

bereichern. Zum anderen ist der Jubilar an dem finanziell von der EU unterstützten Projekt "Babel — a Multilanguage Database" beteiligt, in dessen Ergebnis eine CD über die Artikulation der estnischen Sprache mit etwa 12 Stunden Sprachaufzeichnungen von alle phonetischen und phonologischen Eigenschaften dieser Sprache erstellt wird. Dies sind Sprechtexte von 35 Männern und 35 Frauen verschiedenen Alters und ein phonetischer Überblick über das Estnische. Der In-

halt dieser Diskette ist eine auf höchstem Niveau durchgeführte Vorarbeit, die nun vielseitige Möglichkeiten zur Erforschung der estnischen Sprache für Phonetiker in allen Winkeln der Welt eröffnet. Beide Vorhaben werden in enger Zusammenarbeit mit dem Leiter des Laboratoriums des Kybernetischen Instituts Einar Meister verwirklicht.

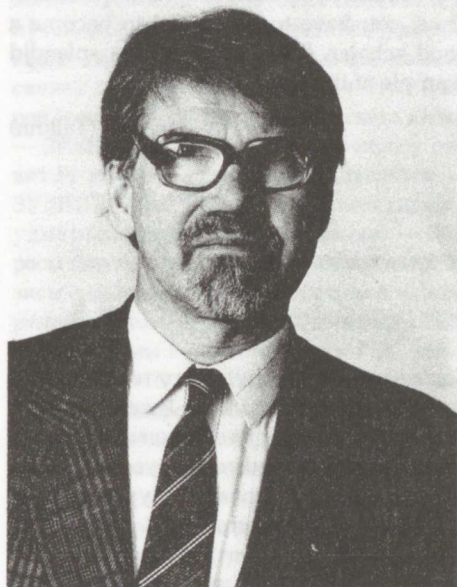
Glück und Erfolg bei der weiteren Forschung und Umsetzung geplanter Gemeinschaftsprojekte!

TIIT-REIN VIITSO (Tartu)

<https://doi.org/10.3176/lu.1997.4.09>

THE ENFANT TERRIBLE OF ESTONIAN LINGUISTICS

MATI HINT 60



When a scholar has a jubilee, it is customary to give an account of all his major works, research themes, academic honours etc, etc. Well, I am not going to outline Mati Hint's academic achievements: if one's academic achievements are not known when he reaches the age of 60, no advertising will help, if they are, why to waste space. It is his personality I want to examine in this short festive address. But before I turn to this, a few biographic facts are in order.

Mati Hint was born in 28th of August

1937 in the rich and traditional agricultural Rõngu district in Southern Estonia (as he once mentioned to me, he was quite a stubborn and uncontrollable child). He graduated the Elva Secondary School and was matriculated to the University of Tartu with a firm intention to study literature (his interest towards literature has never totally disappeared, though, as his occasional witty reviews on new titles of fiction prove). However, at the University, he turned quite soon to linguistics and received his first degree 1963 for a thesis on the phonetic and phonological aspects of the Rõngu dialect. In 1971 he received the degree of candidate of sciences for the dissertation on Estonian word phonology (more than a quarter of century later he obtained a Ph.D. from the University of Helsinki, too). Currently, he is professor of Estonian at the Pedagogical University of Tallinn.

He certainly has a kind of a furious charm. Having been first his student and now his colleague, I am well familiar with this. He teases his students, particularly the girls with pink pullovers. He makes jokes that in politically correct European Community would undoubtedly be classified as sexist. He is very impatient with those who just have not managed to absorb the new knowledge at the required speed, and he lets it know in his impulsive manner. And when he is an hour late to the lecture, nobody has dared to leave. Yet I have never heard students complaining. He is loved, though the love seems to be mixed with a bit of horror.

If there is something that Mati Hint cannot stand, it is stupidity, particularly arrogant stupidity. Stupid questionnaires, stupid answers, stupid politicians and stupid linguistic analyses could make him behave unpredictably. I think you know what I mean. He may throw papers or walk out of the room or write a 60-page article. Whichever option he chooses, he does it with passion. This is the reason why his papers are read with panic, and why some small bureaucrats at the university rather die than approach him direct.

Deep in his hearth, however, he is not a bad man at all. He is just impulsive, and does what ordinary people do not dare to do (though they would want to). He has told me that at soviet times the party organisation at the department has labelled him as "politically suspicious and morally unstable". Now, at better times he often uses this phrase jokingly to characterise himself. Though the times have changed, I guess that he undoubtedly would appear as such to any politically orthodox and socially conformist citizen even still. Yet I cannot blame him for this. The reason is that whatever he does, he is sincere

and has no intention to hurt. He is like Mr Bean — a natural disaster.

Thus, all things considered, he is a remarkable man. He is inspiring and irritating, he is ugly and tender (at times), he is vain and vulnerable. But he is never boring, because his mind is always enquiring. And this is not bad at all when you are 60. Actually, curiosity is characteristic to children. They keep on asking questions to form a picture of the world. For most of the people, at some point the picture is considered complete and no more questions are asked. This is the moment when they have grown up.

On the other hand, curiosity about the world is a major prerequisite for scholarly work. A scholar should never stop asking questions about things. A normal grown-up would never do this. A normal grown-up knows everything that there is worth knowing, and he certainly would not make out a fool of himself by asking useless questions. Thus, you have to be a child to become a good scholar. Mati Hint is just a splendid example of this.

MARTIN EHALA (Tallinn)

В. М. Вахрушев, Синонимъёсын удмурт-зуч кылбугор, Ижевск, "Удмуртия", 1995. 280 с.

Корпус лексикографических источников удмуртского языка пополнился достаточно солидным как по объему, так и по своим научно-практическим качествам изданием — «Синонимъёсын удмурт-зуч кылбугор» (Удмуртско-русский словарь синонимов) В. М. Вахрушева. Сам ученый, к сожалению, не увидел своего труда в типографском исполнении — в ноябре 1995 года после тяжелой болезни он ушел из жизни. Прежде чем приступить к анализу вышеназванного словаря, хотелось бы вкратце ознакомить читателей с биографией и научной деятельностью удмуртского ученого.

Василий Максимович Вахрушев родился 31 января 1918 года в деревне I Выжейл Якшур-Бодьинской волости Сарапульского уезда Вятской губернии (ныне д. Выжойл (Выжойл) Якшур-Бодьинского района Удмуртской Республики) в семье крестьянина. В 1936 году после окончания Якшур-

Бодьинского педагогического техникума он поступил в двухгодичный Ижевский учительский институт; по завершении учебы с 1938 года работал учителем русского языка и литературы в школах Удмуртии и других республик бывшего СССР. В 1947 году он закончил заочное отделение филологического факультета Удмуртского государственного педагогического института (ныне Удмуртский государственный университет).

В 1943 году В. М. Вахрушев был призван в действующую армию, принимал участие в Великой Отечественной войне, был ранен и после лечения в госпитале в 1944 году освобожден от несения воинской службы, а в октябре того же года принят на работу в Удмуртский научно-исследовательский институт при Совете Министров Удмуртской АССР (ныне Удмуртский институт истории, языка и литературы Уральского отделения РАН) в сектор языка в