

THE SYMPOSIUM  
"THE ROOTS OF PEOPLES AND LANGUAGES  
OF NORTHERN EURASIA III"

From 29 June through 1 July this year an innovatory (from the Finno-Ugristic point of view) international interdisciplinary symposium "The Roots of Peoples and Languages of Northern Eurasia III" (s.-c. "Roots III") took place in Saaremaa, Loona. It was organised by Tartu University, Estonian Biocentre, the Open Estonia Foundation in the framework of George Soros' programme "East-east" and the Finland Institute in Estonia. The organising board was headed by Academician Prof. Richard Villems and the author of this paper.

"Roots I" took place at the beginning of the summer of 1997 in Finland, Turku and "Roots II" in the autumn of 1998 in Hungary, Szombathely. The presentations of the first symposium have been published (*The Roots of Peoples and Languages of Northern Eurasia I*. Turku 30.5.—1.6. 1997, Turku 1998). The papers of the second and third symposiums were decided to be published within common covers and hopefully it can be done in the current year yet. Also, the time and place of the following "Roots IV" was determined — from 4 June through 6 August in Finland, Oulu in 2000, thus immediately prior to the beginning of the IX International Congress of the Finno-Ugrists in Tartu. The organising board of Oulu symposium are chaired by professors Kyösti Julku and Milton Nuñez and Doctor Markku Niskanen.

About twenty people, nominally invited, participated in the third symposium. 14 presentations were attended and discussed. The presentations were prevalingly deep-theoretical, a few also giving a survey of the state of affairs. The start was made with the problems of human genetics and physical anthropology, moving further through archaeology and history to languages. In the meantime, discussions took place. In the final discussion it was just linguistic problems that were focused on which is understandable since, apart from geneti-

cists, anthropologists and archaeologists, linguists have findings only from a relatively recent period at their disposal. Therefore the observation of the earlier history of languages is largely hypothetical.

For getting a better overview of the themes of the symposium I would list the papers in the order they were read, further dwelling only on a few problems that attracted my attention. Richard Villems (Tartu) "Some Aspects of Eurasian Genetics", Leiu Heapost (Tallinn) "On the Anthropology and Genetics of the Estonians", Tõnu Seilenthal (Tartu) "Congressus Nonus Internationalis Fenno-Ugristarum", Rimantas Jankauskas and Indre Antanaitis (Vilnius) "Indo-Europeans in the Eastern Baltics. An Attempt of Synthesis of Current Anthropological and Archaeological Data", Kyösti Julku (Oulu) "Charakteristik der spätpaläolithischen Zeit im damaligen nördlichen Europa", István Fodor (Budapest) "Prehistory of Uralians (Finno-Ugrians) and Archaeology", Pavel Dolukhanov (Newcastle) "Migrations, Interaction and Language Shift in Eastern and Northern Europe".

The latter presentation smoothly transferred the main focus on languages: the Grand Old Man of the innovatory trend in Finno-Ugristics Ants-Michael Uesson (Malmö) "Indo-European and Uralic", Kalevi Wiik (Turku) "An Inventory of the Problems Concerning the Origins of the Northern European Peoples and Languages", János Puszta (Szombathely) "Warum? Warum? Warum?", Kristian Nilsson (Lund) "Babel and the Finno-Ugric Language Tree", Urmas Sutrop (Konstanz) "The Forest of Finno-Ugric Languages: On Trees and Waves", Ago Künnap (Tartu) "On Linguistic Relationships" and Lutz Edzard (Bonn) (who was not present himself) "Monogenesis and Polygenesis in Comparative Semitics and Arabic. Implications for Linguistic Change".

The common agreement of opinions among the researchers of various fields was even greater at the third symposium than earlier. At the same time they all realised that side by side with their problems of speciality the aim of the symposium was also concerned with social problems. The national relations have always been and are now, too, a global pain spot. The differences of languages and cultures form a background for hostile action among groups of people (remind of the present actions in the former Yugoslavia). The same danger is principally threatening the Baltic area. One of the outputs of the symposium is undoubtedly a message about the great historical unity of the peoples of the area, including earlier and more recent language shifts. In my presentation I drew the attention to the fact that as experts see it, during some last millenia all over the world more languages have become extinct than there are languages spoken today whereas most of the people speak modern languages which were not originally theirs. To date history has created conditions for groups of people for mutual misunderstandings and even hostility. Concentrating on the past and present-day situations of an area helps to better understand things and smoothe the background of conflict situations.

Concerning the Baltic area, more concretely, for some time already the participants in the series of symposiums principally share the opinion about the 12 000-year-long ancient settlement of Estonians and the 10 000-year-long ancient settlement of the Finns on their present territory that excludes obsolete views on their relatively recent arrival from the East, their Mongoloid-mixed genetic origin (the archaeological bone findings in the area, dated millenia-long, refer to their normally Europoid origin), radical differences from their neighbouring peoples, "Europeanization" under the influence of Germanic, Baltic and other peoples and the like. The whole ancient Northern European population was most likely speaking Finno-Ugric languages and the direction of expansion of Finno-Ugric languages has altogether been from west to east up to Central Siberia.

Concerning genetics we could hear much new from Richard Villems. The data processing has revealed that the Eve of all Europoids must have lived in India. The s.-c. Lapp (Sami) specific motif which states that in case of mitochondrial DNA, descending from mothers both to daughters and sons, the Lapps would have originated from another genetic line, different from the rest of Europeans, has really proved to be erroneous as now professed by the rearers of the hypothetical motif themselves. Only the characteristic features of the Y chromosome, inherited by the sons from their fathers, peculiar to the speakers of Finno-Ugric and Samoyed languages, extend in Northern Eurasia far into the east up to the Eskimoes. (I would recall that these are typical of Russians, too.) Leiu Heapost explained that the earliest cranium findings on the area do not testify to mixing with the Mongoloid type but by their features (first of all, the plainness of the face and high cheekbones) they rather appear as the s.-c. pseudo-Mongoloid. Such crania were widely spread in the Stone Age Europe. At the symposium she hypothesized that the seeming Mongoloidness may originate from the primary common features of Europoids and Mongoloids which are much older than the final formation of the races mentioned.

István Fodor sketched a summary vision about the primal history of Finno-Ugrians and Samoyeds, emphasizing the shifting of Ob-Ugrians and Samoyeds (I would rather say: of their respective languages) from Europe to the Siberian part of Asia. Pavel Dolukhanov presented statistical processing of European archaeological sites of findings in the form of visual diagrams which testify that the northward Europe was practically unpopulated during the bent maximum of the last Ice Age (provisionally about 20 000 years before). In the wake of the receding ice cap a relatively fast migration to the area took place. Therefore the archaeological culture of the area mentioned is pure, so to speak, since there was no mixing with an earlier population. According to Ants-Michael Uesson's idea the

Finno-Ugric speakers could have lived along an elongated zone from the Baltic Sea or even from the Atlantic Ocean to the east. To the north from them were located Lapps, Samoyeds and possibly the populations speaking several Paleo-Siberian languages. To the south from the Atlantic Ocean to the Caspian Sea was an elongated zone of Indo-Europeans. The Samoyed and Yukaghir languages can be Finno-Ugric languages with the Paleo-Siberian substratum.

The main part of the inventory of the origin of Northern European peoples and languages by K. Wiik consisted in 25 issues which well characterize the problems connected with the spread of agriculture and language change: 1) demic and cultural diffusion; 2) three phases in the language contacts (borrowing, shifting, and levelling); 3) the main linguistic boundary and subsidiary boundaries; 4) the movement of the main boundary has been a uniform process from the south to the north, while the movement of the subsidiary boundaries has often been more complicated; 5) the prestige values and sizes of populations; 6) the time lag of the linguistic boundary in relation to the subsistence boundary; 7) the quality of linguistic substratum (phonetics and syntax) and superstratum (loanwords); 8) three corridors (Germanic, Baltic, and Slavic) in northern Europe; 9) two corridors (Celtic and Iberian) in western Europe; 10) the escalation of substratum in the IE and FU languages and the emergence of new dialects/languages in both language groups; 11) the separation of farming and the IE language; 12) the delay of the arrival of farming in certain areas; 13) cultures are usually monolingual; 14) the crucial individual cultures in relation to subsistence and language shift; 15) the naming of languages; a pure shift of names (without any change in the language itself); 16) time depth in individual languages; 17) the role of climate and vegetation (the loess area, the steppe, the broad leaf vs. coniferous forests); 18) place names (toponyms); how far in the south in the three corridors?; 19) the genetic distances of populations (nuclear, mitochondrial, and Y

chromosome); 21) the assumption of an ancient genetic-linguistic homogeneity; 22) the origin of the etymologically opaque words ("about 30%"); 23) the role of the Megalithic culture and the ancient component languages of the linguistic integration; 24) an IE perspective among the linguists in the FU-speaking countries; 25) the Slavic and Germanic expansions (mainly demic?).

János Puszta presented an extensive overview about the interrelationships of Northern Eurasian languages. Substantially, he called upon bravely to sail in less-known distant waters as genuine ocean captains and not to confine oneself with the knowledge and habits of river skippers. Urmas Sutrop indicated that a well-formed tree has a single root and its branches are nontangling. The first design of a language tree was published in 1671 by the Swedish-Estonian poet and scholar Georg Stiernhelm. The first Finno-Ugric language trees were created by József Budenz (1878) and Otto Donner (1879). According to U. Sutrop the most perspective among the tree models are forest models, for example those by Rein Taagepera (based on Tiit-Rein Viitso's idea in the main part) of 1997. U. Sutrop thought that a well-founded and severe criticism would not exclude the language trees from the use yet but it still considerably limits operating with them. The author of this review picks at the stem of our language tree — Proto-Uralic — with the former spirit, recognizing that the whole comparative method is extremely inadequate and hopelessly out-dated. An undoubtedly erroneous idea about the binary character of the Uralic language tree, particularly about the division of Proto-Uralic into the two — Finno-Ugric and Samoyed — sub-*proto*-languages has given a mistakenly false result in the form of Károly Rédei's first volume of the etymological dictionary of Uralic languages (UEW) in which an occurrence of a word at least in one Finno-Ugric and in one Samoyed language is regarded sufficient for reconstructing the word into Proto-Uralic. The efforts of the reconstructors of Proto-Uralic are shed proper

light on if we suppose that instead of Proto-Uralic they have reconstructed (and obviously quite near to the truth) a *lingua franca* of Uralic languages in the broader sense of the meaning (coupled with creolization and pidginization) as the term is extensively used today.

Lutz Edzard showed that a monogenetic language tree model as a symbol of affinity of Semitic languages is more than questionable. He raised three objections as to the model: 1) one cannot reconstruct "proto-languages" because of the lack of data, 2) one must admit to the "abstractedness" of reconstructed languages, 3) one must allow for dialectal variation even at the "proto-stage". Vulgar Latin is tended to regard as the Proto-Romance language. But yet the recon-

struction of Proto-Romance, based only on the mutual comparison of Romance languages is impossible. Incidentally, we simply have written records about Vulgar Latin to proceed from. The researcher did not think it plausible to suppose that once upon a time there existed a linguistic unity on the Arabian peninsula which later dispersed — no evidence has later been found about such a dispersion. (Last year he published an extensive monograph on the subject: L. Edzard, *Polygenesis, Convergence, and Entropy. An Alternative Model of Linguistic Evolution Applied to Semitic Linguistics*, Wiesbaden 1998).

The participants of the symposium departed with a firm wish to meet in Oulu in the year of 2000.

AGO KÜNNAP (Tartu)

### III МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СИМПОЗИУМ «ПУТИ И СПОСОБЫ СОВЕРШЕНСТВОВАНИЯ И РАЗВИТИЯ ФИННО-УГОРСКИХ ЛИТЕРАТУРНЫХ ЯЗЫКОВ», ПОСВЯЩЕННЫЙ 100-ЛЕТИЮ СО ДНЯ РОЖДЕНИЯ КУЗЕБАЯ ГЕРДА

17—18 февраля 1998 года в Удмуртском государственном университете состоялся симпозиум из серии, начало которой было положено Мордовским государственным университетом, организовавшим конференцию на ту же тему, и Удмуртским государственным университетом, который провел конференцию по «Проблемам развития литературных языков финно-угорских народов».

На III симпозиум был представлен (и в большинстве случаев оглашен) 51 доклад, хотя лишь 42 докладчика смогли принять в нем участие. Количество участников и докладов (в скобках) распределилось по городам и весям следующим образом: Ижевск — 32 (36), Йошкар-Ола — 2 (6), Хельсинки — 2 (2), Сыктывкар — 1 (2), Москва, Санкт-Петербург, Пермь, Глазов (УР), с. Бураново (Завьяловский р-н УР) — по 1 (1).

Симпозиум имел некоторые особенности по сравнению с предыдущими: во-первых, он был объявлен как меж-

дународный и в его работе приняли участие исследователи из Российской Федерации и Финляндии; во-вторых, было выделено исследовательское направление, связанное с переводом священных текстов мировых религий (в первую очередь христианства) на восточные финно-угорские языки. Это вызвано прежде всего тем, что в последние десятилетия в Институте перевода Библии Финляндии уделяется огромное внимание переводу христианских книг на финно-угорские языки России, причем одним из важнейших достижений этого направления является издание Ветхого Завета на удмуртском языке<sup>1</sup> в переводе доктора филологических наук диакона М. Г. Атаманова при редакционной помощи и финансовой поддержке финской стороны. Продолжается перевод на восточные финно-угорские языки священных книг других ре-

<sup>1</sup> Виль Сизён, Стокгольм—Хельсинки 1997 (Библиез берыктонъя Институт).