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**FINNO-UGRIC HERITAGE  
IN RUSSIAN DIALECTS OF TYUMEN REGION**

*SUMMARY. The author considers the historical and geographical features of linguistic contacts in Tyumen region dialects, inherited from the Finno-Ugric languages and focuses upon local borrowings, going back to the Ob-Ugric languages. The etymological interpretation of the local Finno-ugric elements is carried out in this work. The author takes into account not only the data-source languages, but different situations of Ugrian-Turco-Russian cooperation, that is being in progress since the end of the XVI century.*

*KEY WORDS. Russian historical linguistic contacts, dialects, etymology, the Finno-Ugric languages.*

Russian old dialects of the Tyumen region including the dialects of Khanty language had been developing since the end of the XVI century in a situation of intense ethnolinguistic interactions. Historical and ethnographic materials (A.M. Kastrena, S.K. Patkanova and others) indicate that in the XIX century Southern (Irtysh) Ostiaks lived in the estuary of the Irtysh and the Demyanka (now Uvat area), although by the end of XIX century a very specific Linguo-ethnic situation began to develop in the area.

According to the census of 1868-1869 s., predominantly settlements of a mixed type (Alymka, Uvat, Lebaut, Solyanka, Meadow Saturday), where Russians lived alongside Hunts existed in the above mentioned territory [List of 1871: 14, 15, 20]. This led to a situation where the Irtysh Ostyaks turned to be "extremely susceptible to cultural influences of Russians, and Russification of this tribe recently progressed a lot ... The Irtysh Ostyaks (Tajät-jax ) have found themselves most Russified ... There are many villages where people have forgotten their native language ... Only the older generation understands the Ostyak language, while young people do not know the language of their fathers and communicate only in Russian", [Patkanov II 1999: 47-48]. This interaction resulted in, according to S.K. Patkanov, the emergence of a "mixed people" who "could be taken as Ostyak only by its name, but in reality who does not speak Ostyak and generally does not differ from Russians" [Patkanov II 1999: 121].

M.A. Romanova, studying in the middle of the twentieth century linguo-ethnic situation of Uvat district, described the Russian population that only thanks to family legends remembers its Ostyak origin. On the basis of linguistic data M.A. Romanova concluded that by the middle of the XVIII century Khanty living in the Irtysh estuary the process of a "linguistic blending of Russian

and Khanty people began”, accompanied by a language change — from Khanty to Russian, herewith the Irtysh Khantys “while speaking Russian transmitted to the newly emerging dialects (starozhilcheskie) the features their native language” [Romanova, 1971].

From the point of view of history of the language and contact linguistics the situation described above can be characterized as a substrate one. In this respect many Ob-Ugric inclusions in the Russian dialects and toponyms should be considered as substrates. A number of scholars studying linguo-ethnic history of other regions, consider later similar phenomena even emerging in the language nowadays as substrates. However A.K. Matveev believes that the recent processes of this kind taking place relatively quickly, do not belong to the substratum phenomena, because it is the matter of the language change rather than of the “rooting” of one language into another. Indeed, the “velocity” of linguistic change, transparency of etymological ties with the source language suggest the process of borrowing. Nevertheless, many loans are not transparent, and in their form still closer to the substrate (possibly through the prior pre-Russian interaction of Ob-Ugric with Turkic dialects).

Among the loans that have distinct etymological connection with the Khanty language it is possible to trace a sufficiently large bulk of words, whose semantics is connected to the household (*goose* ‘outerwear, sewn from the skins of fur on the outside, “*keul*” a bark dipper to drink out of it“), the terminology of hunters, fishermen (Carus “a log barn in the forest for the storage of pine cones and berries”, *Limas* “fishing equipment”, *Haley* “gull species”), etc. This group of words functioning in Russian dialects of Uvat and Tobolsk districts, was widely interpreted in the well-known works of A.E. Aikin, T.N. Dmitrieva, A.K. Matveev etc.

The present article focuses on the Finno-Ugric (Ob Ugrian) borrowings in the popular geographic terminology (nominations of rivers, lakes, wetlands, forest areas, etc.), known in the old-dialects of Vagay district (zone of Uvat-Vagay Frontier). According to historical sources, already in the XIX century this territory was not inhabited by Khantys. Yet, the traces of the Khanty population’s presence can be found in the place names (hydronyms), consisting of regularly recorded determiners (cf. the tau “Lake” < Orishtau, Kolotau etc.), that correlate with the vocabulary of the southern (Irtysh) Khantys, described in lexicographical works by S.K. Patkanov [Patkanov 1902].

Some of the terms prevalent in vagay dialects belong to the broad terms of the Ural-Siberian area, hence they are widely interpreted in scientific works: *kuyah*, *poshvor*, *sor*, etc. [Anikin 2000]. However, local terms have not yet been described in every respect, although many researches make them their major focus.

Popular geographic terminology manifesting language contact situation reflects different aspects of linguo-ethnic interaction, so its etymological interpretation should include the level of borrowing, as well as possible substrate layers. Historical and contact analysis that roots back the etymological one, takes into account historical, geographical, ethnic and cultural circumstances, as well as stratification approach to the situation of language contact. It aims to reconstruct not only the original etymon, but also the conditions of a foreign language entry into Russian dialects.

As regards a historical and contact approach local place names (“sibirizms”) are of utmost interest because they are not registered in other areas. Among localisms it is possible to trace a geographical term *nachibey*. In the Russian aboriginal dialect

of this area the word *nachib'ey* (with options *nachab'a*, *nachib'ay*, *nachib'y*) is known in its general meaning “*large swamp, a large meadow, dry treeless area in the swamp, dry, solid land bank of the river, lake*”.

We point out that the meaning of the “telmographic” term there are two unrelated basic semes, “*large*” and “*dry treeless*”. cf: “*All those big swamps are named nachibei, and small are named in many ways*”, “*Nachibey is a clean, empty space, chistina (clearance), for some reason there is nothing: no cranberry, no trees, nothing. It is even said: “It is as clean there as in a nachibei*”. The seme “*dry solid*”, differentiating a third meaning, appears to be secondary “*dry treeless area in the marsh → dry, hard land on the (marsh), river, lake*”. The coexistence of the two main meanings — “*great swamp*” (large area that contains the swamp forest) and “*dry treeless area in the swamp*” — within the same etymological cluster remains unclear. But it may be indicative of the initial heterogeneity of its constituent words.

In Tobolsk State Archives the word *nachbai* as a place name is fixed in documents dated by 1735. Modern toponym *Nachib'a / Nachab'a / Nachab'ay*, in accordance with the historical, denotes an extended swamp, located in the upper reaches of the Supra and the Small Turtas rivers to the right of the Irtysh. We have recorded this toponym in the early 1980s in the Russian language of Vagay Tatars. At the same time Russian geoterm *nachibey*, *nachiby*, historical toponym *Nachibay*, Tatar toponym *Nachiba*, *Nachabay* are fixed upon the territory of Russian first settlers in Siberia, when ethno-linguistic contacts were particularly intense.

Historical and contact-linguistic interpretation of the term may be based on several versions, correlated with the different languages involved into contact: Russian, Siberian Tartar, Khanty (Irtysh dialect). The study of the material showed that the most acceptable version is that of the Ugric. There is some historical and toponymic evidence that before the arrival of Russians the area where the derivatives of the form-*nachib* are fixed was inhabited by Ob Ugric peoples. In this context, Ugric etymology of the word is relevant. In this case, the Russian form *nachibey / nachiby* should be considered the source form, whereas forms *Nachabay / Nachiba* are perceived as secondary, already as a result of linguistic contacts with Turks and popular rethinking. In this case, in the structure of the geographical term the basis *nacha- / nache- / nachi* and the final formant *-bay / -pay / -bey* are singled out. Still in this case, the interpretation of the term can be linked with a variety of Khanty roots and determiners. Cf, *nachi- / nache-* with a value of Hunt. “*Fir*” (where-*bai* < Turk “*Rich, full,*” or Hunt. Paj «*island hill*”). Given the contamination of Turk and Hunty meaning of original hanty is reconstructed — “*fir- tree island in a swamp*”. Metonymic expansion in vagay dialects later led to the meaning of “*big swamp*”.

The second meaning of the Russian term is logically associated with other Hunty term *ñöli*, *Nöli* «*rust, means rust-colored substance that collects near the shores of rivers* (N.I. Tereshkin believes that it may be oil seeping from the ground). The above interpretation of the Russian root *nachibai* as “*an island, a place where the rust-colored substance accumulates, ie, oil*” is quite acceptable if we remember that it is in these areas that the deposits of oil are found and their industrial

\* Names of swamps, marches and bogs.

development started. Thus, a different meaning of the Russian word *nachibey* “dry clean section of a swamp, on which nothing grows”, can be interpreted by the geological conditions of the place: by the occurrence of oil (see also close to the idiomatic unit, found in Tyumen dialects: “as clean as in a nachibei”).

The study showed that the Russian old dialects of the Tyumen region (including *vagayskie*) retained a layer of geographical terminology, that go back to the language of the Irtysh Khanty. However, the historical fate of borrowing is different. Being under an adapting impact of both Russian and Turkic dialects of the region, the Ob-Ugric entries undergone significant transformations, resulting in the oblivion of native words. The use of special historical methods and techniques of contact linguistics allows to restore lost links of the lexical system, contributing to the reliability of etymological reconstructions, not only at the lexical, but also at the toponymic levels.

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