from its mouth. After the Yamasee War Apalachicola had relocated to the Chattahoochee River (Swanton 1922:131).

About six miles upstream from Savannah was the trading post of John and Mary Musgrove, who had come there from Charlestown only in 1732, at the invitation of Tomochichi. Both the Musgroves were the offspring of Creek mothers and Carolina English fathers, and both served as interpreters for Tomochichi and the English. Mary Musgrove was especially important as a cultural as well as a linguistic broker; she was born at the Creek (Muskogee)-speaking Lower Creek town of Coweta and had received an English education in South Carolina (Durham and Thomas 1978 and Juricek 1989:2, 140).

Very likely the word "Sotolycate" was learned from Oglethorpe, as the spelling seems English and it is cited in the context of Oglethorpe's early instructions to the Salzburgers about their Indian neighbors. But the words written with Greek letters probably were dictated by Mary Musgrove or her husband, both of whom the Salzburgers mention meeting. In fact, Bolzius (1734:44) reported on March 19, 1734 that "some of them [*sc.* Tomo-

chichi's people] are willing to send their Children to our School: Of these Children we shall by degrees learn some Words. Mrs. *Musgrove*, who lives here . . . and speaks the *Creek* Language, is a very good Christian, and gave the *Indians* some Notions of the Holy Scriptures. We have learn'd some words of their Language; for instance," (and here follow the six words written with Greek letters). The penultimate sentence of this passage was replaced by ellipsis marks in Jones's (1868) quotation, so Broadwell did not realize that these words were quite explicitly labeled as Creek.

In December 1734, the Salzburgers reported on their slow progress in learning the local Indian language and gave as examples three names the Indians had provided for such things "as can be pointed out to them, e.g. Brodt, Appalásko, Fleisch, Suck-hah, Hand, Tzeuky etc.' (Bolzius and Gronau 1734:282). Two of these words are certainly Creek: compare Creek *sókha* 'pig'; *cínki* 'your hand', *cánki* 'my hand' ("Tzeuky" must be a misreading of an original "Tzenky"). The word for 'bread' is less clear; however, cf. Creek *apáski* 'parched meal', *apataká* 'flat cake'.

The Salzburgers soon learned that a different language, not Creek, was spoken at the Indian town closest to Savannah and the Yamacraw, that of the Yuchis about fifty miles to the north (Bolzius 1734:37). In 1736 von Reck documented this, when he labeled a set of his natural history drawings in German and in two Indian languages, carefully (and correctly) distinguishing between "Creek" and "Uchi" words.⁵

This is sufficient evidence that the words cited by Broadwell from Jones are in fact Creek, and that this language was spoken by the Indians in 1734 in the former Yamasee and Guale country near Savannah.⁶

⁵ There are about thirty Yuchi forms and twenty-four Creek forms on these drawings, which were identified by me and by James M. Crawford for Kristian Hvidt (1980), the discoverer of the drawings. Unfortunately, Hvidt's publisher simplified and sometimes badly distorted our transcriptions and identifications of the Indian words written by von Reck. However, most of them are visible in the reproductions in Hvidt's volume.

⁶ The ten words first recorded by the Salzburgers are useful beyond establishing that Tomochichi and his people spoke Creek. Booker has suggested (personal communication) comparing the term for God, **soto(h)laykatí*·, with the modern Creek term for the Christian God, *hisa-kítá misí*· 'gives breath to him'. Evidently this last represents a transfer of the name for the non-Christian Creator; compare the Mikasuki term for the latter, *fisáhki-kómihci*·, lit. 'he makes breath'. The term given the Salzburgers may have been a nonce formation for the Christian God, who was conceived of as different from the non-Christian Creator. Interestingly, similar terms appear in Alabama for the (Christian) God: *abà-licókkò-li*·, lit. 'he sits above' and (archaic) *abáskicókkò-li*· 'he sits high up' (Sylvestine, Hardy, and Montler 1993). The occurrence of *sókha* in the meaning 'pig' (actually, 'meat' was given) suggests that, not really surprisingly, the shift from its earlier meaning, 'opossum', had already occurred by 1734. In modern Creek 'opossum' is *sókha hátká*·, and in Mikasuki *sókihátki*·, both literally 'white pig' (Taylor 1992; for this shift, see Sturtevant 1966:39). Booker also points out that

However, it has not been shown that Creek was the language of the Yamasee or the Guale.

5. Yamacraw and Yamasee. The Salzburgers and Oglethorpe referred to the Indians at Savannah as Yamacraw, but they also said repeatedly that they were Creek or Lower Creek. There are very few contemporary statements that the Yamacraw settlement under Tomochichi included any Yamasees. One, dated 1736, is quoted by Jones (1868:18): "They were composed partly of Lower Creeks, and partly of Yamasees." More common, and perhaps better informed, are remarks such as those of 1733 (Juricek 1989:12 and Jones 1868:28) which indicated that the Lower Creeks consisted of eight allied towns, who "speak the same Language. . . . All the Indians inhabiting this Tract, speak their Language. Tomo-chi-chi, Mico, and the Indians of Yamacraw, are of their Nation and Language."

Broadwell says that the "group called the Yamacraw . . . was a subdivision of the Yamasee." He cites Jones (1868:39), who in fact was more cautious: "it seems probable that the small tribe of the Yamacraws . . . was composed in the main of Yamasees, acknowledging the supremacy of the Creek confederacy."

Assertions that the Yamacraw were descended in part from the Yamasees seem to be based on the resemblance of the two names, the fact that before the Yamasee War this was Yamasee territory, and reports that Tomochichi had said this was his ancestral region. Swanton (1922:109) on this basis proposed that Tomochichi "belonged to some refugee Yamasee among the Apalachicola." Later he suggested, without additional evidence, that the Yamacraw "were probably connected with the Hitchiti-speaking group" of the Creeks, and "may have" been Yamasee (Swanton 1946:153, 210). When he wrote his late summary volume, Swanton (1952:116) had become positive that the Yamacraw were Yamasee, although he cited no new evidence. Neither Swanton nor Gatschet (nor anyone else) has provided an etymology for the name Yamacraw.⁷

6. Yamasee and Guale. Broadwell understands Swanton (1922) to say that the Yamasee and the Guale were two "closely related tribes . . . speak[ing] the same language." Swanton (1922:11) does imply

Bolzius's spelling of the word for 'dog' evidently indicates a bilabial fricative /ʃ/, rather than the modern Creek labiodental. In Oklahoma in the 1930s Haas (1940:149) noted [ʃ] among older Creek speakers and [f] among younger speakers. I found the same generational difference in Florida in the 1950s among Seminole speakers of both Creek and Mikasuki.

⁷ However, English "Yamasee" is probably from Creek *yamasi* 'tame' as Gatschet (1884:64) suggested—compare English "Seminole" from Creek *simanó-li* 'wild'.

as much in his outline of his classification of southeastern languages, and most later writers have evidently accepted his conclusions. But a close reading of Swanton (1922:14–25, 80–109) shows that he simply proposed some interpretations of inadequate evidence on the political affiliations of Indian towns in southeastern Georgia and northeastern Florida during the colonial period. He then assumed (in his outline and elsewhere), as is commonly done, that allied groups spoke the same language, especially when they were known (to Europeans) under a single cover term. But Swanton and subsequent writers have only been able to cite indirect evidence like this, on the question of the actual linguistic affiliations of the various groups known over some two hundred years as Guale or Yamasee. Unfortunately the data noticed by Broadwell are even less relevant for answering this question.

7. Languages of the Creek Confederacy. The Creek Confederacy was an organization of named “towns” (Creek *itálwa*), a majority of them speaking Creek (Muskogee), but a large minority speaking Hitchiti and a few speaking still other languages. There is evidence from de Soto’s time onward that multilingualism was widespread among Southern Indians. Creek was the lingua franca of the Confederacy and probably among neighboring peoples also. Several towns of the Confederacy are known to have abandoned their original languages for Creek (Swanton 1922:25–27, 215–16, 272–86, etc.). Thus the fact that some Creek vocabulary items were collected from a town does not prove the primary linguistic affiliation of that town.

One reflection of the dominance of the Creek language is the appearance of Creek terms for political offices in other languages of the Confederacy and also in Apalachee and Timucua. That several such Creek terms are also documented for the Guale and Yamasee (as Broadwell notes) is therefore not evidence that they spoke Creek.⁸

It is difficult to identify the original languages of named tribes and towns that formed part of the Confederacy or that were on its peripheries and were at some time allied. The use of the Creek language in communicating with outsiders, the occurrence of Creek names and titles for leading men, even the lack of any other Indian language among town members in the late nineteenth century, do not suffice as evidence that a town’s language was Creek in the early eighteenth century or before. So it

⁸ Thus it does not speak to the affiliation of the language that Spanish “Guale” may be from Creek *wahála* or Hitchiti *wahali* ‘south, downstream’ as Broadwell speculates, unknowingly repeating a suggestion made by Swanton (1946:135). (The Hitchiti form was probably *wāhā:li*, as it is in Mikasuki.)

is reasonable to examine the old literature for evidence of the use of a language other than Creek—applying the usual historical (and philological) methods for the criticism of sources.

8. Potential sources on Yamasee and Guale. There does remain the possibility of discovering good evidence for the language or languages of the Yamasee and the Guale, even though Broadwell's attempt at this was a failure. The best hope is the Spanish, Jesuit, and perhaps Franciscan archives. For example, the Jesuit Brother Domingo Agustín Vázquez was reported, on excellent authority, to have written a grammar of Guale and translated the catechism and prayers into that language, during his residence among them in 1569 (Zubillaga 1946:61n.1, 403, 477n.18 and Swanton 1922:85); and the Franciscan Father Tomás de Aguilar was "professor of the Indian language of Guale" among the Guale and Yamasee settled near St. Augustine in the 1720s and 1730s (Larson 1978:120). No writings by either of these men are known.

If such materials do survive, archival researchers are less likely to notice them and call them to our attention if linguists and anthropologists have (unjustifiably) removed Guale and Yamasee from the category of linguistic *nomina nuda*.

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