ON ILLIČ-SVITYČ'S STUDY "BASIC FEATURES OF THE PROTOLANGUAGE OF THE NOSTRATIC LANGUAGE FAMILY"

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Illič-Svityč's study entitled "Basic features of the proto-language of the Nostratic language family" remained in an absolutely draft version containing considerable empty slots left for examples, the words are often written in an abbreviated form, the text is full of numerous insertions. From the text it is obvious that it was meant to be the fourth[38] "preliminary" publication preceding the finalization and submission to press of "Opyt ..."[39], which, however, was never completed and published. The text clearly suggests approximately when it was written: it is the year of 1965, when the author had accomplished the paper "Stop correspondences in Nostratic languages" submitted to *Voprosy jazykoznanija*, and "Materials for a comparative dictionary of Nostratic languages" submitted to the periodical *Etimologija* but before receiving the negative reviews and refusal of the first paper from *Voprosy jazykoznanija* The refusal by the editorial committee of *Voprosy jazykoznanija* (despite the fully argumented response from the author) to publish V.M. Illič-Svityč's article ruined his plan to subsequently, almost simultaneously publish an abridged (therefore easily conceivable) form of the Nostratic theory, what would have protected the theory from a series of preposterous "critical" attacks. He then gave the paper "Stop correspondences in Nostratic languages" to *Etimologija*, where it was supposed to be published within a year following the publication of his other article. But V.M Illič-Svityč had to abandon the idea of publishing "Basic features of the protolanguage of the Nostratic language family" because it did not fit into the theoretical framework of the periodical *Etimologija*, while *Voprosy jazykoznanija* was, of course, not willing to accept it. He included the beginning, the lists of correspondences and some parts - in a somewhat reformulated version – in the preamble to the article "Materials for a comparative dictionary of Nostratic languages" (the remaining parts were left in draft) and engaged in the minute revision of the etymological entries (a section of the materials prepared for this article obviously made

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[38] By the three "preliminary" publications the following articles are meant: "Sootvetstvija smyčnyh v nostratičeskih jazykah" [Stop correspondences in Nostratic languages], "Materialy k sravnitel'nomu slovarju nostratičeskih jazykov" [Materials for a comparative dictionary of Nostratic languages] both of which were published in the periodical *Etimologija 1965* and *Etimologija 1966*, and "Genezis indoevropejskih rjadov guttural'nyh v svete vnešnego sravnenija" [The genesis of the Indo-European guttural series in the light of external comparison].

its way into the second volume of the Nostratic Dictionary "Opyt sravnenija nostratičeskih jayzkov II: Sravnitel'naja grammatika" that has also survived in a draft form).

Since questions concerning Nostratic morphophonology and morphology became relevant in the subsequent discussions because one of the counter-arguments against Nostratic comparisons was the claim that it is impossible to reconstruct Nostratic morphology, I suppose it would be useful to get acquainted with the pertaining ideas of V.M. Illič-Svityč Below is the text of the section on grammar and morphophonology from the outline of the historical comparative phonology given in the above mentioned manuscript article. Following each descriptive paragraph there are notes marked as "Reflexes" or "Representation" in the manuscript, which show the author's intention to supplement the respective data. In the catalogues of the author there are some cards sorted in groups, which may have been prepared as the illustrations for these insertions. We have to bear it in mind, though, that in the process of work on the etymological dictionary the author may have changed his approach to certain morphological problems, what is visible in a series of etymological chapters devoted to formants.

Morphonology
Root structure

Root structure in the Nostratic protolanguage was governed by certain rules.

Grammatical words (pronominal elements – subject, object, possessive, interrogative, demonstrative pronouns, negative pronouns, particles), as a rule, are monosyllabic and have a CV structure, where C can be any consonant or its absence, V stands for any vowel: *mi object pronominal affix; *ko interrogative pronoun; *ja relative pronoun.

The roots of lexical words (nouns, verbs) are regularly bisyllabic and have the structure: 1) $C_1V_1C_2V_2$, 2) $C_1V_1C_2C_3V_2$, where V_1 is any vowel, V_2 is the vowel a or e, C_1 is any consonant or its absence, C_2 (in type 1) is any consonant, while the consonant cluster C_2C_3 in type 2 is a cluster formed according to the principle of raising or equal sonority, i.e. C_2 is a sonant, C_3 is a stop, ? laryngeal, sibilant (spirant, affricate), or C_2 and C_3 are sonants and, finally, C_2 and C_3 are stops of the same type of articulation. E.g. *bary- 'to bear', *....

Thus the general features of all root types are the following: 1) consonant clusters are not allowed in root initial position, and 2) consonants are not allowed in root final position (the last syllable of any root is an open syllable).

Reflexation in the languages. The archetypal root structure is best preserved in Uralic, less preserved (with simplification of the -CC- cluster in medial position) in Altaic and Dravidian. The final vowels in the second syllable of roots are partially lost in Altaic and they are totally lost in Dravidian. In Indo-European, Kartvelian and Semito-Hamitic the root type $C_1VC_2C_3V$ can appear as ₁, where there is a consonant cluster in root initial position. This metathesis is obviously connected with the peculiarities of suffixation that will be surveyed below. In Semito-Hamitic verbal roots of the type C_1VC_2V almost entirely ousted the root type $C_1C_2VC_3V$ ($C_1VC_2C_3V$) at the expense of additional suffixation of the root. In these three language families the vowels in the second syllable are often lost.

The structure of derived forms

Derived stems and derived forms of words are usually created by way of suffixation (on the origin of derivation by prefixes see below in the section "Word-formation"). The usual form of grammatical formants and derivational suffixes is -C- or -CV-, where in the latter case the final vowel can be only *-a. The only vocalic suffix is *-a that forms deverbal nouns. Combining the stem with the suffix type –C and with the type -CV- has its peculiarities.

When a suffix C is attached to the stem, the final, closed syllable seems to be stressed: CVCV + C → CVCV́C, CVCCV + C → CVCCV́C. The stressed nature of the final closed syllable is reflected in Uralic, and indirectly in Indo-European, Kartvelian and Semito-Hamitic, where structures of the type CVCV́C and CVCCV́C are transformed into CCVC and CCVCC respectively. In Semito-Hamitic, where the extension of the biconsonantal root by a third consonant lead to the dominance of the CCVC structure, this structure is represented (on the Semito-Hamitic level) also in the non-derived triconsonantal roots.

When the suffix CV (Ca) is attached to the stem, the stem-final vowel is reduced, if this vowel is the more closed –e; if the stem-final vowel is –a, then the vowel is preserved:

$$CVCe + Ca \rightarrow CVCCa \quad CVCCe + Ca \rightarrow CVCCCa$$
$$CVCa + Ca \rightarrow CVCaCa \quad CVCCa + Ca \rightarrow CVCCaC$$

The reduction of the vowel e is reflected in all the compared languages.

II. Morphology

Noun declination

The declinational paradigm was available only in the singular. Adjectives were declined only if they were substantivized and used independently. The nominal paradigm can be reconstructed as the following:

1. nominative-accusative case: -0 (zero flexion) for the case of the subject and the unmarked object;
2. case of the marked object: -mʌ; used if the object has to be topicalized in the sentence if the possibility arises for an ambiguous interpretation of the phrase and if a definite object is to be indicated, etc.
3. genitive (connective): -n: the case of a noun standing by another nominal (possessivity, etc.);
4. instrumental -tʌ: the case of the instrument;
5. local cases: lative -ḳa, ablative *-da and essive (locative) -n.

The plural of nouns: It is possible to posit the existence of a special marker for undefined plurality (with count words the base form of nouns was used); this marker is

primarily the formant *-t. With less certainty the existence of a special formant for the oblique form of plural can also be posited in the shape of *j.

Personal pronouns

The following types of personal pronouns can be postulated for the Nostratic protolanguage:

1) independent pronouns – for specifically indicating the pronominal subject.

2) forms of the subject standing by a verb: primarily in a position preceding a noun.

3) forms of the direct object by a verb: primarily in a position preceding a noun after the form of the subject.

4) possessive forms next to nouns: primarily in a position after a noun.

In all these series only the 1st and 2nd person singular and plural pronouns were represented.

1. Independent pronouns were used with a facultative emphatic element -na:

    1st pers. sing. *ʌke-na,
    2nd pers. sing. *tʌ-na
    1st pers. plur. *naHe-na
    (2nd pers. plur. ? *u crossed out).

2. Forms of the subject by verbs: [1.sg.] *a-, [2.sg.] *ta-, [1.pl.] *na-, [2.pl.] *?-.

3. Forms of the direct object: [1.sg.] *mi-, [2.sg.] *k-, [1.pl.] ?, [2.pl.] ?.

4. Possessive forms: [1.sg.] *mi-, [2.sg.] *si-, [1.pl.] mʌn, [2.pl.] sʌn.

Non-personal pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns (fulfilling the function of the 3rd person pronouns): *tä-, *šä-, *mu-.

Interrogative pronouns: *ko 'who', *mi 'what', *ja interrogative-relative pronoun, ? *na.

Noun classes

In the system of pronouns an opposition of two noun classes can be observed: agent nouns and object nouns. The interrogative pronoun *ko belongs to the first of these classes, while the interrogative pronoun *mi belongs to the second class.

The marker of the object class in the system of demonstrative pronouns was probably the marker –t It has reflexes in Uralic, Indo-European and Semito-Hamitic, where its use is strongly extended.

Verbs

The verbal stem in its pure form expressed an order and was used in the quality of the imperative. Besides this form two opposing verbal categories can be reconstructed: one presented a designation of the action itself (transferred to the object in the case of transitive verbs), this was used with the subject pronoun and (in the case of transitive verbs) with the object pronoun. The direct noun object by this verbal form could stand in the marked form; in this case the verbal stem coincided with infinitive stem. The other

verbal form was a derived noun ending in –a indicating the state of the subject verb was transitive, it contained only the prefix of the subject and in this circumstal object noun could not be marked and thus always appeared in the subjective-ob case.

Form I (the form of action) is reflected …

It is also possible to posit for the Nostratic protolanguage the existenc temporal (or aspectual) distinction between 2 basic verbal categories, which was re apparently by the help of deictic particles of pronominal origin.

Particles

A series of negative prepositional particles can be reconstructed: *e, prohibitive particles *mʌ, *älä, a postpositive connective or emphatic particle *-k deictic particle *-na used with pronouns.

III. Wordformation

As earlier mentioned, denominal formations were created with the he suffixation. Among denominal suffixes we can list *-la (nomina loci), *kʌ (diminu *-mta (comparative), *-ja (possessive, nomina agentis).

Deverbal formations were derived with the help of prefixation: *ma- (no agentis, nomina actionis), *na- (adjectives), *ta- (causatives).

Syntax

Sentence structure can be characterized only in most general terms. In a s declarative sentence the verb stood in final position (this rule conditioned the positi the subject and object pronouns next to verbs). The direct object preceded the verb determining adjective without concordance and the nominal genitive precede definite substantive. The form of the object (marked or unmarked) was determined by the conditions of object deixis and by the nature of the verbal form. Marked o was not allowed when a type II verb form was used.

(Translated from Russian by Irén Hegedűs)