INTRODUCTION

This monograph is an introductory descriptive grammar of Tümpisa Shoshone, meant to provide both layman and specialist with a basic understanding of how the language works as a linguistic system. In this sense, it is intended to be a "nuts and bolts" grammar with lots of examples illustrating the most important grammatical elements and processes in the language.¹

Tümpisa Shoshone is a dialect of the language most often called Panamint in the technical literature (e.g., Freeze and Iannucci 1979, Henshaw 1883, Kroeber 1939, Lamb 1958a and 1964, McLaughlin 1987, Miller 1984). The language is also known as Panamint Shoshone (Fowler and Fowler 1971, Merriam 1904, Miller et al. 1971), Koso (= Coso) or Koso Shoshone (Kroeber 1925, Lamb 1958a), and simply Shoshone (Steward 1938). Panamint and two other closely related languages, Shoshone proper and Comanche, comprise the Central Numic branch of the Numic subfamily of the northern division of the Uto-Aztecan family of American Indian languages (see Lamb 1964, Miller 1984, Kaufman and Campbell 1981). Speakers of Uto-Aztecan languages occupied more territory in aboriginal America than any other group. More than 30 Uto-Aztecan languages were spoken over a vast area stretching from the Salmon River in central Idaho south through the Great Basin and peripheral areas into the Southwest and through northern and central Mexico. Colonies of Aztecan speakers were also scattered further south into Central America. At the time of
UTO-AZTECAN FAMILY

Northern Division

NUMIC
  Central Numic
    Panamint (= Tumpisa Shoshone), Shoshone, Comanche
  Western Numic
    Mono, Northern Paiute (= Paviotso)
  Southern Numic
    Kawaiisu, Chemehuevi-Southern Paiute, Ute

Tubatulabal isolate

TAKIC
  Serrano-Kitanemuk
  Cupan
    Luiseño-Juaneño, Gabriélino-Fernandiño, Cupeno, Cahuilla
  Hopi isolate

Southern Division

SONORAN
  Corachol
  Cora, Huichol
  Tarahumaran
    Tarahumara, Guarijio
  Tepiman
    Pima-Papago, Pima Bajo
    Northern Tepehuan, Southern Tepehuan-Tepecano
  Opatan
    Opata-Jova, Eudeve-Heve
  Mayo-Yaqui isolate
  Tubar isolate

AZTECAN
  Pochutec
  Nahua-Pipil
the Conquest there were Aztec speakers as far south as Nicaragua, and an Aztec language called Pipil is still spoken today in El Salvador. The Uto-Aztecan family has a time depth of over 5000 years; its divisions are outlined below (after Kaufman and Campbell 1981).

The Numic subfamily of Uto-Aztecan is a well defined group having a time depth of over 2000 years (according to lexico-statistic methods of dating; see Hale 1958-59, Lamb 1958a, Miller 1984). Numic is comprised of three branches, each with two or three closely related languages which split up about 1000 years ago. Speakers of Numic languages occupied the Great Basin and peripheral regions such as the Snake River Plain and the Colorado Plateau (see maps). The three branches of Numic fan out into the Great Basin and adjacent areas from southeastern California, with Mono, Panamint, and Kawaiisu confined to the extreme southwestern portion of the area. This area, between the eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada and Death Valley, is thought to be the homeland of people speaking Proto-Numic (see Lamb 1958a, Fowler 1972b, Bettinger and Baumhoff 1982). The other languages in the Numic subfamily cover large territories to the north and east of the apex in southeastern California. Comanche is the only Numic language spoken in an area not contiguous to territory of the other languages. Speakers of Comanche were formerly Shoshone who broke off the main group and adopted a Great Plains lifeway just before Europeans arrived in the area. Today, many live in Oklahoma.

In aboriginal times, Panamint was spoken by small bands of Indian people living a hunting and gathering lifeway in the valleys, deserts, and mountain ranges east of the Sierra Nevada in what is today southeastern California and southwestern Nevada. Panamint territory included the southern end of Eureka Valley, Saline Valley and the eastern slopes of the Inyo Mountains, the southern end of Owens Valley around Owens Lake, the Little Lake area and the Coso Range, Indian Wells Valley and the Argus Range, northern
Panamint Valley and the Panamint Mountains, the Last Chance Range, northern and central Death Valley, the Grapevine Mountains and Funeral Range, the Amargosa Desert and area around Beatty, Nevada.

These people followed a transhumance lifeway, mostly residing in the lower and warmer valleys and desert areas in the winter and moving to cooler higher elevations of the mountains in summer, when the valleys become unbearably hot. To a large extent, they followed this migratory pattern well into the present century (see section 10.1). During much of the year, individual families wandered independently foraging for food, with men mostly hunting game and women mostly gathering and preparing plant foods. Communal activities primarily involved several families coming together to harvest and prepare pinenuts in the fall, for rabbit or antelope drives, and often several families wintered together in the same village. Whenever a number of families were together, there were festivities such as recounting folktales, dancing, singing, and gambling, especially playing handgame (= stickgame). Perhaps the most important social event of the year was the fall festival after the pinenut harvest. Outside of the immediate family, the most important political ties were among families that wintered together, but these ties were not binding, since the same families did not always winter together year after year.

The Panamints lived in some of the harshest country in the Americas. Many of the valleys are hot, arid, lower Sonoran desert. Arid conditions lessen somewhat as one moves higher, but nearly the entire area below 5-6000 feet elevation is characterized by desert conditions. And Death Valley is one of the hottest and driest places on earth.

Like hunters and gatherers everywhere, the Panamints knew their environment extremely well. They knew the locations of all the springs in the area, whether they were permanent or temporary, or when the water could be found below the surface and at what depths, and they knew if the
water was sweet, brackish but palatable, or poisonous. They exploited virtually all of the animal and plant resources in the area. Big game like mountain sheep, antelope, and deer were hunted, and so were small game such as cottontails, jackrabbits, pikas, various squirrels, chipmunks, and desert rats, many kinds of birds and waterfowl, lizards (especially chuckwalla), and edible insects and grubs. Hundreds of different kinds of plants were utilized (see Fowler 1972a). Pinenuts, mesquite beans, and seeds of Indian ricegrass were the most important staples, but all kinds of wild edible seeds, berries, roots, and tubers were harvested. Hundreds of plants were also used for medicinal purposes, and some, such as jimson weed, as intoxicants. Plants were also used in making various kinds of implements such as sinew-backed juniper bows, willow and cane arrows with greasewood frontal shafts, wild hemp string, reed flutes, willow and sumac baskets, etc., as well as brush houses and mud-covered, brush-framed sweat houses. The Panamints produced some of the finest and most delicate basketry in the Americas.

There never were many Panamints. Kroeber (1925:590) estimates that the country they occupied never would have supported more than 500 people; that figure is with a population density of 2.11 people per square kilometer, which is thought to be the maximum, given the technology and lifeway of the Panamints (1939:137). Kroeber notes that "In 1883 an estimate [of the Panamint population] was 150; in 1891, less than 100; a recent one [1925], between 100 and 150" (1925:590). In 1973 I made a rough count of 35 to 40 people who could speak the language fluently and used it daily. In 1988, there were less than half a dozen people who could speak the language fluently, and they were in their 80s, 90s, and 100s. A few more still had a passive, though not fluent, knowledge of the language. Clearly, the Panamint Shoshone language is on the brink of extinction.

The grammatical description in this monograph is based entirely on Tumpisa Shoshone, the dialect of Panamint spoken
In and around Death Valley, California, and all of the examples given are from the Tumpisa dialect. Nearly all of the lexical material in the Tumpisa (Panamint) Shoshone Dictionary (Dayley 1989) is also from this dialect. Between 1971 and 1973, I spent three summers and several shorter periods in the winters doing linguistic fieldwork with speakers from the Furnace Creek area of Death Valley. I also worked very briefly with the last speaker from Saline Valley and with one of the last from the Darwin area, but the material I collected from them was not in any way different from the Death Valley material. In 1988, I made a month-long field trip to check material in the grammar; at that time, I worked with one person from Furnace Creek and another from Beatty, Nevada.

In earlier times, people from different valleys, even people from different villages within the same valley, spoke somewhat different dialects of Panamint. In recent years, however, the Tumpisa dialect has predominated, since more people from Death Valley continued to use the language on a day-to-day basis than did people from other areas. As far as I can tell, of the handful of speakers left today, only one is not from Death Valley; she is from Beatty. I should note, however, that the Beatty dialect is the most distinct, having many characteristics of Shoshone proper not found in other varieties of Panamint to the west of Beatty.

The term Tumpisa is the native word for Death Valley. It literally means 'rock ochre', since the word is a compound formed with the root tun- (as in the noun tümpi), meaning 'rock', and pisa 'red ochre'. Thus, Death Valley is named after an important source of red ochre found in Golden Canyon a little southeast of present-day Furnace Creek. Tumpisa is often used with the general locative postposition ka, forming Tumpisakka 'in/at/to Death Valley', and frequently the latter form is nominalized with the suffix -tun, forming Tumpisakkatun. All three forms -- Tumpisa, Tumpisakka, and
Tümppisakkatun — are used to refer to Death Valley. People from Death Valley are called Tümppisattsi.

Except in this introduction, the term "Panamint" is not used in this grammar at all. Panamint is a technical term used only by linguists and anthropologists. Neither the Indians themselves nor non-Indians in the area use the word. In English, Indian and non-Indian alike call the people and their language Shoshone. When speaking their own language, people refer to it either as sosoni or númu. Sosoni may be used either in reference to the language or to a Shoshone (= Panamint) Indian. Númu has several related meanings. It not only refers to the language, but it is also the generic word for 'person' or 'people'. It is also used in a more specific sense to mean 'Indian' as opposed to a non-Indian; and it may be used still more specifically to mean 'Shoshone (= Panamint)', as opposed to other kinds of people. When speaking English, the Indians use the term 'Nevada Shoshone' to refer to what linguists and anthropologists would call Shoshone proper, in reference to either the people or the language. The 'Nevada Shoshone' are said to speak a different language, although one recognized to be very closely related to 'Shoshone (= Panamint)'. It is said that if one goes to live in Nevada, it only takes a few weeks to make the adjustments necessary to speak the other language. In Tümppisa Shoshone, the people speaking Shoshone proper are called (Sosoniammu) Kwinawen Nangkwatun Númu, literally '(Shoshone) people towards the north'.

To both Indians and non-Indians living in the area, the term Panamint seems strange as a linguistic or cultural designation, since to them it could logically only refer to people from Panamint Valley or to the variety of 'Shoshone' that Panamint Valley Indians spoke. But since there haven't been any Indians from Panamint Valley for some time, the term does not make sense, and certainly does not make sense as a designation for people from Death Valley or other places in the area. Since the term seems ridiculous, even somewhat
offensive, to locals, Indian or non-Indian, I have opted not to use it.

The linguistic and anthropological literature on the Tümpisa Shoshone is sparse. The most important anthropological works remain Kroeber (1925:589-592) and Steward (1938:70-93), but Kerr (1980) also has a good deal of information. Two early sources are Colville (1892) and Nelson (1891). Early linguistic sources are Henshaw (1883) and Merriam (1902 and 1904). The only substantial linguistic source to date is McLaughlin's (1983) work based on the Beatty dialect. For discussions of Numic and Uto-Aztecan, see Kaufman and Campbell (1981), Lamb (1958a and 1964), Langacker (1977), Miller (1964, 1966, 1967, and 1984), Nichols (1973), Sapir (1913-14 and 1915), Steele (1979), Voegelin, Voegelin, and Hale (1962), and Whorf (1939). Grammars and dictionaries on other Numic languages are Canonge (1958) on Comanche; Crapo (1976) and Miller (1972 and 1975) on Shoshone; Giv6n (1980) on Ute; Sapir (1930 and 1931) on Southern Paiute; Lamb (1958b and 1958c) on Mono; and Nichols (1973) and Liljeblad (1967) on Northern Paiute. Some shorter works on Shoshone may be found in Dayley (1970, 1986a, and 1986b) and McLaughlin (1982a, 1982b, and 1983). D'Azevedo et al. (1964) and Sturtevant and D'Azevedo (1986) should be consulted for background information on the Numic area in general.

For a summary of the archaeology in the area with relevant primary bibliographic sources, see Warren and Crabtree (1986). They suggest that there has been cultural continuity in Death Valley for the last three major archaeological periods, going back some 4000 years:

Shoshonean Period (= Death Valley IV)
A.D. 1220 to contact

Saratoga Springs Period (= Death Valley III)
A.D. 500-1200

Gypsum Period (= Death Valley II)
2000 B.C.-A.D. 500
INTRODUCTION

The organization of this grammar is as follows: Chapter 2 provides an overall summary of Túmpísa Shoshone grammar and characterizes it typologically. Chapter 3 contains a detailed discussion of verbs. Chapters 4-6 are on constituents that occur in or involve noun phrases (i.e., pronominals, nouns, postpositions, and adjectives). Chapter 7 is on uninflected words such as adverbs, grammatical particles, and interjections. Chapter 8 introduces the major kinds of sentences composed of more than one clause, either by coordination or by subordination. Chapter 9 is on the phonology; specialists may wish to read chapter 9 first, or at least right after chapter 2. Chapter 10 contains texts illustrating the language in normal discourse; the first five texts are narratives, the sixth a long conversation.

Notes to Introduction

1. Because this publication is not aimed only at specialists in linguistics or the Uto-Aztecan languages, technical terms are occasionally defined, especially if they are not accessible in common dictionaries.

2. My primary native language consultant was Mamie Boland, to whom this volume is dedicated, but I also elicited material from a number of her relatives and others from Furnace Creek. These people normally resided in the Indian village at Furnace Creek in the winter months, although they would move to higher elevations, like Lone Pine, in the summer, in traditional transhumance fashion. The father of Mamie and her several sisters owned the water rights to Furnace Creek earlier in this century, but the people have since lost these rights to the U.S. Park Service.