Proto-Indo-Uralic: The Common Origin of the Proto-Indo-European and the Proto-Uralic Language

Preface

This is a brief summary of my research results in the field of historical-comparative linguistics and on the subject of language reconstruction. The main focus is on the scientific examination of proto-languages. In this paper, I want to pursue the question about the possibility of a genetic relationship between Proto-Indo-European and Proto-Uralic. It should be noted that since the 1990ies until today I have not found any convincing evidences for the Nostratic hypothesis. After a revision of my research results (2020) I came to the conclusion that at least there can be supplied evidences for a distant genetic relationship and for a common origin of the Proto-Indo-European and the Proto-Uralic language.

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Abbreviations

acc. = accusative.
FU = Fenno-Ugric.
 PIE = Proto-Indo-European.
pl. = plural.
 PU = Proto-Uralic.
sg. = singular.
 vb. = verb.
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The Proto-Indo-European (PIE) and the Proto-Uralic (PU) share a series of common features which indicate a distant genetic relationship. Independently from this relationship there are also several loanwords which show that until recent times there have been contacts between the languages.

The following list presents inherited words and 35 cognates (sound laws are listed further below):

PIE *h1nomn = PU *nime “name”.

PIE *mesg- “dip under water, dive” = PU *moški- “wash”.

PIE *wodr = PU *wete “water”.

PIE *pel- “flow” = PU *pulV- “flows gushingly”.

PIE *h2ekw- “water, river” = (?) PU *uŋa- (uncertain reconstruction) “stream, flow” (< *Vnk-, *HV(n)k- ?).

PIE *yeg- “ice” = PU (FU) *jäne “ice”, PU *jäkše “cool, become cold”.

PIE *h1ngw- “fire” = PU *äŋ- “burn”.

PIE *peh2ur (*peh2-) “fire” = PU *päwā- (vb.) “warm, heat, keep warm” (originally onomatopoeic: *pVw-/*pVh2- “blow hot air” ?), compare also PU *päxi-, *päji- “boil, cook”.

PIE *(s)koitros “bright, clear” (< *kei- “shine”?) = PU *kaja “sun”.

PIE *penkwe “five” = PU *piŋė “palm of the hand, handful”.

PIE *(s)pei- “sharp” (compare Latin spina and New High German spitz) = PU *pije “flintstone”.

PIE *kes- “cut” = PU *kečš “knife”.

PIE *kes- “comb, scratch” = PU *kešV- “tear, peel”.

PIE *sek- “cut” = PU *ćäŋkV- “break, separate”.
PIE *h2el- “grow, nourish” = PU *āl “raise, nurse a child”.

PIE *h1es- “be” (derived from *h1es- “sit”!) = PU *ači- “stay, sit, dwell”.

PIE *bhel- “swell” = PU *palj “many, dense, big”.

PIE *bhenǵh- “grow, increase” = PU *puŋka (*poŋka) “swollen/expanded object”.

PIE *menhx- “tread, stamp” = PU *mene- “go”.

PIE *médh- “go, step” = PU *kang(k) “climb, ascend”.

PIE *j1e- “go”, *j1eig- “move” = PU *j- “be in motion”, several verbs of motion with initial *j-: e.g. *jomV-, *jakka-, *juta- “go”, *jVkV- “come”.

PIE *(s)neg- “crawl, sneak” (compare Sanskrit naga, English snake) = PU *níñe “maggot, worm”.

PIE *kwel- “turn, move around” = PU *kVl “tapeworm”.

PIE *deh3- “give” = PU *toɣi- “bring”.

PIE *seh2- “satisfy, fill up” = PU *sayi- “achieve, reach”.

PIE *sek- “dry up” = PU *čoka- “become dry, sink (water level)”.

PIE *mer- “crush, pulverize” = PU *mura- “break”.

PIE *weǵ- “be awake, be strong” = PU *wäki “strength, power”.

Personal pronouns:

1st person: PIE *h1eme-, *-mi “me, I” = PU *minä “I”, *me “we”; 2nd person: PIE *te- “you” (sg.) = PU *tinä “you” (sg.), *te “you” (pl.); 3rd person sg.: PIE *so- = PU *sä-n, *-sä.

Demonstrative pronouns:

PIE *te/*to- = PU *tä- “this, that”.

Interrogative pronouns:

PIE *kwos = PU *ku, *ko “who”.

Case suffixes:

accusative: PIE *-m = PU *-m; ablative: PIE *-d = PU *-ta
Phonetic laws

The laryngeal consonants PIE *h₂, *h₃ correspond PU intervocalic *ɣ. The initial laryngeal consonants were not preserved in the Proto-Uralic language.

The affricates PIU *č, *č and the fricatives PIU *s, *ś were preserved in PU, but in the PIE they are all represented by *s.

The nasal consonants *m, *n and the liquids *r, *l and the semi-vowels *y, *w stayed unchanged in both proto-languages.

The voiced stops *b, *d, *g coincided with the voiceless stops *p, *t, *k in the Uralic proto-language.

Peculiarities:

PIE *h₃ekw- “eye, see” = PU *koke- “see” (*H₃oke- > *koke-: assimilation!).

PIE *ǵep-, *ǵ(y)eu- “eat, chew” = PU *sewe- “eat, chew” (recent palatalization: < *k’ewe-).

PU *ŋ(k) < *nk/*ng = PIU *(n)k/*(n)g.

Overview list of the sound correspondences:

PIU *p, *b = PIE *p, *b, *bh = PU *p
PIU *t, *d = PIE *t, *d, *dh = PU *t
PIU *k, *g = PIE *k, ķ, g, ġ, gh, ġh, = PU *k
PIU *m = PIE *m = PU *m
PIU *n = PIE *n = PU *n
PIU *l = PIE *l = PU *l
PIU *r = PIE *r = PU *r
PIU *w = PIE *w = PU *w
PIU *y = PIE *y = PU *j
PIU *h₁ = PIE *h₁ = PU – (not preserved)
PIU *hx (*h₂, *h₃) = PIE *h₂, *h₃ = PU * – (initial position), *ɣ (intervocalic)
Reconstruction: Proto-Indo-Uralic (Proto-Uralo-Indo-European), 9000 B.C. (?)

* MiC(V) yegem h3okemi. TiC(V) kayVm, h1engCVm, wedem miCenga deh3eti. H1aćemi. (?) (The vowel reconstruction is uncertain)
“I see ice. You bring to me sunshine, fire (heat), water. I dwell (am).”

Remarks:
*yege “ice”, *kayV “sunshine”, *h1engCV “fire”, *wede “water”, plus acc. *-m.
*miCenga (?) “to me” (= *miC- (?) “I” plus allative *-ng(a)/*-n)ya ??).

References

Abondolo, Daniel (1996): Vowel Rotation in Uralic: ObUgrocentric Evidence, School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SEES), University of London.


