

remarked, the value of the method has hardly begun to be realized among Americanists.

HISTORICAL VALUE OF OPERATION OF PHONETIC LAWS.

It must be acknowledged that in particular cases it is not always easy to distinguish between a word independently inherited by a number of languages from a common prototype and one which has spread by diffusion within the limits of a group of genetically related languages. Ordinarily the distinction is rendered comparatively easy by the fact that the borrowed words do not show the influence of such dialectic phonetic laws as operated before their adoption. However, a borrowed word may happen to have come into use at a period prior to the operation of all such phonetic laws as are capable of affecting it, in which case it exhibits all the phonetic characteristics of words belonging to the oldest ascertainable stratum of the language. The chronological value of such words remains great, for they give us a minimum age, in terms of often relatively datable phonetic laws, for their adoption and that of the concepts associated with them.¹

A good example of such a culture word is the Nootka *hei'na*, which is identical in origin with the Kwakiutl *ɣwe'la*. This term designates the supernatural quartz which is capable of flying and which, among the Nootka, plays an important part in the conduct of and in the beliefs connected with the Wolf Ritual. Nootka possesses both *ɣ* (velar voiceless spirant) and *ɣw* (labialized velar voiceless spirant), though these are not common sounds; original Wakashan (Kwakiutl-Nootka) *ɣ* and *ɣw* have both regularly developed to *h* (velarized aspiration).² Moreover, Kwakiutl *l* regularly corresponds to Nootka *n*.³

¹ The phonologic criterion renders great service in the stratification of the borrowed culture words of a language. Countless examples could be given from the history of the culture languages of the old world. Thus, the minimum age for the origin of the probably borrowed hemp culture among the Germanic-speaking tribes is indicated by the phonetic form of the Germanic word for the plant (cf. Anglo-Saxon *haneþ*): comparison with such forms of the word as Greek *kannabis* shows clearly that this culture, or at least the knowledge of the plant, was older than the characteristic Germanic changes of original *k* to *h* and of original *b* to *p*, whence results an inference of very considerable antiquity, an antiquity exceeding that, e.g., of the acquaintance of the West Germanic tribes with Christianity (cf. Anglo-Saxon *cyrice* "church," i.e., *kūrike*, from Greek *kūriake*: note retained *k* in Anglo-Saxon, and West Germanic generally, because this word was borrowed subsequently to the time at which the shift from *k* to *h* operated).

² Nitinat and Makah, however, preserve Wakashan *ɣ* and *ɣw*.

³ Kwakiutl *l*, when "hardened" from *l*, corresponds to Nootka *ʔ*, not *n*. This consideration may ultimately prove Nootka *hei'na* to be borrowed from Kwakiutl *ɣwe'la*, not cognate with it. Nootka *n* would then have been substituted for Kwakiutl *l* as its nearest acoustic equivalent.