

Nostratic and Monogenetic Theories in Linguistics in the Epoch of Digital Technologies

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Abstract. The greatest soviet Slavic linguist made a revolutionary discovery in linguistics, especially in Indo-European linguistics, proving the distant kinship of the more explored macro-families of languages at that time. The merit of V.M. Illich-Svitych is that he gave the scientific form to the Nostratic hypothesis, i.e. he established systemic patterns between reconstructions. Further research in Nostratic linguistics should lead linguists to prove the theory of language monogenesis. Many linguists have not accepted this hypothesis, including most of the Western scholars. The main burden of proving the distant relationship of macro-families falls on the shoulders of the Moscow School of Comparative Studies and the like-minded colleagues of V.M. Illich-Svitych. Today, when the Moscow School of Comparative Studies created several Internet projects and websites to expand etymological and linguistic databases, everything is in favor of the monogenesis hypothesis.

1 Introduction

The following information is presented in the Great Soviet Encyclopedia: "Nostratic languages (from Latin *noster* - ours) are macro-families, including a number of language families and individual languages of Eurasia and Africa (Semitokhamit or Afrasic, Indo-European, Kartvelian, Ural, Dravidian, Altai). After the creation of the etymological dictionary and comparative phonetics by V.M. Illich-Svitych the Nostratic hypothesis acquired the character of an evidence-based scientific theory"[1].

In the 60s of the twentieth century reconstructions were successfully carried out not only of Indo-European languages, but also of many previously unexplored languages. The Prasemitic language, the proto-languages of different families of Eurasia (Altai, Ural, Turkic, Kartvelian, Dravidian families in South India, etc.) were reconstructed.

In "The compendium of comparative grammar of the Indo-German languages" (1861-1862) A. Schleicher reconstructed Indo-European parent language in the main. The first attempts of comparative studies of Nostratic families were made in the middle of 19 century: Indo-Ural (I. Kuno, N. Anderson, V. Tomsen, F.P. Kyoppen), Ural-Altai (V. Shott, M.A. Kastren), Indo-Semitic (G. Myoller, A. Kyuni) and Indo-Cartvelian comparisons (F. Bopp).

More consistent in their research scientists raised issues about connections of languages with each other at a deeper level and the general ancestor.

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There were single attempts to prove that, rather strictly observing a scientific technique, it is possible to try to compare these reconstructions already with each other. The main merit in the foundation of Nostratic linguistics belongs to the Soviet school of a comparative studies. This scientific break was connected, first of all, with a name of Vladislav Markovich Illich-Svitych. In the early sixties the outstanding Slavist V.M. Illich-Svitych for the first time generalized reconstructions of non-Indo-European languages, having summarized all results which were achieved by comparative studies at that time, and put forward the theory of "Nostratic kinship".

The merit of V.M. Illich-Svitych is that he gave the scientific form to the Nostratic hypothesis, i.e. he established systemic regularities between reconstructions [2]. The term "Nostratic languages" was first coined in the early 20th century by Danish comparative linguist Holger Pedersen, who put forward a proposal to compare the more researched Old World language families and gave them his name "Nostratic" (from Latin "noster" (ours), i.e. our languages).

In the article "In Memory of V.M. Illich-Svitych," V.A. Dybo calls the most important scientific achievement the creation of "a new branch of Linguistics – Comparative Grammar of Nostratic languages" [3].

We, as comparative linguists of local importance, are very familiar with the problem of proving the distant relationship of all linguistic families, and therefore the giant pioneer work of Illich-Svitych is for us a natural and inevitable result of a new stage in the development of comparative historical linguistics. On the one hand, the lack of investigation of many language families, on the other hand, the arrogance of Indo-European scholars and their unwillingness to objectively consider all language facts prevented the development of comparative historical linguistics, primarily, the proof of the kinship of macro-families of languages.

2 The First Experiments of Comparison of Differently Structured Languages

We have published a series of articles on lexical convergences among Chechen and a number of Indo-European languages – Old English (63 cognates), Latin (197 cognates), modern French (330 cognates), the Celtic languages (51 cognates), Spanish (87 cognates), Arabic (140 cognates, apart from religious vocabulary) [4.5] and as well as morphological and word-formation elements of Chechen and Indo-European languages [6]. Basically, comparable vocabulary is represented by verbs, Chechen original verbs have retained almost unchanged the sound structure of the oldest roots. A large number of "regular coincidences" of the sound structure and their semantics lead to conclusions that all language families – "related and unrelated" – go back to one source, that is, the mother tongue of all language families (the theory of monogenesis of languages – Starostin S.A. and Ivanov V.V.) or the existence at the dawn of humanity of contacts or mixtures of the languages in question

Many local linguistic scholars in their oral speeches at the scientific conference criticized our undertakings, and the conclusion was similar for everyone: these are random coincidences or borrowings. We used the mass comparison method, which was taken as a basis in the studies of J. Greenberg. J. Greenberg believed that regular phonetic changes darken significantly over time and therefore do not need to be distinguished, and, to prove distant kinship they are not suitable.

The effectiveness of this method is that more languages are compared, since when comparing more languages, the likelihood of a random match is reduced. We did not try to prove the genetic relationship of Caucasian and Indo-European languages, but we tried to draw attention to the presence of specific linguistic facts, namely the presence of isoglosses

in unrelated languages. In addition, if we are talking about very distant contacts not of languages, but of macro-families of languages, then these phonetic correspondences can also occur outside the framework of 100 vocabulary list of M. Svodesh.

For example, in the following Latin-Chechen correspondences, phonetic changes are observed no more than in dialects of one language, Chech. *louzan* "to play"; Lat. *lusio lūsio* "game"; *ludo, lisi, lusum* "play";

Chech. *lazuo/laza-van* "damage, injure," – Lat. *laesio [laedo]* "damage, injure"; *laedo laesī, laesum*, "damage, injure"; Fr. *léser* "to cause damage, harm to health"; *isp. leso* "damaged");

Lat. *mittere [o, misi]* "place," *immittere, o, misi, missum* "insert"; (cf.: Fran. *mettre [mety]* "put., place"); Chech. *mettig* "place";

Chech. *satsan* "stop, cease," *cessare* "stop" [ts > ss > s];

Chech.(s) *tomma* "thick, swollen," – Lat. *tumere [eo, ui, -]* "to be thick, swollen"; Lat. *tumidus [a, um]* "swollen";

Chech. *latta* "land" – Lat. *terra, ae f* "land"; (English *land*, Basque. *lurak*, arab. *ardun*, wall. *tir*, irl. *talamh*, maltium. *art, igbo ala*).

Concerning the last phonetic transition of A. Meillet, N. Savchenko writes that "in Sanskrit *r* is extended at the expense of *l*, but didn't force out him finally" [7, p. 76]. Speaking in A.N. Savchenko's words: "Archetypes are restored only approximately and quite often presumably" [8, p. 13].

For descriptive reasons we give examples of lexical similarities below, their nonrandom identity is obvious:

E.g. чеч. *vuorta* 'neck' (срв. Chech. *werzan* 'turn, turn round'), Sansk. *Vartami*; Got. *wairþan* 'become', Old Slavic *vratita*, Lit. *vartyti* 'turn', 'I spin', Lat. *Verto*; [4]

Chech. *dalan* "give", * *del* "give, divide" PIE (Pokorny), Russian *delit'* "to divide"; Old Celt. *dail*, +*dal* "portion", Irel. *daal* "part", Lit. *dalis* "part", Sanskrit *da-ti* "cut off", *dalas* "part", *dailich* "distribute", Irel. *deilim*, Old English *á-dælan* "to divide;

чеч. *aiban* 'поднимать' [h>0 – выпадение h]; др.англ. *áhabban* 'поддерживать' *áhebban* 'поднимать';

Chech. *bēr* "baby" (*baram* "stretcher for a dead man") PIE: *bher-* "to carry," Lat. *Fero*, Rus. *beru*, "pregnant", Old Sl. *berъ*, Skr. *bharami* "carry," Greek. *φέρω*, Got. *baira*, Old English *bearn* "child," born "to give birth" *áboren* "to carry cargo," modern-English *born* "born";

Chech. *bēr* "child" – w (b.j)-*dan* "to do," PIE: * *bherd-* "pregnant," Russian *reb-enok* > Chech. *ber*. [ber > reb - metathesis];

Chech. *nus* "daughter-in-law," skr. *snusa*, Lat. *Nurus*, Greek. *νύος*, Old Sl. *snha*, Old English *snoru* [s>r; s>x];

Chech. *v* (d, b.j) -*ouzan* "know" PIE: **u(e) id-* [d > z] [Pokorny]: Gr. *Φοῖδα* "know," Skr. *vēda*, Got. *wait*, Prus. *waiei* "you know," Old Sl. *vem*, Fr. *voisin* "neighbor";

Chech. *stigal* "sky"; Old Eng. .<*stīgan, stigon, stigen* > "rise, rise" [Pokorny *steigh*];

Chech. *magan* "can, possibly"; Old English *magan*, *mæg*, "perhaps," English *may* [magh: *māgh* "power" Pokorny];

Chech. *aiban* "raise" [h > 0 - drop of h]; Old English *áhabban* "to support" *áhebban* "to raise";

Chech. *qiētan* "understand, hit, reach" [g>k>q], Old English *gietan, gietep/ágéaton* "reach, hit, know, understand";

Chech. *sieda* "star", Lat. *stella* "star"; Lat. *sidus sīdus*: the constellation *sidus natalicium* - "the star under which a man was born," "the star, the heavenly shining", Greek *astir*, Got. *stairno*; Corn. *sterenn*, Toh. *sren*, Arm. *astl*, Fr. *stelliare*,

Chech. *mayr* "husband," mari *yahan* "to marry"; Fr. *marier* [maʁje] "marry," "marry," Spanish *maridar* to marry. The word *mar*, mari in the meaning of "man, groom" is found in

many Semitic, Turkic and Indo-European languages, as well as in the Hittite language, in Arabic mar'un "man" [4].

3 Nostratic Theory

Within the framework of the Illich-Svitych theory of distant kinship, the present "Nostratic macro-family includes the following families: Indo-European, Kartvelian (Georgian, Megrelian, Svan; Ural (Finno-Ugro-Samodian and Yukagir), Altai (Turkic, Mongolian, Tunguso-Manchu, Korean and Japanese), Elam-Dravidian, as well as probably Eskimo-Aleut and Chukoto-Koryak languages (according to Illich-Svitych, and Afrazian) [9]. The common ancestor of the Afrasian and Nostratic is called Para-Nostratic. It was this language that Illich-Svitych reconstructed under the name Nostratic [10].

After the revolutionary break which began with the prove of the Nostratic theory, the opinions of comparative linguists of the whole world were divided, it was given a hostile reception by orthodox linguists as the proof of distant relationship of languages in itself confirms the theory of monogenesis of languages. Many scientists were frightened, they began to say in horror that it is too deep level of reconstruction, too unclear as the modern languages are considered as remote from parent languages for the time period of 10-15 thousand years. As the largest Russian Indo-European linguist V.V. Ivanov precisely noted that "all scientists were divided into those who "are afraid of deep water and aren't afraid of it". V.V. Ivanov took these words from the poem as the preface to the huge three-volume etymological dictionary by V.M. Illich-Svitych "Experience of comparison of Nostratic languages". The crucial role in confirmation of the theory of monogenesis was played, first of all, by Illich-Svitych and S. Starostin, as well as V.V. Ivanov.

The narrow linguistic approach to the problem of the origin of Indo-European languages failed the test of time. Conservative thinking prevents Indo-Europeanists to present how there could be it that, for example, Indo-Europeans have some general words with Asians or Africans with whom if to lean on the facts of other sciences, they shouldn't have nothing in common. In 1901 the English linguist G. Suit considered that in Indo-European mainstream racism is the main reason for rejection of the idea of distant relationship of languages "... It usually is expression of no more than simple prejudice against overthrow of Aryan language from a position of proud loneliness and his rapprochement with languages of yellow race" [11].

In the difficult period of Soviet rule it was difficult to decide to go against the orthodox science and to draw the conclusions which are not previously approved by "the advance party" of the general line of the Communist Party.

The innovative work by Illich-Svitych remained incomplete "Experience of comparison of Nostratic languages (Semitohamit, Cartvelian, Indo-European, Ural, Dravidian, Altai) Introduction. Comparative dictionary". The manuscript was published thanks to dedicated work of colleagues of Illich-Svitych united in publishing group under V.A. Dybo's edition. They needed 16 years that 3 volumes of his work were published that became some kind of scientific feat from colleagues of the scientist [12]

In his diary entries dating back to 1954, Professor S.B. Bernstein dedicated several lines to his student: "... He is comprehensively gifted. He is well versed in the most difficult issues of comparative grammar. I am afraid that I will not be able to keep him in Slavic and Baltic linguistics. Gradually, he matures the need to go beyond not only Slavic, but also Indo-European linguistics. Recently, he began to be disturbed by common elements in various languages of the Old World. The path is dangerous. How many talented scientists have broken their necks on this! I will do everything to keep him in Slavic linguistics. Will I have enough strength to do it!!!" [13]. The apprehension of his teacher came true,

unfortunately, and in August 1966, a month before his 32nd birthday, V.M. Illich-Svitych died.

Within the Nostratic theory S.A. Starostin managed to do a huge work, he also prematurely died in his 52 years. In 2003 S.A. Starostin together with Anna Dybo, Oleg Mudrak published "The comparative dictionary of the Altai languages – Turkic, Mongolian, Tungusomanchzhur, Korean, Japanese languages". In the 1980s S.A. Starostin managed to take an important step in the direction of the proof of the theory of macro-families. In the research S.A. Starostin proved the existence of the second Dene-Caucasian macro-family of languages, that significantly strengthened the theoretical base for distant comparison between parent languages [10].

Further the colleagues of S.A. Starostin suggested to unite Dene-Caucasian macro-family with Nostratic and some other within Boreyan linguistic community [10].

In the program "Conversation between G. Zelenko and S. Starostin", he talks about the problems of proving the distant relationship of languages: "The structure of the Nostratic family is now visible quite clearly. This is primarily the core, which includes the Ural, Altai and Indo-European languages. This core is practically the same as what Greenberg calls the "Eurasian" family. There are also controversial issues regarding Eskimo-Skoleut languages, Chukot-Kamchatka languages. But there are also Kartvelian and Dravidian languages, and they are also clearly part of the Nostratic family. Finally, there is the last, most controversial question about the Afrasian (or Semito-Hamitic) languages, which Illich-Svitych referred to as Nostratic. In all respects, it turns out that these languages are as deep a family as Nostratic, that is, if they are relatives, then at a deeper level "[10].

Starostin was worried that there aren't enough forces and means to cover the reconstruction of all macro-families "hardly quickly we will reach the mankind parent language. Enormous scientist teams would be necessary for this purpose. Nevertheless, something is possible and it is necessary to do and for this reason I also try to unite the American and Russian schools".

S.A. Starostin writes that pedantic approach of the Moscow school will take decades while the American approach will allow to make some approximate classifications, on their basis it is possible to do approximate reconstruction to accelerate work. The online project was started for acceleration of reconstruction and classifications of languages. At the end of the conversation S.A. Starostin noted: "The different techniques and computer programs generally already available on the Internet (starling.rinet.ru) are used for this purpose. It is necessary to process so large volumes of information that without computer processing it is impossible" [10].

Together with colleagues and adherents S. Starostin creates the Online project of the etymological database "Babel tower" for fast processing of the linguistic database devoted to comparative-historical linguistics.

S. Starostin's son Georgy Starostin, also famous comparativist, does for promotion of the Nostratic theory much, he has founded "Global Lexical and Statistic Database" Online project to accelerate enormous work of the proof of relationship of Nostratic languages.

In 2007 V.V. Ivanov discovered the existence in Nostratic parent language of 2 series of personal pronouns: direct and indirect pronouns (oral message, 2007) that are similar to 2 series of the Indo-European personal verbal endings.

Russian and foreign scholars devoted a number of works to the external comparison of Indo-European morphology with the morphology of other languages of the Nostratic macro-family: J. Greenberg (2000), E.A. Helimsky (2000), P. Hyde (1985), F. Cortlandt (2004), A. Bomhard (2003), V. Blazek (1995), B. Kollinder (1960) and others. Today, the Nostratic hypothesis of V.M. Illich-Svitych is presented in a modified form in the works of his followers over the past decades. According to G.S. Starostin, "the Nostratic macro-family of languages exists, and within its framework an external comparison of Indo-

European languages with the languages of other families of Eurasia can be made. This belief is based on several basic considerations. Secondly, the presence of the Nostratic macro-family of languages is proved by lexicostatistics and glottochronology, which have been successfully used in recent decades to clarify the genealogical classification of the languages of the world. The refined method of glottochronology, modified by S.A. Starostin (Starostin 1989), is significantly raised the bar of the analyzed material veracity and it allows to research the genetic links as deep as 15-18 centuries, while the existence of Nostratic language is postulated as 12,000 years old.

4 Theory of Monogenesis

Modern linguists-polyglots at the disposal of whom has appeared the data of earlier not studied languages confirm similarity of all languages of the world. S.A. Starostin substantiated the idea of uniform parent language by the low probability of independent origin of language families with absolutely identical deep structure: "Human languages have absolutely similar deep structure. It is possible to identify a number of properties which universally are present in each human language. It is the existence of vowels and consonants, syntactic structure in which have to be a subject, a predicate and an object – syntactic actants. It is possible to tell a lot about details, but in principle the general structure of languages is absolutely identical. It is very doubtful that this "deep structure" arose in various places independently" [10].

American linguist M. Rulén, a supporter of monogenetic theory, lecturing at Stanford University on anthropology and human biology, noting the confirmation of monogenetic theory by achievements in biology, writes: "the idea that Indo-European peoples have not known biological relatives would seem unfounded to them. Meanwhile, for most linguists, the single origin of all human languages seems to be largely dubious, and confidence that Indo-European languages do not have known linguistic relatives is not only a convenient position for them, but also practically a symbol of scientific integrity" [16]. Merrit Roulén denies the provision that, allegedly, over the 6-8 thousand-year limit, comparative methods become ineffective. He believes that the reconstruction of language macro-families can deepen much further than this threshold [15].

Modern scientific research accumulates more and more data in favor of monogenesis of languages and men. The paleontologist K. Stringer, noting the validity of the monogenetic theory by different sciences, defines problems of further researches: "Perhaps, we are on the threshold of creation of the uniform theory which will unite paleoanthropologic, archaeological, genetic and linguistic proofs in favor of the African monogenetic model" [15].

In 2004 V.V. Ivanov wrote even more definitely: "The latest achievements of comparative historical linguistics are increasingly clarifying the original common origin of languages. In this sense, the study of languages is useful for realizing the real unity of mankind. Development of comparative studies of the proto-languages of macro-families... leads to the search for evidence of the likely common origin of the vast majority of the languages of modern humanity. In this regard, the conclusions of comparative linguistics can most likely be connected with the picture that molecular biology opens." [16].

5 Conclusion

Linguists independently of each other come to a conclusion about macro-communications. For example, on-dene, on many properties different from other Indian languages, linguists of the highest qualification (S.A. Starostin, E. Sepir, J. Greenberg, M. Rulén) connect

languages with the sino-Caucasian and Yenisei languages which, according to Starostin and Greenberg, are related each other too.

Today, when the Moscow school of a comparative studies created several Interenet-projects and websites for etymological and linguistic databases expansion, everything develops in favor of a monogenesis hypothesis.

V.V. Ivanov wrote: “During the studies which were carried out in recent years directed to deepening of etymological researches in Indo-European linguistics the peculiar and convincing actual data which is eloquently confirming unity of origin of all modern language families of the world unexpectedly were found”. The unity of languages’ origin is more reasoned hypothesis, than the polygenesis of languages [16].

Monogenesis will be coordinated with the Quranic and bible narration about a Babel, and with the main postulates of all religions that has important value. Today, when relationship of all languages receives biological and linguistic confirmation, it is possible to speak with confidence, as most of scientists will return to the Creator, having rejected arrogance which surely results in delusions and disbelief.

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