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The aim of 'The Cambridge handbook of areal linguistics' edited by Raymond Hickey is to provide a 'focused and clearly structured volume' on areal linguistics, which is understood by the editor of the book as 'research into how languages come to share features diachronically and the manner in which this takes place' (p. 1). Areal linguistics is therefore a multidisciplinary research enterprise situated at the intersection of different subfields of linguistics 'such as language contact, typology and historical linguistics'. In other words, areal linguistics is interested in non-trivial spatial constellations of linguistic features that arise historically due to language contact.

The volume consists of a preface that briefly outlines the main research questions and describes the contents of individual contributions, followed by two parts that constitute the bulk of the book: 'Issues in areal linguistics' and 'Case studies for areal linguistics'.

The first part begins with an essay 'Why is it so hard to define a linguistic area?' by Lyle Campbell. It mostly reiterates the statement made in the scholar's authoritative paper [Campbell 2006] that it is fruitless 'to struggle over the intractability of defining the concept "linguistic area" and the specific "linguistic areas"' and that researchers should focus on 'understanding the changes themselves, in particular in this instance the changes diffused across languages' instead (p. 34). This research programme is in stark contrast to that proposed by Balthasar Bickel in the short chapter entitled 'Areas and universals'. Bickel notes in passing that humans are good at spotting spatial patterns, which provides an intuitive explanation for the enduring interest in linguistic areas, but his main concern is with carefully controlling for distributions of linguistic features in typologists' quest for universal tendencies, not with particular historical scenarios.[1] Instead of trying to account for diffusion of individual changes (which is in most cases simply impossible), Bickel takes the existence of linguistic areas for granted and urges researchers to come up with ways to control for possible phylogenetic and areal biases; he discusses two methods—Predictive Areality Theory and the Family Bias Method—that were developed precisely with this aim in mind.

The next chapter, 'Reassessing sprachbunds: A view from the Balkans' by Victor A. Friedman and Brian D. Joseph, can also be construed as a response to linguistic-area sceptics, in this case based on the long history of research on the Balkans, the 'prototypical sprachbund'. To tackle the sprachbund issue, the scholars propose a questionnaire on the properties of a particular linguistic region that must be completed in order to decide whether the region should be considered a bona fide linguistic area. The questions concern the number of different languages and language families represented in the region, the number and distributional properties of the features used to establish the sprachbund, the causal issues (contact vs. inheritance), the issues of delineation (i.e. how to draw borders, core vs. periphery), and finally the issue of whether the convergence

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[1] He references work by Dryer [1989] and Nichols [1992], who drew the attention of typologists to large-scale areal patterns.

processes that resulted in the formation of the sprachbund are still ongoing. By answering these questions with regard to the Balkan sprachbund, Friedman and Joseph essentially propose yet another linguistic-area delineation framework and eventually come to the conclusion that (i) linguistic areas do exist as theoretically meaningful, well-defined entities, which reflect 'the effects of intense multilateral, multidirectional, mutual multilingualism' (p. 80), and that (ii) the Balkans are an example of such an entity.

The chapter 'Areal sound patterns: From perceptual magnets to stone soup' by Juliette Blevins proposes and elaborates the notion of **areal sound pattern** (ASP), defined briefly as a 'sound pattern shared minimally by two languages, having arguably diffused from one into the other' (p. 89; a more elaborate definition is given on p. 88). Blevins gives several examples of ASPs: pre-glottalisation of voiced stops in Formosan languages, the absence of contrastive retroflexion in two regions in Australia, the presence of glottalised consonants in the Pacific Northwest of North America, and devoicing of final obstruents in Europe. She then proceeds to propose a general historical scenario which could account for the emergence of ASPs that are not entirely due to loan phonology. According to Blevins, ASPs arise due to what she calls the **perceptual magnet effect**: in situations of bilingualism, 'the phonetic prototype established for one language may have a magnet effect in another' (p. 99). The perceptual magnet effect skews the distribution of allophones in the pool of synchronic variation already existing in the target language and thus pulls it towards a certain developmental trajectory, which is still always possible, but much less probable without this influence. Blevins discusses properties of sound patterns and contact situations, which are more or less likely to lead to areal spread, and discusses several other examples of possible ASPs (e.g. clicks in South Africa, ejectives in the Caucasus, retroflexion in South Asia, and tone in Southeast Asia) and their historical background.

The chapter 'Convergence and divergence in the phonology of the languages of Europe' by Thomas Stolz and Nataliya Levkovych gives a descriptive statistical overview of consonantal inventories in European languages (Europe in this chapter is meant to include the westernmost parts of Kazakhstan, as well as Transcaucasia and Anatolia). The scholars provide tables and maps depicting the distributions of different airstream mechanisms, manners and places of articulation, phonation types, secondary articulations, and particular segments in the languages of Europe. Additionally, they provide data on phylum-internal diversity along these lines. Based on the collected data, Stolz and Levkovych conclude that (i) Caucasian languages are clearly different from other languages of the region, as are, to a lesser extent, the Eskimo-Aleut languages of Greenland, and that (ii) 'minority configurations tend to occur in languages that are remote from the centre of the European continent' (p. 154). They also note the presence of an east-west cline in the distribution of phonological features, which is evident even if the Caucasian data are not taken into account.

The chapter 'Word prominence and areal linguistics' by Harry van der Hulst, Rob Goedemans, and Keren Rice surveys areal effects in the distribution of stress and pitch-accent types in the languages of the world with a focus on hybrid stress-pitch-accent systems. Basque, languages of North America, and aboriginal languages of Australia are presented as case studies.

A similar overview of areal phenomena in the distribution of a particular fragment of linguistic system is presented by Maria Koptjevskaja-Tamm and Henrik Liljegren in the chapter 'Semantic patterns from an areal perspective'. For the first time, they survey areal clusters of lexico-semantic parallels (calques), shared formulaic expressions, and patterns of organisation of semantic domains in different regions and then exemplify these phenomena with a case study of the Greater Hindu Kush linguistic area.

The second part of the handbook consists of case studies of several kinds, and instead of surveying them sequentially, I group them thematically in this review.

The first group consists of chapters dealing with particular linguistic areas. These chapters are 'The Caucasus' (Sven Grawunder), 'Western Asia: East Anatolia as a transition zone' (Geoffrey Haig), 'The Kalahari Basin area as a "sprachbund" before the Bantu expansion' (Tom Güldemann and Anne-Maria Fehn), 'Jharkhand as a "linguistic area": Language contact between Indo-Aryan

and Munda in Eastern-Central South Asia' (John Peterson), 'Sri Lanka and South India' (Umberto Ansaldo), 'Language in the Mainland Southeast Asia' (N. J. Enfield), 'Languages of Eastern Melanesia' (Paul Geraghty), and 'The Western Micronesian Sprachbund' (Anthony P. Grant).

These chapters demonstrate a high degree of variation in the proposed criteria for establishing linguistic areas, the features that can be selected to prove their existence, and their resulting geographical structure. Some areas, such as Sri Lanka, are clearly delineated and are based on deep grammatical similarities decisively separating languages of the area from their relatives in other regions. Other areas are more tentative in that they have fuzzy boundaries and/or show overlapping but not coextensive distributions of diagnostic features (cf. the maps in the chapters on the Caucasus and Jharkhand), which may not be numerous or deeply entrenched. Insofar as these chapters represent the general outlook of research on linguistic areas, they depict a field more anchored to common sense and explanatory clarity than to strict application of first principles of statistical analysis (which are conspicuously absent from these contributions).

The chapters from the second group are dedicated to areal processes that shape the structure of languages from a particular linguistic family or other phylogenetic unit. These chapters are 'The Germanic languages and areal linguistics' (Johan van der Auwera and Daniël Van Olmen), 'Varieties of English' (Bernd Kortmann and Verena Schröter), 'Slavic languages' (Alan Timberlake), 'Areal contact in Nilo-Saharan' (Gerrit J. Dimmendaal), 'Niger-Congo languages' (Jeff Good), and 'The Transeurasian languages' (Martine Robbeets). The last chapter is markedly different from the rest. It starts out from the communis opinio that the similarities between Transeurasian languages (also known as Altaic languages) are due to prolonged contact but concludes with the thesis that the distribution and structure of these commonalities most probably point to common inheritance. Therefore, in Robbeets' view, Altaic languages do form a phylogenetic unit after all. Other chapters are mostly devoted to enumerating cases of contact-induced feature distributions in the languages from a given linguistic grouping.

The third group of chapters is dedicated to describing particular regions, whose languages display contact-induced distributions of features but do not necessarily form a sprachbund. It consists of the following contributions: 'Britain and Ireland' (Raymond Hickey), 'An areal view of Africa' (Bernd Heine and Anne-Maria Fehn), 'South Africa and areal linguistics' (Rajend Mesthrie), 'Languages of China in their East and Southeast Asian context' (Hilary Chappell), 'Languages of Australia' (Luisa Miceli and Alan Dench), 'Languages of the New Guinea region' (Malcolm Ross), 'Native North American languages' (Marianne Mithun), and 'The areal linguistics of Amazonia' (Patience Epps and Lev Michael). They deal mostly with smaller sprachbunds that can be identified inside these macro-areas and/or try to elucidate contact scenarios that gave rise to particular, presumably non-inherited, linguistic features in certain languages.

Taken together, the chapters from the last two groups provide a wealth of information about different historical scenarios, showing how hard it is to come up with a unified theory of linguistic convergence. For example, languages of North and South America display non-trivially low amounts of lexical borrowing, which accords well with linguistic attitudes of their speakers, who prefer using 'pure' varieties to code-switching. African multilingual communities surveyed by Jeff Good, on the other hand, are particularly prone to creating mixed varieties, which serve as identity markers for certain social groups.

Two chapters try to estimate the possibility of postulating a sprachbund based on a particular complex feature, such as case marking ('The changing profile of case marking in the Northeastern Siberia area' by Gregory D. S. Anderson, who gives a positive answer) or the presence and characteristics of tone ('Southeast Asian tone in areal perspective' by James Kirby and Marc Brunelle, who give a negative answer, not fully disqualifying SEA as a potential sprachbund nonetheless).

The volume closes with a standalone chapter 'Linguistic areas, linguistic convergence and river systems in South America' by Rik van Gijn, Harald Hammarström, Simon van de Kerke, Olga Krasnoukhova, and Pieter Muysken, who try to estimate the role of river systems in the formation of linguistic areas in South America by means of careful geographical sampling and significance testing. They come to the conclusion that this role is negligible.

As a whole, the volume under review provides a quite comprehensive introduction to the field of linguistic areal studies and presents different current positions taken by specialists in this field. Some chapters (such as that by Juliette Blevins) provide important theoretical or methodological reference points; others (such as the one by Malcolm Ross) are both methodologically sound and replete with carefully systematised and laid out information—in one way or another, all macroregions of the world are covered. At the same time, however, there are several presentational drawbacks, which impede perusal of the volume as a handbook.

First, it would probably have benefited from a bit more structured presentation. Chapters in the second part are organised in neither a geographical, nor a thematic sequence: chapters on Africa are sandwiched between Western and Eastern Eurasia, and chapters on areas are interspersed with chapters on regions, families, or particular linguistic features in no particular order. Moreover, the chapters on the Balkans and on European phonologies from the first part, even though they contain some theoretical discussion, have a clear geographical focus.

Second, chapters could have been more coherent in their presentation of data. Even though vastly different features are adduced to postulate different sprachbunds, they all fall in the same general categories of phonology, morphosyntax, discourse, and lexicon. A common presentational sequence would have greatly facilitated comparison of different cases.

Third, some statements made in different chapters probably need clarification and additional cross-referencing. Thus, Alan Timberlake's reference to 'modern understanding of linguistic areas as a force with less immediate and less visible contact than ordinary contact' (p. 350) is rather opaque and seems to be in contradiction with assumptions held by other contributors.

Finally, and most importantly, a handbook of areal linguistics certainly needs a dedicated chapter on statistical methods. Strangely enough, several chapters refer to the contribution by Kirby and Brunelle on the areal value of tone in SEA as the discussion of statistical methods, but it is nothing of the kind. Several statistical techniques such as Predictive Areality Theory or Bayesian non-parametric areal linguistics are mentioned in separate chapters but are never discussed in depth. Some interesting papers on statistical delineation of linguistic areas, such as [Donohue, Whiting 2011], are not mentioned at all. As a result, at least one promising way of providing a solid basis for the study of linguistic areas remains largely unexplored except for the valuable negative result reported in the last chapter, which also contains some useful references.

These drawbacks, however, are of relatively minor importance and cannot obscure the fact that 'The Cambridge handbook of areal linguistics' is a valuable contribution to the study of linguistic areas, which will hopefully provide a starting point for the development of the field in the near future.

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