

Keywords: Language, Settlement Patterns, Selby Bay phase, Chronology (Fox Creek, Cony, Algonquian)

Luckenbach, Alvin H., Wayne E. Clark, and Richard S. Levy

1987 Rethinking Cultural Stability in Eastern North American Prehistory: Linguistic Evidence from Eastern Algonquian. *Journal of Middle Atlantic Archaeology* 3:1-33.

This article addresses the need for linguistic analysis of the Algonquian languages as a tool for studying the (in)stability of the diverse Algonquian groups. The authors utilize both glottochronology (in which linguistic diversification can be determined in absolute years) (p.7) and *Worter und Sachen* techniques (which compares vocabulary in related languages and reconstructs words and meanings that existed in an ancestral language) (p.11) to determine the linguistic proximity of several diverse Algonquian languages. *Worter und Sachen* can also be used to spatially identify the location of where the proto-language was spoken (p.11).

The authors utilize both methods with several Algonquian languages that cover the Eastern Algonquian range, and conclude that an Algonquian “population radiation” and linguistic divergence occurred between 900 B.C. and 500 A.D. They explore the implications of the linguistic migration evidence in both the Northeast and the Middle Atlantic. In doing so, they also synthesize their analyses with archaeological evidence. The linguistic evidence indicates that following the initial radiation of Proto-Algonquian groups from the Great Lakes to the Northwest, later groups expanded southward (p.19). The authors suggest a second shift in populations, between groups adapted to estuarine and riverine environments respectively (p.19). The archaeological evidence suggests that the expansion of the Meadowood/Middlesex Adena phase groups (based in the Northeast), which began ca. 800 B.C., led to the establishment of the riverine and estuarine populations ca. 700 B.C. (p.20). The development by 200 A.D. of the distinctive phases of the Fox Creek, Cony and Selby Bay complexes are evidence of the evolution and growth of this adaptive radiation southward (p.21). The authors also mention the adaptation of these groups from using materials procured from long distances, to utilizing more localized resources and the reasons for this change (p.23-4).

Ultimately, the authors criticize the utilization of continuity models as an explanation for prehistoric change, and call for using both *in situ* archaeological-based models, various migration hypotheses, and linguistic evidence (p. 27).