

to the alternative of assuming that the linguistic differentiation of aboriginal America developed only in small part (in its latest stages) in the new world, that the Asiatic (possibly also South Sea) immigrants who peopled the American continent were at the earliest period of occupation already differentiated into speakers of several genetically unrelated¹ stocks. This would make it practically imperative to assume that the peopling of America was not a single historical process but a series of movements of linguistically unrelated peoples, possibly from different directions and certainly at very different times. This view strikes me as intrinsically highly probable. As the latest linguistic arrivals in North America would probably have to be considered the Eskimo-Aleut² and the Na-dene (Haida, Tlingit, and Athabaskan).³

DIFFERENTIATION OF LINGUISTIC STOCKS INTO DISTINCT LANGUAGES.

The criterion of linguistic differentiation has time value not only in relation to independent linguistic stocks but also, and indeed even more typically, in relation to the cognate languages of a single linguistic stock. The major divisions of a linguistic stock represent the oldest differentiations within it and the geographical distributions of each of these divisions as unit must be considered as of equal weight in an attempt to reconstruct the earliest ascertainable location and movements of the stock as a whole. In other words, the geographical centre of gravity, historically considered, of a linguistic stock is not determined directly on the basis of all the dialects of the stock but rather on the basis of its major divisions, regardless of whether

¹ Or so remotely related at best that the fact of relationship could hardly be gathered from the descriptive evidence.

² The Siberian Eskimo would, of course, still have to be considered as representing a regressive movement from America to Asia.

³ From these considerations follows a highly important theoretical, if not at present practical, corollary. Should it ever be possible to prove a tangible genetic relationship between Asiatic and American languages, this would by no manner of means necessarily or even probably involve more than a small proportion of American languages. I do not consider it at all inconceivable that, *e.g.*, the Eskimo-Aleut and Na-dene languages may ultimately be shown to have respective Asiatic affinities but no American ones. I need hardly insist that these remarks have a merely theoretic validity.