structural objectives. The author's genre-based approach allows for a detailed, informed analysis of texts per se, as well as an understanding of the intertextual and, to some extent, contextual complexities that accompany such narratives. In this lies the strength of the work.

This book is recommended for anyone who is interested in the structural aspects of oral literature. Similarly, anyone who makes use of discourse analysis will find this work useful.

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This is an unusual book, both valuable and frustrating at the same time. It is a wide-ranging, stimulating work, containing much original information and many provocative ideas, as well as many valuable reports on languages from northern Eurasia that are not generally well known. Fortescue readily admits that much in his book is "speculative" (p. 1), and yet what he qualifies as speculative in one place is often asserted as real in others. It is often difficult to figure out what his real claims and conclusions are.

Fortescue suggests several goals for the book:

> The principal purpose of this book is to illustrate how, given a geographical region smaller than a continent but large enough to contain several language families, the suspected genetic and areal affiliations amongst the region's languages can be fruitfully investigated even though any common source appears to lie at a time depth beyond that amenable to the comparative method. [p. 1]

> [A] more general thesis of the book is . . . the Beringian region provides us with a useful test case for observing the differing rates whereby languages and genes move through space and time. [p. 2]
>
> This book, then, is concerned essentially with the last wave of linguistic intrusion form the Old World into the New. [p. 21]

Finally, Fortescue is attempting to establish a "paleo-linguistic" framework.

Chapter 1 introduces the book and attempts to place the languages dealt with in geographical and "prehistoric" context. Fortescue states that "the region concerned is the 'Gateway' between the Old World and the New [Beringia]" (p. 1), i.e., "the whole of Arctic and Subarctic Eurasia and America, but with primary focus on Alaska and Siberia," with extensions from Finland to Greenland to California and beyond (p. 4). The primary languages involved are those that he identifies as "descendants of the hypothetical proto-language" he calls "Uralo-Siberian" (US), the true focus of the book: Uralic (Finno-Ugric and Samoyed), Yukagir, Eskimo-Aleut, and, "less certainly," Chukotko-Kamchatkan (CK) (p. 5). Numerous other languages also play significant roles: "Na-Dene" (Athabaskan-Eyak, Tlingit, and, with qualifications, Haida), "Mosan," "Penutian," "Hokan," Ainu, "Altaic" (Turkic, Tungusic, Mongolian), Japanese, Korean, Nivkh (Gilyak) (and other languages of the Amuric family), Yeniseian, Indo-European, Sino-Tibetan, Uto-Aztecan, Algonquian, etc.

Fortescue inconsistently refers to "Uralo-Siberian" as either a "stock" of genetically related languages or a "mesh." A "mesh," for Fortescue, involves relationships among languages that may be genetic or areal or a combination of both. Typically, his "meshes" involve suspected, but unproven, genetic affiliations, where "the languages may or may not ultimately reflect common origins, but which at all events lie (for the time being) beyond the grasp of conventional comparative method. Though their genetic unity may be unfounded, their accumulation of shared typological features suggests some kind of ancient areal communality at least" (p. 6; see also p. 52). Numerous passages suggest that Fortescue wants to assert a genetic relationship for his "Uralo-Siberian" languages, which he, in fact, does variously in the book; but he nevertheless allows for the "mesh" possibility, knowing that his evidence of a genetic connection is unlikely to persuade others, as, for example, in the following:

> I must stress that my use of the term "Uralo-Siberian" is to be understood (for the time being at least) as referring to a mesh rather than a strict genetic unit for which a proto-language can be reconstructed in detail, although, . . . it does approach the level of reconstructibility . . . The bundle of typological features characterizing the US languages alerts us to the possibility of a deep historical relationship . . . To explain egregious divergences form the common profile other feature bundles typifying earlier "stocks" or "meshes" in the region may in turn be drawn upon to suggest likely sources of interference. [p. 86]

Various hypothetical genetic groupings are said not to be confirmed (and may be meshes), but nevertheless are discussed as though the genetic relationship were not in doubt. It is disconcerting that Fortescue waffles from cautions about controversial groupings (such as "Altaic," "Mosan," "Penutian," "Hokan," etc.) to passages where they are just assumed. For example, he mentions (p. 32) that "Mosan" "may be still more remotely or indirectly related to Algonquian and Kutenai," but confesses that "Mosan" is not generally accepted.

Fortescue's approach consists of two phases. Of the first he says, "I shall push the comparative method as far as I can in attempting to relate the latest linguistic family to

have reached North America—Eskimo-Aleut—to Old World language stocks" (p. 1). More orthodox comparativists would dispute that it is the standard comparative method that he applies in these comparisons. He notes that "the number of lexical items reconstructible for the hypothetical proto-language [is] not . . . sufficient for the case to be considered finally 'proven'" (p. 1), but he believes that "there is quite impressive evidence of ancient genetic communality in the rich morphological systems of all the families involved" (note that no "mesh" is mentioned now in this context), concluding that "the net result is a relatively modest yield (as of yet) from the comparison of lexical stems, but considerable yield for potential morphological correspondences" (p. 50).

For the second phase, Fortescue says that he "scour[ed] the wider areal context for accumulations of typologically significant features which may bolster the case for deep genetic relationships—or else indicate substratum/contact interference. . . ." He says of "the sharing of a unique *bundle* of typological features by the languages concerned" that it "adds to the likelihood of remote genetic relationship" (p. 1). He claims his approach has the "advantage over the traditional comparative method on its own . . . that it can extend the time-scale of the latter (with luck!) by perhaps a few thousand more years . . . Its goal is to posit a typologically reasonable framework out of which the specific languages of the region that actually are genetically related can be supposed to have emerged" (p. 82).

We would welcome any successful attempt to see beyond the limitations of the comparative method. However, in Fortescue's application, it all becomes muddled. He posits "a common typological starting point" that can be either a "hypothetical proto-language" or "an areal 'mesh'" (p. 2):

> [The] overall geographical configuration suggests that a combined typological and genetic approach to demonstrating relationships between the languages concerned—separated by thousands of years of unwritten history—may be more fruitful than either of them on its own in trying to reconstruct the linguistic prehistory of the region. In fact, it is my contention that such an approach allows us—without overstepping the ground rules of comparative linguistics—at least to begin to reconstruct the origins of a truly circumpolar language mesh, if not an actual genetic stock. [p. 3]

Fortescue seems to realize some of these difficulties with his traits associated with certain family groupings and others associated with waves across the region: "Historical markers associated with a particular language family may become either geographically spread across several families or discontinuously distributed within the same family . . . 'historical markers' may remain for a long time in a geographical region, becoming 'areal markers' if they spread much beyond the original family; there is nothing intrinsically 'deep' or 'long-lasting' about them, as far as I can judge," and also that "traits resulting from contact do not necessarily assert themselves only at one discrete period of time" (p. 82). This is all fine, when we have reasonable evidence about which traits are inherited (reconstructible in a particular language family) and which are diffused in other instances. However, in looking back at Uralo-Siberian languages and the Beringian region, as Fortescue does, we do not even know whether these language groups are genetically related to one another, nor which traits are areally diffused and which due to independent parallel development, and therefore the typological distinction between "historical markers of wider affinities" and "real markers" is inconclusive, mostly just speculation.

Chapter 2 surveys hypotheses proposing various sorts of connections among the "Paleo-Siberian" or "Paleo-Asiatic" languages (a cover term for the non-Uralic and non-"Altaic" languages of the region, p. 29).

A significant contribution of this book is the information it provides on the little-known languages in Fortescue's Chukotko-Kamchatkan (CK) group. The closely related Chukotkan family includes: Chukchi, Koryak, Alutor, and Kerek. Kamchatkan (also known as "Kamchadal") is the single language now called "Itelmen." Fortescue presents some evidence that makes a Kamchatkan (Itelmen) connection with Chukotkan languages seem plausible (pp. 39–44): suspected sound correspondences (of a very complex sort); twenty-six out of ninety-eight on the Swadesh 100 word list shared by Itelmen and Chukchi (forms not given); and mention of 295 Chukotko-Kamchatkan cognates (data not presented). Of these, the actual forms of only three potential cognates sets are presented (table 6, pp. 43–44); but they are far from compelling. The phonetic matchings in the Chukotkan and Itelmen forms for 'human being' instill no confidence, whereas the forms for 'star' are sufficiently similar to raise questions of probable borrowing; the forms for 'freeze' by themselves are certainly not compelling evidence for the relationship. Fortescue admits that the "Chukotko-Kamchatkan family . . . is still regarded with scepticism" by many (p. 35), but nevertheless he treats it as fully established and unproblematic. In my estimation, the evidence presented for the proposed relationship is far from conclusive, leaving Chukotko-Kamchatkan as another proposed, but unproven, hypothesis of distant genetic relationship.

Fortescue's report of Irina A. Nikolaeva's reconstruction of Proto-Yukagir is valuable, since her Moscow dissertation and forthcoming work are not generally accessible (pp. 45–46).

Chapter 3, "A Typological Overview of the Region," takes up forty-four features "as being particularly relevant" for dealing with "the typological backdrop against which the detailed historical investigation of linguistic relations across the Beringian Gateway needs to be set in relief" (p. 60). The distribution of these features is displayed in maps 9–53. These maps, with extremely few points of reference (mostly only the outlines of land masses, with no indication of language locations, place names, rivers or natural features, or national boundaries), are remarkably uninformative, on the whole, and small for the vast territories that they cover.

Many of these typological features are problematic; two can be mentioned for the sake of illustration. "Lack of adjectives as a distinct part of speech" (map 9): in many languages the category of adjective is missing or has extremely few members—for this reason this trait could be found among Fortescue's languages and many others for purely independent reasons. "Antipassive and indefinite object affixes" (map 10): ergative Eskimo, Tsimshian, and Chukotkan, and formerly ergative Aleut have antipassive markers, while non-ergative Yukagir, Itelmen, Haida, and Na-Dene have indefinite/dummy object affixes (a proclitic in Haida) with similar function—reducing the specificity of the object, and Algonquian has similar affixes, while Salishan has middle voice. So what? What kind of assembly of languages is this? Most languages have something functionally similar in their morphosyntax, so why not also include many more American Indian families here, e.g., Uto-Aztecan with its indefinite object affixes, or European ones, e.g., Finnish with its impersonal (so-called passive) verb forms, etc.?

Fortescue believes that these typological features are relevant "as large-scale areal features, as historical markers of deep genetic relationship, or as traces of more local diffusions or substratum effects" (p. 60). His interpretation of them is methodologically curious. His "method of using typological data to extend the historical picture involves determining a bundle of typological features reconstructible for the proto-languages of all the known families involved" and then assuming that "where one of these features is lacking in any of the contemporary languages, that lack should also find some plausible explanation" (p. 61). So far, so good; however, Fortescue seems invariably to assume that any missing feature in any language of the region was indeed present historically and is now gone due to areal pressures from languages that were once in the region, but moved

on long ago, most of them into the Americas from the Siberian side. A skeptic might wonder why the language in question necessarily had to have had and then lost some of the missing features—would it not be more parsimonious just to imagine that the particular language never had the typological trait in question in the first place?

Fortescue associates different sets of his typological features with successive waves through the Bering Strait region. Some seventeen typological features, he says, "appear to have been brought into the Beringian region by the Uralo-Siberian wave" (p. 78). Several of these are quite commonplace typologically, and thus could pop up almost anywhere in the world with no necessary historical connection, for example, "lack of adjectives as a distinct part of speech" (map 9), mentioned above, "purely suffixing morphology" (map 41), etc. Several other traits are not independent of one another. For instance, in languages with SOV word order (map 53) and dependent marking (map 21), which characterize Fortescue's "Uralo-Siberian" languages (see p. 79), the features "genitive and accusative case marking" (map 19), "non-finite subordinate clauses" (map 34), and "purely suffixing morphology" (map 41) are typologically linked and expected to co-occur.

Fortescue lists nine features that he associates with a "pre-Na-Dene" wave (preceding the Uralo-Siberian wave), eight traits that "may have been brought at this same time" though were "probably already represented on the American side," and eleven features "definitely in place in Northwest America already, associated with a 'Mosan'[!]—or some still earlier—wave" (p. 79). These exhibit the same sorts of difficulties mentioned for the traits associated with the Uralo-Siberian wave.

A surprising admission is that all the "contemporary Uralo-Siberian languages" lack some of these traits (Chukotko-Kamchatkan is missing five of the seventeen). Fortescue assumes that these languages have lost these features, but it is just as possible that they never had them in the first place and that some are later innovations due to areal contact or just independent parallel change. In fact, Fortescue makes a methodological point of this very problem; he says, "Note that this method is open to disconfirmation: if it should turn out on internal evidence that some feature proposed for hypothetical Proto-US clearly arose secondarily within one or more of the ingredient families, then it should probably be removed from the common profile" (p. 81). But this very admission begs the crucial methodological question: how can one possibly distinguish between what may have been present at the time of the hypothesized Uralo-Siberian starting point and what may be the result of later innovation, either areal or independent?

Chapter 4 presents "the best morphological evidence to date for a genetic link between Eskimo-Aleut and Chukotko-Kamchtkan" (p. 96). This does not, however, involve the sort of shared irregularities advocated by Meillet and most others as the best sort of morphological evidence for genetic relationships. Rather, the comparisons involve similarities among grammatical suffixes, which are for the most part relatively short and whose functions are not unusual—number, pronominal affixes, mood and participial markers, and case markers. Since, for some of these, "the functional and phonological details of the correspondences are not fully transparent," Fortescue speculates about the sorts of changes that might have resulted in these differences, suggesting proto-forms, the reconstruction of which appears not to involve a rigorous application of the comparative method, but rather intuitive guesses of what might have been and how the divergent forms might have evolved. Chapter 5 tries to bring "Uralo-Yukagir" morphology into the picture presented in chapter 4 by "drawing upon similar areas of the morphology of Yukagir and the Uralic languages," finding that "beneath the superficial differences in shape and the varying distributions and functions of the ancient morphological elements involved, numerous elements can be found that appear to be common to all of these branches. The indeterminate proto-language to which the reconstructions of chapter 4

pointed can now be tentatively specified as Proto-Uralo-Siberian" (p. 109). I found these two chapters particularly unconvincing.

Chapter 6, "Lexical Correspondences between Uralo-Siberian Languages," begins with proto-phonology and sound correspondences among the "Uralo-Siberian" languages, in what Fortescue calls an ordinary application of comparative methods (p. 166), though the correspondences and reconstructions proposed will no doubt be found too impressionistic and imprecise for the tastes of more traditional comparative linguists. For example, though this is not clear, the phonemic inventory for Proto-Uralo-Siberian (table 12, p. 129) appears not to be a reconstruction based on sound correspondences found in cognates, but rather to be based on making the phonemic inventories themselves (given in tables 10 and 11 of Proto–Eskimo-Aleut, Proto–Chukotko-Kamchatkan, and Proto-Uralic and Proto-Yukagir) "commensurate" (p. 129). The some 114 sets presented as "candidates for lexical cognates" for linking Eskimo-Aleut and Chukotko-Kamchatkan suffer from problems typical of many proposals of distant genetic relationship (see Campbell 1997:206–59, 2000)—only a few examples are mentioned from the several possible in each category: onomatopoeic ('knock', 'beat drum', 'call', 'cough/sneeze', 'seagull', 'suck breast'), nursery forms ('grandfather/ father'), too much semantic latitude ('cook'/'light fire', 'turf'/'over, plug', 'evil spirit'/'be nervously attentive, be angry'); suggestive of diffusion ('boot', 'moon', 'magic spell'/'practice sorcery'); too short to defy chance as a possible explanation ('who', 'this'); frequently a form from only a single language is presented instead of representatives from a number of the languages under investigation; and so on. Similar problems are seen in the some 130 sets linking Finno-Ugric/Uralic with Eskimo-Aleut, 43 sets joining Yukagir with Uralic, and 59 between Chukotko-Kamchatkan and Uralic, with a few extras added at the end under "note also."

This exercise culminates in a list of "95 reasonably solid Uralo-Siberian sets with reflexes [proposed cognates] in at least three of the four constituent families" (p. 50), though nearly every set exhibits problems of the sort already mentioned, but now in greater abundance. These numbers of putative reconstructions, some 130 involving Finno-Ugric/Uralic and Eskimo-Aleut and some 95 for Proto–Uralo-Siberian, are remarkable (i.e., dubious), given that, for example, Proto-Uralic—a fully accepted and well reconstructed family—has only about 150 accepted etyma.

Chapter 6 also deals with numerous loanwords that Fortescue has identified among various languages of the region. This ought to be a significant contribution of the book, but we are given only the forms in the recipient languages, not the words in the donor languages; thus crucial information for numerous historical interests is not made available.

Chapter 7 presents "the archaeological scenario that seems best to account for the linguistic facts" addressed in the volume (p. 178). Fortescue attempts "to sketch a plausible scenario for the genesis and spread in space and time of 'Proto-Uralo-Siberian', the hypothetical ancestor of most of the languages of Siberia until the advent of Altaic speakers from the south" (p. 183). The treatment of the Russian archaeological sources of Siberia and Central Eurasia is valuable. Key to Fortescue's discussion is his contention that "the Bering Strait region . . . constituted a bottleneck into the New World over which successive waves of nomadic hunting people crossed as conditions allowed; here they must—all except the first—have met predecessors, groups held back or left behind, and mingled with them" (p. 183). Much of the discussion revolves around the archaeological sequence at Ushki Lake in central Kamchatka and speculates on possible linguistic waves that may be matched with the seven Ushki archaeological levels. For example, the oldest Ushki layer at ca. 14,000 B.P. (or 16,000 on recalibration) is correlated not with the first migration to the New World, but "an intermediate wave" that "could be associated with 'Mosan' people" (p. 184). Fortescue associates level 6 with a wave of Na-Dene and

"'pre-Na-Dene' "Haida" languages (p. 186); he sees "the people of Ushki level 4 as a vanguard of related mesolithic people from the interior that included . . . also the ancestral speakers of Proto-Eskimo-Aleut" (p. 188); and, he associates Ushki level 2, ca. 2000 B.C., with Chukotko-Kamchatkans, with the Kamchatkan newcomers more clearly represented in level 1, ca. 1000 A.D. (p. 190).

Chapter 8, "Linguistic Layering around the Bottleneck: From Beringia to the Diomede Islands," attempts to draw conclusions about the relationships and the spread of the languages in Fortescue's "Uralo-Siberian" group. This chapter might be seen as the culmination of Fortescue's program, but it is also exceedingly speculative. To see how typical Bering Strait is as a bottleneck, Fortescue compares it "with two other bottlenecks, the thin isthmus that connects North and South America, and the passage into northern Greenland from Ellesmere Island" (p. 204). Fortescue's discussion is confusing, as he speaks of "the Meso-American isthmus," which seems to suggest the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, the narrow neck of land in southern Mexico, but he also speaks of it as "the thin isthmus that connects North and South America," which seems to suggest the Isthmus of Panama (which has nothing to do with Mesoamerica).

Since the physical geography, climate, demographic density, and linguistic composition surrounding these three "bottlenecks" is so very different (as Fortescue points out, p. 204), they are hardly comparable and provide no reliable basis for generalizing about "bottlenecks." Nevertheless, Fortescue finds an "essential linguistic property the three American bottlenecks share," namely, "the propensity to allow through a limited selection of typological features (borne by specific languages), traces of which may be picked up by succeeding waves of people passing through them" (p. 205). He generalizes: "The gradual funnelling of diverse language groups into a relatively small 'bridge' area pending their fanning out again on the far side might in turn accelerate linguistic interaction and mixing at bottlenecks (by forced interaction, as it were)" (p. 205). The "general nature of bottlenecks," he states, has the effect of "promoting a temporary increase of linguistic diversity on their 'intake' side (a process associated with residual zones) and allowing a restricted selection of typological features to fan out on their 'output' side" (p. 206). In this view, language mixing is encouraged "where successive populations and languages are funnelled into forced proximity" (p. 207). The presuppositions of this view deserve scrutiny. First, this "intake"-"output" view assumes inevitable movement of different language groups towards the bottleneck, where they are slowed and, thus, forced to intermingle. Movements can bring different language groups to the same area, but a bottleneck is neither necessary nor sufficient for such "intermingling." Such "intermingling" without the bottleneck motivation is well known in linguistic areas such as the Northwest Coast of North America, the Caucusus, etc. Bottlenecks do not logically require that groups will stack up on their "intake" side; for example, for the Isthmus of Panama, gateway to South America (and probably what Fortescue intends as one of his three comparison cases), there is no build up of genetic diversity, rather only relatively closely related Chibchan languages are found on both sides, with, if anything, greater diversity on the output side (see Constenla 1991). The same is true of the Ellesmere Island-Greenland bottleneck, with essentially only Eskimoan speakers on either side.

There is something unsatisfying in Fortescue's interpretation of bottleneck effects. The typological traits found in a particular language can be unusual in two ways, either not typical of the other languages of the area or not characteristic of the other languages to which the language in question is assumed to be related. In both instances, Fortescue appeals to bottleneck effects for explanation. The trait that is out of step with the other languages of the area is typically explained as the result of influence from an earlier vanguard language group that has subsequently moved on through the bottleneck and out of the picture. Similarly, a typological trait inconsistent with supposed related

languages can also be assumed to be the result of contact either with much earlier languages that moved through the region or with languages that came into the region only later, not leaving typological tracks on other related languages (cf. p. 207). However, this is a sort of cake-and-eat-it-too approach: anything that fits current typological expectations is assumed to have a straightforward areal or genetic explanation (or both). Anything that does not fit current areal expectations can still be accounted for areally, as the residue left behind by languages that are assumed once to have been in the region, left their typological marks, and then moved on. For example, Fortescue reports, "in the light of the particularly strong match between the typological profile of Wakashan/Salishan languages and the features distinguishing CK [Itelmen in particular] from other US languages . . . , the possibility suggests itself that a residual 'Mosan' presence on Kamchatka influenced the CK family directly" (p. 213). But, why not simply attribute such differences to the genetic unrelatedness or the independent development of the languages in question?

It should be noted that Fortescue finds correlations between genes and languages, though he is aware of the difficulties and the conflicting findings, the mismatches in cases where speakers of related languages diverge significantly in their genetic make up. While he, appropriately, reports his belief that "Boas was correct to stress the independence of language, physical type and culture" (p. 2), this is seemingly contradicted later by his reliance on human genetic arguments to bolster his beliefs about language connections. He finds that "archaeology and population genetics have a legitimate (if subordinate) role to play in historical linguistics: between two competing hypotheses of linguistic relatedness that which best matches the evidence for prehistoric population movements and spreads (allowing for the important intervening factor of language shift) should for the time being be given greater weight" (p. 222). This seems reasonable, and yet, the degree of abstractness and speculation in Fortescue's assumed correlations between language groups and archaeological and human genetic information is so extreme as to erode any confidence in this particular use of non-linguistic evidence to assist in distinguishing between otherwise competing hypotheses of relatedness.

In conclusion, this book is both rich and perplexing. Though it contains valuable information and thought-provoking ideas, its major claims are abstruse, perplexing, and unconvincing.

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