

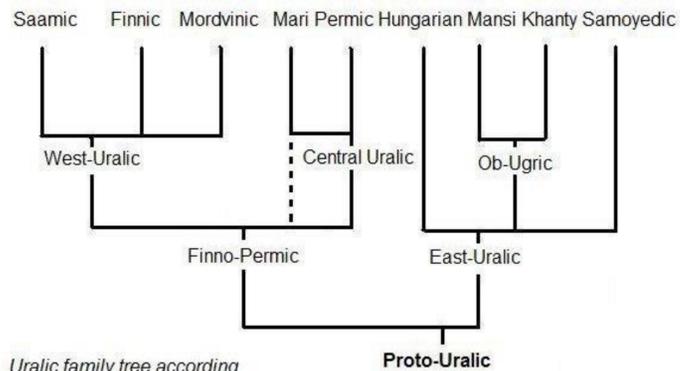
INDO-IRANIAN LOANWORDS IN THE UGRIC LANGUAGES

Sampsa Holopainen, sampsa.holopainen@helsinki.fi
Department of Finnish, Finno-Ugrian and Scandinavian Studies, University of Helsinki

INTRODUCTION

According to the traditional view, the Khanty and Mansi languages constitute the Ob-Ugric subgroup of the Uralic family, which together with Hungarian forms the Ugric branch. As all the Uralic languages, the lexicon of the Ugric languages contains a number of Indo-Iranian loanwords dating from different periods of contact. Korenchy (1972) has dealt with the early Indo-Iranian-Ugric contacts, but many of her conclusions can be considered outdated by now. Also the traditional taxonomy of Ugric has frequently been challenged in recent research (cf. especially Bakró-Nagy 2013).

My research aims to explain whether the three Ugric language branches were separate entities already when the Indo-Iranian loanwords common to them were acquired and how can the different loanword layers be distinguished.



Uralic family tree according to Jaakko Häkkinen (2007)

One version of the Uralic family tree, rejecting Proto-Ugric but accepting the Ob-Ugric unity.

OVERVIEW OF THE CONTACTS

There are different layers of Indo-Iranian loans in the Ugric languages, the oldest ones inherited from the Proto-Finno-Ugric period. The loanwords common to Khanty, Mansi and Hungarian are traditionally derived from the Ugric proto-language and are thought to be Proto-Iranian loans. It is also usually assumed that Proto-Ob-Ugric and later Khanty and Mansi separately had contacts with later Middle Iranian languages. There are also multiple later Iranian loans in Hungarian.

Helimski (1997) has claimed that many of the loans in Ob-Ugric can be derived from an unattested branch of Indo-Iranian, a language he dubs "Andronovo Aryan".

Some of the loans are from an Alan-type Iranian language (Helimski 1997; Korenchy 1972).

Traditionally the loans have been stratified according to their distribution, but a closer look at the material shows that this is an erroneous way to distinguish the chronological layers of Indo-Iranian borrowings.

EXAMPLE ETYMOLOGIES

Etymologies collected from: Korenchy 1972; Joki 1973; Bláček; 1990; Helimski 1997; Koivulehto 1999, 2007 (Ob-Ugric reconstructions from Zhivlov 2006). See the handout for a full list of etimologies.

PUg *mańčV 'ethnonym' > Hu *magy-ar*, Mansi *moańś*, Khanty *mōś* < PI *manuš 'man'

- The vowel relations between Mansi and the other languages are irregular. Probably a parallel loan.

POU *mēja > PM *mūj(-ə) 'guest'; PKh *māj 'wedding' < PII *maya- > Avestan *maya-* 'mating', OI *máya-* 'enjoyment'

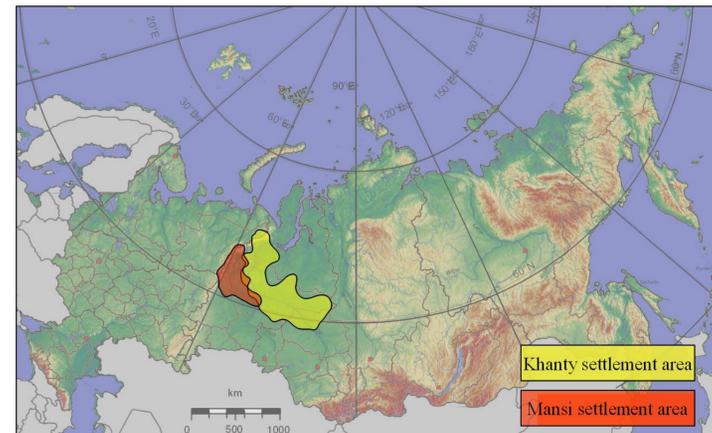
- There are no phonological problems in the etymology, but the semantic connection is not straight-forward. The Ob-Ugric cognates are regular. The vowel seems to continue Pre-OU *a.

POU *päčäy > PM *pāšəy; PKh *päčəy 'reindeer calf' 'reindeer calf' < PI *pacu- 'animal, cattle'

- *č is an expected substitution of Proto-Iranian *č. POU *ä probably reflects the Proto-Iranian *a; this seems to be a common substitution. Ob-Ugric cognates are regular.

Pre-Kh *sayVrV > *łǎγər* 'ring armour' < MI *zγar-, compare Ossetic *zγar* 'armour'

- Although limited to Khanty, the word was acquired before the Proto-Ugric sound change *s > *θ (> Khanty *Λ).



Current settlement area of the Ob-Ugric peoples. Map © Ob-Babel.

CONCLUSIONS

• Many of the loans are difficult to date, and it is hard to distinguish the different loanword layers. The earliest loans can date from Proto-Indo-Iranian.

• *ä seems to be a common substitute for Indo-Iranian *a, but based on Zhivlov's (2006) Ob-Ugric reconstruction, there were other kinds of substitutions for *a as well, the conditions of which are hard to determine.

• Contrary to Zhivlov (2013) and Helimski (1997), there are no loans in Ugric that point to the "Andronovo Aryan" donor language (this view is supported also by Napol'skikh 2014).

• Among the presumably oldest loanword layer there are phonological irregularities that point to parallel loans.

• The loanwords common to Hungarian and (at least one of) the Ob-Ugric languages are acquired before the Proto-Ugric consonant changes, and it is notable that some loans attested only in one Ugric language also point to equally early origin.

• The loanwords in Ugric should not be classified according to their distribution.

• Many unclear points in Ugric historical phonology still need thorough working out before the problems with the Indo-Iranian contacts can be convincingly solved.

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Sources of the pictures:

The Uralic family tree:

Häkkinen, Jaakko 2012: After the protolanguage: Invisible convergence, false divergence and boundary shift. *Finnisch-ugrische Forschungen* 61. 7-28.

The map of settlement areas:

Ob-Babel project: <http://www.babel.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/media/pics/Russlandkarte.png> Obtained 20 August 2015

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