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The Nawathinehena Language

This paper will offer new data on the Nawathinehena language, from the National Anthropological Archives. Alfred Kroeber published data on this language in 1916, based on material collected in 1899, but he published only about half the forms he actually collected. Subsequent discussions of the language (Michelson 1935, Goddard 1974, Pentland 1979) have been forced to rely only on the 1916 published data. The presentation presents all the data, with phonemicization. It then presents the rough outlines of the historical phonology of the language. The new data allows a more certain understanding of that phonology than has previously been possible, especially the reflexes of Proto-Algonquian consonant clusters. While the language shares some phonological innovations with Cheyenne, the treatment of the consonant clusters is actually different from either Arapaho or Cheyenne in most cases. The data suggest that from a phonological perspective, Nawathinehena is much less of an Arapahoan language than Arapaho, Gros Ventre, or the language of the Beesoowuuneno', even though morphologically it is much more similar to them – an interesting mismatch between language domains. Kroeber's unpublished data includes some noun and verb paradigm information which is especially useful in this regard.

References:

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