

## Compte rendu

---

Ouvrage recensé :

FORTESCUE, Michael, 2005 *Comparative Chukotko-Kamchatkan Dictionary*, Berlin and New York, Mouton de Gruyter, Trends in Linguistics Documentation, 23, 496 pages.

par Steven A. Jacobson

*Études/Inuit/Studies*, vol. 29, n°1-2, 2005, p. 356-360.

Pour citer ce compte rendu, utiliser l'adresse suivante :

URI: <http://id.erudit.org/iderudit/013954ar>

DOI: 10.7202/013954ar

Note : les règles d'écriture des références bibliographiques peuvent varier selon les différents domaines du savoir.

---

Ce document est protégé par la loi sur le droit d'auteur. L'utilisation des services d'Érudit (y compris la reproduction) est assujettie à sa politique d'utilisation que vous pouvez consulter à l'URI <https://apropos.erudit.org/fr/usagers/politique-dutilisation/>

---

Érudit est un consortium interuniversitaire sans but lucratif composé de l'Université de Montréal, l'Université Laval et l'Université du Québec à Montréal. Il a pour mission la promotion et la valorisation de la recherche. Érudit offre des services d'édition numérique de documents scientifiques depuis 1998.

Pour communiquer avec les responsables d'Érudit : [info@erudit.org](mailto:info@erudit.org)

some examples of their usage. The book ends on an English-Naukan index, and on a remarkable section on place names, presented and analysed (with etymological, geographical and anthropological commentaries, as well as maps) by Michael E. Krauss.

This book is the most complete source in existence on Naukan Yupik lexicography, even if its compilers consider it as preliminary. It constitutes a unique undertaking, and its authors should be congratulated for their achievement. It is worth noticing that they had it translated into Russian—under the same format as the English edition, except that Cyrillic transcriptions come first—so that it can be used by native speakers and by those who wish to relearn their ancestral language. The cover picture, a group of Naukan children photographed in the 1920s, contributes bringing hope and optimism to users of a language that might otherwise be considered as bound to disappear.

Louis-Jacques Dorais  
CIÉRA  
Université Laval  
Québec (Québec) G1K 7P4  
Canada  
louis-jacques.dorais@ant.ulaval.ca

FORTESCUE, Michael

2005 *Comparative Chukotko-Kamchatkan Dictionary*, Berlin and New York, Mouton de Gruyter, Trends in Linguistics Documentation, 23, 496 pages.

Fortescue's new *Comparative Chukotko-Kamchatkan Dictionary* ("CCKD") deals with the languages of the next group of indigenous people of Asian Russia past the Siberian Eskimos across the Bering Strait and the Bering Sea from Alaska. The Chukotko-Kamchatkan language family, which has also been called "Luorawetlan," has two branches: the four languages of the Chukotian branch, which are Chukchi (which is the one situated geographically closer to the Eskimo area), Koryak, Alutor, and Kerek, and the one language of the Kamchatkan branch, Itelmen (also called Kamchadal).

A comparative dictionary such as CCKD will be of interest to scholars of Eskimo-Aleut languages on several grounds. It is another comparative dictionary of a family of indigenous languages of the North, many endangered (if not moribund), their lexicons documented to an uneven extent, just as is the case with Eskimo-Aleut, so that the present dictionary is, in a sense, a companion or complementary volume to the *Comparative Eskimo Dictionary with Aleut Cognates* (1994), "CED" compiled by Fortescue with two others (one of whom is the present reviewer). If one is interested in a possible deep relationship between these two language families that between them straddle the Bering Strait, the "crossroads of continents," CCKD is a very good tool. And, the three Eskimo languages spoken on the tip of Siberia and on St. Lawrence Island Alaska have borrowed hundreds of words, especially from Chukchi. A few

words from Chukotko-Kamchatkan are found in mainland Alaskan Yupik and Inupiaq, and even as far away as Greenland there is one such borrowing, the word for "birch" (*wəlyi* on p. 334 of CCKD, and *ulyilə* on p. 366 of CED, realized as *ulyiiliq*, *ulyiilik* 'loose, brittle driftwood' in Greenlandic).

CCKD is a good source of information on the Chukotko-Kamchatkan languages for the English speaker who finds reading Russian troublesome, since dictionaries of the various individual Chukotko-Kamchatkan languages give listed lexemes in Cyrillic orthography and have glosses in Russian. It must be stressed, however, that CCKD cannot be used as a full substitute for dictionaries of the individual languages of the family, because many words found only in one language of the family will not be represented by any of the cognate sets of CCKD since, "The main criterion for setting up a reconstructed [...] set is that cognates should be attested in at least two of the [...] languages" (p. 5).

CCKD begins with a nice overview of the Chukotko-Kamchatkan language family, history of its documentation, assessment of the vitality of each member language, and the sources used in compiling the dictionary which include Fortescue's own fieldwork. It then goes on to describe the format of the dictionary and the way each of the five languages in question relates to the hypothesized phonetics of the proto-language(s): proto-Chukotian (PC) or proto-Chukotko-Kamchatkan (PCK).

Next in CCKD is the main section, some 334 pages of comparative sets, slightly more PC than PCK, and some, not many, sets with a loan-word origin, in many cases, from Eskimo. A protoform is reconstructed and glossed in English, and then daughter forms in each of the languages Chukchi, Kerek, Koryak, Alutor, where they have been found, and for PCK sets, Itelmen also, each daughter form written in the uniform scientific IPA orthography of CCKD, and glossed in English. Alphabetization here is according to the reconstructed protoform.

Next come 50 pages of proto-Itelmen (PI) cognate sets, each headed by an English gloss. Protoforms are not reconstructed because of difficulties due to the relatively scanty documentation of some of the now extinct dialects of Itelmen. The reason for a special section for only Itelmen dialects is Itelmen's diverse dialectology, and the fact that Itelmen alone constitutes the Kamchatkan branch of the family. Following the proto-Itelmen section are more PC and PCK comparative sets, but now of derivational affixes, and following that there is a section on proto-CK (and proto-C) inflections.

At the end of CCKD are two indices, separated from the main dictionary sections by a short appendix which gives a typological profile of the CK family, and a "sources and references" bibliography. The first index is Chukchi to protoform, and the second is English gloss to page number indexing both the PC/PCK and the PI sections. Readers familiar with CED will quickly see that CCKD has very much the same format.

There are only approximately 2000 comparative stem sets in CCKD compared to approximately 3900 in CED. Fortescue explains, "[...] a succession of accurate but not

very extensive dictionaries [...] have appeared for the major languages (Chukchi, Koryak, and Western Itelmen), and the stage has now been reached where a fully-fledged comparative dictionary—albeit still limited in extent—can be presented " (p. 4). Thus, the less common words in a given language which would have lead to further comparative sets may indeed exist but not, as yet, be documented. Also perhaps, for one or another reason, no matter how comprehensive the documentation of individual languages could have been, there may be fewer comparative sets existing in this language family than in Eskimo-Aleut. To this reviewer, CCKD appears to be a solid piece of well researched work, in which the author has invested considerable effort and scholarship with good results. His comparative sets are convincingly put together in terms of both phonology and semantics. The organization of CCKD makes it easy to follow and use.

CCKD notes C and CK proto-forms where the words have been borrowed from this language family into Eskimo, but note that one should not interpret it literally when it says at a certain protoform listing that it is "borrowed into" this or that Eskimo language, since the borrowing probably did not take place at the PC or PCK level, but rather from one of the daughter languages of the family (in most cases from Chukchi). Giving this sort of information is, in itself, a little odd, since in contrast to words borrowed *into* a language where the information really should be included in the dictionary, why should a dictionary, comparative or other, note words borrowed *out from* the language? Also, the information given is not always accurate (p. 37, line 8, *apajəpaajuq* should be *apayəpayiiq*; p. 238, line 24, *qujgik* should be *qujgiq*; on p. 324, line 27, *wapaəga* should be *wapaaqa*; p. 337, line 28 *vuvəltu/puvəltu* should be *vuvəltu/puvəltu*), and some out-borrowed words are not noted, or not completely noted, as such. These include some of the most interesting Eskimo borrowings from Chukotko-Kamchatkan. For example, PCK *kəli-* (1) 'draw' (p. 130), gives rise to words in Aleut, Sugpiaq, Central Alaskan Yupik, and King Island Inupiaq meaning 'paper,' and since it is not borrowed into any of the three Siberian Eskimo languages the word probably entered Eskimo-Aleut from Koryak via the Aleutian Islands. PC *kəjgən* 'bowl of cup or pipe' (p. 139), gives rise to words in the three Siberian Eskimo languages, in Central Alaskan Yup'ik, and in Inuit/Inupiaq as far east as western Canada meaning 'smoking pipe' (or 'cigarette'). PCK *ləlu(n)* 'moustache or beard' (p. 158) in combination with PC *rəmkən* 'people or gathering' (p. 252) gives rise to the Central Siberian Yupik word *laluz-amka* for 'white man.' While CCKD does note that PCK? *tanə* 'stranger or enemy' gives rise to a word in Central Siberian Yupik (p. 276), in fact it also gives rise to the North Alaska Inupiaq and Siglit word *tanik* for 'white man,' though there is a curious gap in that the word is not in Bering Strait and Kobuk Inupiaq which are closer geographically to Chukotka.

Of course any borrowing of a word into Eskimo languages beyond the first would most likely be an internal Eskimo matter and thus certainly need not be noted in a Chukotko-Kamchatkan dictionary, and also the interesting cases mentioned above are in fact documented elsewhere (in CED, de Reuse 1994, or Badten *et al.* 1987) so there was no real necessity of noting them in CCKD. Perhaps this is the policy (though unstated), since CCKD does note that PC *wəvcelkalgən* 'lemming or vole?' (p. 337)

gives rise to certain Central Siberian Yupik, Sirenik, and Central Alaskan Yupik words meaning 'lemming or vole,' which is not documented elsewhere.

Maybe it was never intended that CCKD should include a comprehensive listing and discussion of all words borrowed out to Eskimo but merely give a sample, however the fact that some are indeed noted does give the reader the expectation that such out-borrowings are being noted consistently. Also there are certainly borrowings into Eskimo (particularly into Siberian Yupik) of specifically Chukchi words that lack cognates in other Chukotko-Kamchatkan languages, and which, as stated above, would therefore not give rise to comparative sets where these borrowings could be noted. For these reasons one must not take CCKD as the "final word" on borrowings from Chukotko-Kamchatkan languages into Eskimo. Nevertheless CCKD will most certainly prove to be one among several very useful resources for anyone seeking to identify Eskimo words borrowed from Chukotko-Kamchatkan languages and to determine their sources.

If any actual genetic link between the indigenous languages of the Americas (including Siberian Eskimo) and those of Eurasia is ever to be proven, a connection between the Eskimo-Aleut family and the Chukotko-Kamchatkan family would be among the most likely places. It is fascinating to leaf through CCKD and note just how very many PCK, PC or PI forms at least *seem* to correspond to various proto-Eskimo (or proto-Yupik, proto-Yupik-Sirenik or proto-Inuit) forms found in CED. Consider the following:

<i>Proto-Chukotko-Kamchatkan (page in CCKD)</i>	<i>Protoform-Eskimo (page in CED)</i>
<i>kətkət</i> 'hard snow crust (in spring)' (154)	<i>qirətrər-</i> or <i>qiqetrər-</i> 'form hard crust (snow)' (308)
<i>ɣəvəccqət</i> '(young) 'woman' (196)	<i>nəvi(C)ar</i> 'girl' (233)
<i>pujə-</i> 'smoke or steam' (218)	<i>puya</i> 'rancid residue of oil' (271) or <i>puyur</i> 'smoke' (272)
<i>qiq(qiq)</i> 'nose' (235)	<i>qəɣar</i> 'nose' (298)
<i>vəkəj</i> 'grass' (320)	<i>əvəɣ</i> 'grass' (120)
<i>əccaj</i> 'aunt' (338)	<i>accay</i> 'paternal aunt' (2)
<i>əninəlrən</i> 'elder (brother)' (344)	<i>anəɣar</i> '(woman's) older brother' (28)
<i>kissa</i> 'lips' (in Eastern Itelmen) (378)	<i>qisiq</i> 'lip' (309)

CCKD does not note these comparisons; it has no obligation to do so. Yet, one does wonder whether these are merely coincidental and superficial similarities of the sort to be found in any pair of even completely unrelated languages, or if some are borrowings, perhaps ancient, from Chukotko-Kamchatkan to Eskimo or vice versa, or if some of these are indeed evidence of an ancient genetic relationship between the two language families. This reviewer invites others to ponder these questions when they study CCKD, an important and fascinating new work by Michael Fortescue.

## References:

- BADTEN, Linda Womkon, Vera Oovi KANESHIRO and Marie OIVI  
1987 *A Dictionary of the St. Lawrence Island / Siberian Yupik Eskimo Language*,  
edited by Steven Jacobson, Fairbanks, Alaska Native Language Center.
- DE REUSE, Joseph William  
1994 *Siberian Yupik Eskimo, The Language and Its Contacts with Chukchi*, Salt  
Lake City, University of Utah Press.
- FORTESCUE, Michael, Steven JACOBSON and Lawrence KAPLAN  
1984 *Comparative Eskimo Dictionary With Aleut Cognates*, Fairbanks, Alaska  
Native Language Center.

Steven A. Jacobson  
Alaska Native Language Center  
University of Alaska Fairbanks  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-7680  
USA  
ffsaj@uaf.edu

- KOONOOKA, Christopher Petuwaq (transliterator and translator)  
2003 *Ungipaghaghlanga. Let Me Tell You a Story. Quutmiit Yupigita  
Ungipaghaatangit. Legends of the Siberian Eskimos*, Transliterated and  
translated from the Chukotka Collection of G.A. Menovshchikov; *Stories  
Told by Ayyeghhaq, Tagikaq, Asuya, Alghalek, Nanughhaq, Wiri*, Fairbanks,  
Alaska Native Language Center, 185 pages.

This attractively produced book contains 35 tales, the major portion of a set of 49 tales originally recorded by the Russian linguist and teacher G.A. Menovshchikov from six Siberian Yupik speakers from Chukotka, Russian Far east, and published in the Cyrillic alphabet with Russian translation in 1988. Christopher Koonooka (born in 1978) a native speaker of Siberian Yupik Eskimo from Gambell, St. Lawrence Island, Alaska, transliterated the stories into the Latin letter alphabet used by St Lawrence Islanders, and translated them into English. The presentation is not in the bilingual facing page format; English translations simply follow the Yupik texts. However, the correspondence is facilitated by matching paragraph numbers, and by the fact that the sentences of the Yupik and the English almost always correspond one to one. The book is illustrated with drawings by Native artists Jeffery Apatiki and Percy Avugiak.

The preface by senior ANLC linguist Steven A. Jacobson provides the historical background to Koonooka's project, and points out that there were some errors in the original Cyrillic transcription, which were corrected. It is also good to keep in mind that certain phonological distinctions are more consistently marked in the Latin based spelling system than in the Cyrillic one. Koonooka occasionally changed phraseology