



AGO KÜNNAP (Tartu)

ON THE URALIC *ś-PRETERITE AND *k-PRESENT

In his article "Die Negation im Uralischen I—III" László Honti affords quite a lot of space for the discussion with me (Honti 1997 : 243—247). I namely deny the Proto-Uralic (PU) origin of the *ś-preterite and in my hitherto publications I have gradually come to several unconventional viewpoints concerning also origin of the preterite forms of the Uralic negation verb.

Of course, L. Honti and I find it hard to discuss since he proceeds from the traditional conception of PU as well as from its later division up to the contemporary Uralic languages. I have my strong doubts about the former existence of such a unified proto-language and about the meaningfulness of the "back-reconstruction" of the reconstructed forms of the proto-language into the present-day Uralic languages, in particular. The "back-reconstruction", as I see it, interferes with a clear sight about the contemporary Uralic languages as they actually are and forces upon them phenomena which must or had to be in them. The reconstructed forms of the supposedly fairly unified PU language itself are extremely hypothetical and as such, they do not have sufficient evidence to enable the "back-reconstruction". To date the "back-reconstruction" has turned into a game of rules in accordance with an agreement while we have no more linguistic evidence at our disposal but the practical evidence of contemporary Uralic languages.

Discarding the whole, more profound theoretical debate which is connected with the "back-reconstruction", I would say, I appeal — for simply finding a new point of view at least and so, cross-checking earlier suppositions — to giving up the "back-reconstruction" originating from the postulated PU and to rely on the actual evidence of the contemporary Uralic languages. I certainly understand that this way I am digressing from one extreme to another and the true result may be found between the two extremes. But I suppose that the present moment demands falling into the other extreme since the former has practically exhausted itself. The time will tell and eventually settle everything better from a respective future point of view. However, it would not preclude the discussion between L. Honti and myself since we both try to consider the evidence of the contemporary Uralic languages, one way or the other.

Recently I came to a point of view, even a more radical one than my former statements which were pointed out in his article by L. Honti. Winding up a paper for the forthcoming commemoration collection of articles for Wolfgang Veenker I write, "Taking into account the fact that the *ś-preterite, typical of Samoyed, Ob-Ugric and Mordvin, may have equivalents in Paleo-Siberian languages (see Audova 1996), then there is every reason to regard the *ś-preterite as a p h e -

nomenon, related to the Siberian language area, first and foremost, which has never been known in Finnic, Lapp, Mari, Permic and Hungarian". I add, though, "However, I would underline one more time that the straightforward picture I have sketched here is marred by the *š-suffixal full paradigm of the preterite of the Mordvin negative auxiliary verb." (Künnap 1997b).

Returning to some concrete critical remarks in L. Honti's paper as to my hitherto viewpoints. L. Honti writes, "Nach A. Künnap ist noch auffallend, daß das Präteritum *š nur im Obugrischen und Samojedischen regelmäßig verwendet werde, in Sprachen, welche neben der individuellen Entwicklung auch gemeinsame Veränderungen durchgemacht hätten [---] Hier beruft er sich auf die Dissertation von E. Helimski und auf seine eigenen Studien, in denen er — übrigens vergeblich — den Versuch unternommen hat, den angeblich sekundären Charakter und die gemeinsame (aber nicht grundsprachliche) Herkunft des Dualsuffixes in den genannten Sprachgruppen zu beweisen. Aus E. Helimskis Arbeit ergibt sich aber keinerlei Schlußfolgerung hinsichtlich der Tempora des Uralischen, die darin behandelten übrigen "Übereinstimmungen" lassen sich nicht als gemeinsame obugrisch-samojedische Innovationen einstufen." (Honti 1977 : 243). I would only state that Eugen Helimski in his book from the year of 1982 addresses namely the interdependent development of Ob-Ugrian and Samoyed languages during the last 5,000—6,000 years up to date, also bringing forth respective linguistic affinities (see Хелимский 1982 : 65—125). Another thing is if L. Honti considers these affinities as "gemeinsame obugrisch-samojedische Innovationen" or not.

L. Honti continues, "A. Künnap hat also das hohe Alter des *š in Zweifel gezogen und behauptet, es sei in den Sprachen, die es heute besitzen, einer konvergenten Entwicklung zu verdanken: "... the use of the *š-preterite in Uralic is very sporadic." [---] M. W. ist aber das Tempussuffix *š in der Sprachfamilie recht gut vertreten, es gibt mehr Sprachen, die es als Tempussuffix des Negationsverbs und/oder des lexikalischen Verbs kennen, als solche die es gar nicht haben. Dies stellt sich übrigens auch in den Artikeln von A. Künnap eindeutig heraus." (Honti 1997 : 243—244). I would just say that if a temporal marker in a language family is not used as a general temporal marker of a regular conjugation paradigm, the occurrence may be regarded as sporadic. I do not deny that regarding it this way I somewhat tend to my final aim — the preterite marker *š does not come from PU. In that case we can follow a similar tendency also in L. Honti's view since he supposes a PU origin. L. Honti claims, "Es sind Versuche bekannt, das tscheremissische Tempussuffix geschichtlich anders zu erklären sie sind aber recht unwahrscheinlich" (Honti 1997 : 244). Here he must have in mind the derivation of the Mari preterite suffix from the original 3P ending *s. Péter Hajdú, by the way, does not exclude the possibility at all but considers it conceivable, word for word, P. Hajdú writes, "Хотя представляется более вероятным, что формант -š соответствует уральскому показателю прошедшего времени *-š, нельзя все же пренебречь мнением, согласно которому -š имеет местоименное происхождение и является элементом, указывающим на определенность прилагольного прямого дополнения." (Хайду 1985 : 246).

L. Honti still continues, "A. Künnap hält die Präteritalformen des livischen und estnischen Negationsverbs für ziemlich jung: "For my part, I have considered the possibility that in the Finnic-(Sami?) linguistic area we are concerned with a relatively recent sporadic application of verbal nouns of negative auxiliary preterite for forming the past tense of the verb negation. We can really believe that the Old Finnic type (Estonian) *ma es taha* 'I did not want' was quite original (not a result of Germanic or Baltic influence)" [---] A. Künnap lehnt hier also die Möglichkeit des germanischen

oder des baltischen Einflusses ab. Für mich ist es jedoch klar, wie man in der Präteritalform des Negationsverbs überhaupt germanischen oder baltischen Einfluß vermuten könnte. Wenn es sich um so etwas handeln könnte, wären Formen wie etwa **ei menin* 'ich ging nicht', **ei menit* 'du gingst nicht' im heutigen Finnischen zu erwarten, d.h. das lexikalische Verb müßte finit gestaltet sein." (Honti 1997: 245). I regret my lapidarity in the article under review. What I bear in mind is the pattern *ma es ...* 'ich ... nicht', *sa es ...* 'du ... nicht', *ta es ...* 'er/sie/es ... nicht' etc., i.e. a complete negation word *es* since a respective German or Baltic pattern could principally have also offered an example, e.g. German *ich ... nicht, du ... nicht, er/sie/es ... nicht* etc.

Further on, "Wenn das **ś* Tempussuffix, wie auch A. Künnap annimmt, ursprünglich ein perfektivierendes Bildungssuffix war, ist es nicht überraschend, daß es sich in einigen Sprachen (im südlichen Ostseefinnischen und einigen lappischen Mundarten) als Tempussuffix nur auf das Negationsverb beschränkt auch im Mordwinischen wird es hauptsächlich im Präteritum der Verneinung verwendet, da die Negation perfektiven Charakter hat (vgl. 'er geht' ~ 'er geht nicht')." (Honti 1997: 245). Yes, certainly, but still why so? My response now suggests that in Southern Finnic, Lapp dialects and Mordvin there are no traces of the **ś*-preterite. But E. Helimski gave his answer to this question at the Finno-Ugric Congress in Jyväskylä in 1995, not referred to by L. Honti and regarded as impossible by me.

E. Helimski writes, "If assumption concerning P[roto-]Ur[alic] **ś* : **j* is true ..., then its S[trong]G[rade] **ś* was to occur after monosyllabic stem (that is, with the negative verb **i-*: it was the only verbal stem of this type, or one of very few such stems), and its W[eak]G[rade] **j-* — after bisyllabic vocalic stems [---] The original distinction of allomorphs was later neutralized in favour of either **-ś-* (Vogul, Ostiak, Selkup, ?Hungarian, ?Nenets, ?Enets, ??Estonian, ??Livonian) or **-j-* (Lapp, Finnish, Karelian, Veps, Votic, Mordvin, Votiak, Zyrien). It seems however, to be preserved in Nganasan, cf. *ni-siəm* 'I did not' : *niłi-d'iəm* 'I lived' : *ni-m-ih'a-siəm* 'I usually did not'." (Helimski 1995: 4). In a paper submitted for publishing in "Ural-Altäische Jahrbücher" (Künnap 1997a) I wrote about it the following, "Here Helimski obviously considers the development in Nganasan *-d'iəm* < **-j'iəm*, cf. an earlier Nganasan preterite form *niłe-jeəm* ('leben') (Castrén 1855: 559b). The weakest point in Helimski's thesis concerns the aspect that the **j*-preterite is lacking altogether in Samoyed languages. [---] In an attempt to find original *j*-suffixes in Samoyed, related to temporal markers, I would first address Kamass and Mator. On the whole, there appears a lot of ambiguity in Samoyed in connection with the verbal **j*-suffixes, concerning both their functions and their origin (see more closely Klesment 1995: 96—97; Künnap 1995; Künnap 1996; Künnap 1997b)". So that E. Helimski's explanation is not a good answer to the question "why so"? either, since the evidence of the alternation *ś* ~ *j* in the preterite suffix is confined to Nganasan in the family of Uralic languages.

Klara Majtinskaja writes that the PU present tense marker **k* has most consistently remained in the full forms of the present tense in the Mari negative auxiliary verb, in short ones it occurs only in the 3PSg. In Permic languages it occurs both in the present tense and in the preterite of the negative auxiliary, e.g. in the present tense of the Udmurt *yɛ* 'I not; s/he not; they not'; in Komi *oɔ* 'I not'; *oɔö* 'we not', in the preterite tense of the Komi *əɔ* 'I not' (Оснoвы 299). So, once again there is an assumption that it is the negative auxiliary where the marker of the present tense **k* has peculiarly been preserved just as it was stated in case of the preterite marker **ś* (see Honti 1997). In addition to this, an Erza unchangeable negative word *at* is supposed to have come from the form **ak* (see Honti 1997: 90; UEW 69 offers the form **avt*, though). Thus, Raija Bartens writes that "für das Ne-

gationsverb scheint oft die Verwendung von anderen Zeichen als den bei den Vollverben gebräuchlich charakteristisch zu sein." (Bartens 1996 : 71). What a magnetic miraculous thing is the negative auxiliary to attract all the PU temporal markers?!

What catches the attention is that present tense forms of the Volgaic and Permic negative auxiliary are velar-vocalic while their preterite forms and both present and preterite forms of negative auxiliary of other Uralic languages are predominantly palatal-vocalic (see Honti 1997 : 88—93; UEW 66—69). The unchangeable negation words of Ob-Ugric languages are also prevalingly velar-vocalic (see Очновы 328). A well-founded question arises: Are the Volgaic and Permic velar-vocalic negation verbs with a **k*-element from quite a different origin than palatal-vocalic negation verbs without **k*? If we discard the predominating *idée fixe* that the former come also from a PU present tense marker **k*, there are certainly other explanations for their origin to be found.

Besides, what has been supposed about the velar-vocalic Uralic negation verbs is as follows, "Es ist auch mit dem Einfluß der iran. (arischen) Verneinungspartikel *a-*, *an-* (<ieur. **n*) bei der Entstehung des velaren Vokals zu rechnen. Diese Annahme wird vor allem durch die Formen mit Verneinungspartikel vom Typ *mord. E a-paro* 'schlecht, böse' unterstützt." (UEW 69). At least it sounds hopeful: the "phonetically regular back-reconstruction" of the PU palatal stem into respective Uralic languages as velar has been wished to be given up.

László Honti writes about Mari, "Die zur Satznegation dienenden Verbformen sind aus der Verbform *ok* 'es ist nicht' mit hinzugefügten Personalendungen gebildet: 1. P. Sg. *o-γâm*, 2. P. Sg. *o-γât*, 3. P. Sg. *o-γâš* [---] Aus demselben Element *ok* stammt auch *uke* 'ist nicht'. Laut E. Kangasmaa-Minn ist *uke* ('it is not' = 'non-existence') ein "negative noun". Es ist eigentlich eine existenzielle Negationspartikel, die mit der Negationsverbform der 3. P. Sg. zusammenhängt, vgl. z.B. osttscher. *oksam uke* 'nincs pénzem; ich habe kein Geld' Das *u* in *uke* ist wohl dem Kasan-tatarischen *juk* 'nincs; nem; es gibt nicht' zu verdanken; *juk* ist eine allgemeine Verneinungspartikel der Turksprachen" (Honti 1997 : 162) (From Turkic it was borrowed into the Kamass language: *d'žok̄, vōk̄, tōg* etc.: it is mostly used as a negative interjection, e.g. *d'žok̄, èi o'j̄im* 'no, I won't let', infrequently it may have some other functions, e.g. *šāda· koptō· kulā·mbi, a oš' vōk̄* 'Two girls died but one didn't'). L. Honti's text adds to the hope: the Turkic velar *u* and *k*-consonant make an occasional appearance.

There are other interesting Turkic parallels, e.g. in case of the Mokshan unchangeable negation word *af* (Honti 1997 : 90) it is "mitteltürkisch *ab: ab — ab* 'weder — noch, *aw* 'nein' " (Räsänen 1969 : 1a). Be it as it may, it is not that simple, though.

The following train of thought by R. Bartens attracts attention, "Im Mokschanischen hat die negative Existentiale ihr Gebiet erheblich erweitert und hat auch die Stelle des Negationsverbs eingenommen [emphatic spacing by A. K.]. Das alte vordervokalische Negationsverb, das im Erzanischen im Indikativ Präteritum verwendet wird, wird auch in vielen mokschanischen Dialekten gebraucht, in den meisten mokschanischen Dialekten aber ist *aš* an dessen Stelle getreten. [---] Die mokschanische negative Existentiale dürfte als Grundform *aš* haben. In einem Teil des Gebietes, in dem *ajaš* verwendet wird, ist neben der allgemeinen Negationspartikel *aj* auch die Negationspartikel *ajaf* in Gebrauch so daß *aj* eine Art verstärkende Partikel sein dürfte. *aš* muß Nomen sein: Oben wurde festgestellt, daß daraus eine Deminutivableitung gebildet wird und daß es die Formen der Nominalkonjugation annimmt. Seine Nominalität zeigt auch die von Evsev'ev mitgeteilte Ableitung, das lativförmige Adjektiv *ašu* 'mittellos, arm, armer Mensch' [---] D e n G e b i e t s-

winner negativen Existentialen des Mokschanischen, seinen Übergang zum Negationsverb [emphatic spacing by A. K.] dürfte außer seiner an das Negationsverb erinnernden Kürze auch der Umstand erleichtert haben, daß die mordwinische (aus dem früheren Negationsverb entwickelte) Negationspartikel ein *a* enthält (E *a*, *at*, *Maf*).” (Bartens 1996 : 78—79). Based on R. Bartens’ result of research, a part of the Permic and Volgaic negation words with a velar stem vowel (first of all, those with *a*) drops out as original nouns from the present observation and another part becomes questionable as it could be made up of generalizations of these nouns (at least in case of a velar stem vowel and *a*, in particular).

Despite that a supposition that in the Permic and Volgaic negative auxiliary occurs the PU present tense marker **k* has firmly been rooted. The picture is marred from the start by the fact that the **k* in Permic languages occurs only in the 1P and 3P, and, at that, in Komi only in the preterite. If the place of occurrence were only in the 3P, it would be easy to suppose the use of the marker **k* of a verbal noun first in the form without any verb inflection. It is a kind of dead heat: on the one hand the absence of **k* in the 2P mars the picture about the commonly used **k*-present while the occurrence of **k* in the 1P does wrong to my supposition. One may certainly ask if **k* in the 1P and 3P was originally one and the same suffix, especially if we keep in mind that **k* may occur at the end of the 1P in Hungarian (as probably also in Selkup, see more closely Künnap 1994 : 88—102). We have to admit, too, that changes 1P **-k-m* > **-k* and 2P **-k-t* > **-t* in Permic go as a very good explanation.

Here I would briefly consider the occurrence of the **k*-present tense in Uralic languages in general. I would say it is most sporadic. First of all we have to distinguish really existing evidence from an imagined one. The imagined evidence, I’d say, the dreamt-of material is abundant. All the “back-reconstructions” of the present-tense forms á la **tule-k-mek* (Finnish *tulemma*) ‘we come’ is only a fantasy without the least evidence. What I bear in mind is more narrowly the present-tense conjugation paradigm of the indicative mood, not of the imperative or a negation form or something of the kind. In this sense a genuine evidence can be found in Ob-Ugric languages, e.g. in Mansi *totə-γə-m* ‘I carry’, *totə-γi-n* ‘you carry’ etc. (ОСНОВЫ 300). The evidence of the **k* of the present tense is completely lacking in Samoyed languages, there is **ŋ* instead (see Künnap 1994 : 88—102). If the Samoyed general **ŋ* of the aorist can be observed as a definite equivalent to Finno-Ugric **k* of the present tense, we could speak only about an Ob-Ugric-Samoyed evidence, to which the Permic-Volgaic evidence in the negative auxiliary is added. Such a distribution makes the occurrence of the PU **k* of the present tense as evidence in the indicative conjugation paradigm of the negative auxiliary of Permic-Volgaic languages very debatable, as I see it. (I would indicate that Eeva Kangasmaa-Minn has not presented the **k* in case of Permic and Volgaic languages in her survey table about Finno-Ugric temporal suffixes, see Kangasmaa-Minn 1988 : 20).

REFERENCES

- Audova, I. 1996, On the *s-Preterite of Uralic Languages and the Verbal s-Suffixes in the Siberian Non-Uralic Languages. — Uralic Languages in European and Siberian Linguistic Context, Tartu (FU 20), 23—28.
- Bartens, R. 1996, Die positive und negative Existentialen in den finnisch-ugrischen Sprachen. — UAJb., Neue Folge 14, 58—97.
- Castrén, M. A. 1855, Wörterverzeichnisse aus den samojedischen Sprachen, St. Petersburg.
- Helimski, E. 1995, Proto-Uralic Gradation: Continuation and Traces. — CIFU VIII, Pars I, 17—51.

- H o n t i, L. 1997, Die Negation im Uralischen. — LU, 81—96, 161—176, 241—252.
- K a n g a s m a a - M i n n, E. 1988, Suomalais-ugrilaisia aikasuhteita. — Sananjalka 30, Turku, 17—26.
- K l e s m e n t, P. 1995, Monosuffixal Finite Verb Forms in Mator. — Minor Uralic Languages. Grammar and Lexis, Tartu—Groningen, 94—100.
- K ü n n a p, A. 1994, Two Suffixes of Finite Verb Forms in Samoyed: *ŋ* and *š*. — Minor Uralic Languages: Structure and Development, Tartu—Groningen, 88—112.
- 1995, *j* in Samoyed Temporal Suffixes. — Minor Languages and Cultures in Contact. Abstracts of the TEMPUS-Conference, Tartu, 18—20.
- 1996, *j* in Sayan-Samoyed Temporal Suffixes. — Ünnepi könyv Mikola Tibor tiszteletére, Szeged, 209—213.
- 1997a, On the Interrelationship between **š*- and **j*-Preterite in Uralic Languages. — UAJb. (forthcoming).
- 1997b, The **š*-Preterite as a Siberian Phenomen in Uralic Languages. (forthcoming).
- R ä s ä n e n, M. 1969, Versuch eines etymologischen Wörterbuchs der Türk Sprachen, Helsinki (LSFU XVII 1).
- Основы финно-угорского языкознания (Вопросы происхождения и развития финно-угорских языков), Москва 1974 (= Основы).
- Х а й д у П. 1985, Уральские языки и народы, Москва.
- Х е л и м с к и й Е. А. 1982, Древнейшие венгерско-самодийские языковые параллели (Лингвистическая и этногенетическая интерпретация), Москва.

АГО КЮННАП (Тарту)

ОБ УРАЛЬСКИХ ПРОШЕДШЕМ ВРЕМЕНИ НА **-š* И НАСТОЯЩЕМ ВРЕМЕНИ НА **-k*

В своей статье об отрицании в уральских языках (Honti 1997) Ласло Хонти уделяет довольно много внимания дискуссии со мной. Дело в том, что я отрицаю прауральское происхождение прошедшего времени на **-š* и в своих последних публикациях постепенно прихожу к разным неконвенциональным точкам зрения относительно происхождения и форм прошедшего времени уральского отрицательного глагола.

Конечно, нам с Л. Хонти трудно спорить, так как он исходит из традиционной концепции прауральского языка и распада его на современные уральские языки. Я же сильно сомневаюсь в наличии такого единого праязыка и особенно в допустимости «обратной реконструкции» реконструированных форм праязыка в современные уральские языки. Эта «обратная реконструкция» стала ныне некоей светской игрой с заранее обговоренными правилами.

Недавно я пришел к еще более радикальным выводам, чем те, которые цитирует Л. Хонти: в своей статье, которая будет опубликована в сборнике, посвященном памяти Вольфганга Феэнкера, я показываю, что прошедшее время на **-š* связано с лингвистическим ареалом Сибири и никогда не употреблялось в прибалтийско-финских, саамском, марийском и пермских языках (Künnap 1997b).

Далее я отвергаю предположение Е. Хелимского о том, что показатель прошедшего времени **-j* в уральских языках происходит от показателя **-š* (как слабая ступень последнего).

Показатель настоящего времени **-k* также свойствен лишь обско-угорским и самодийским языкам, имея некоторую эвиденцию в волжских и пермских языках. Все «обратные реконструкции» типа прибалтийско-финского **tule-k-mek* (фин. *tulemme*) являются фантазиями без малейших доказательств.