

INFORMACIJA

THE BUDAPEST CONFERENCE ON BALTIC STUDIES

Specialized Baltic studies in Hungary were initiated only about 10 years ago, but the University of Budapest is step by step gaining the reputation of an important center of Baltic scholarship. Thanks to the unselfish efforts of a group of scholars at the Department of Eastern Slavic and Baltic Philology, and especially to the enthusiasm of its head, Prof. András Zoltán, close contacts have been established with Lithuanian and Latvian colleagues: guest teachers of Baltic languages are being invited to the University for permanent work or with presentation courses, young Baltic scholars have been trained. Articles on Baltic topics regularly appear in the annual journal of the Department "Studia Russica", several textbooks and manuals have been published both in Budapest and in Szombathely, where Latvian is taught at the Department of the Uralic Languages of the Daniel Berzsenyj Higher Pedagogical School.

An important aspect of the development of Baltic studies in Hungary is the organization of conferences. In 1998 a series of biennial conferences focusing on Slavic and Baltic languages, "Languages of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania", was started. The year 2000, in which, by the way, the thousandth anniversary of the foundation of the Christian Hungarian state was celebrated, is especially noteworthy for Hungarian Baltic studies: together with the second symposium on the languages of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, on April 5–6, a specialized scholarly meeting on Baltic linguistics was held: "Grammatical systems and areal typology in focus – the case of Baltic languages". Its conception was carried out by Aranka Laczházi, a young and promising Ph.D. student of Baltic languages at the University of Budapest, the life and soul of the whole meeting, and Dr. Björn Wiemer (University of Konstanz, Germany). The subject-matter of the conference was strictly defined: description of particular grammatical (sub-)systems

of the Baltic languages, comparative studies of grammatical questions and typological and areal studies focusing on Baltic languages. This meeting of scholars, devoting themselves to the study of a number of well-defined problems, resulted in close contacts and intensive discussions. The 15 participants of the conference represented 11 countries: Estonia, Finland, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Ukraine, and USA.

The papers presented at the conference seem to single out the most crucial problems of the grammatical studies of Baltic languages nowadays: by a curious coincidence, almost identical or very similar topics were dealt with in several contributions.

Roman Roszko (Warsaw) outlined the project of a contrastive grammar of Lithuanian, based on a meaning-to-form approach. To illustrate it, the expression of imperceptive modality (i.e., evidentiality) in Lithuanian, Polish and Bulgarian was discussed. The same problem, but from the morphological point of view, was studied in Liena Muižniece's (Turku) paper on past participle finitization in Estonian and Latvian, revealing some subtle similarities and differences between these languages and their dialects. The use of Lithuanian participles in analytical forms of the perfect was analyzed by Björn Wiemer (Konstanz) on the basis of quite comprehensive corpora of both spoken and written texts. The interrelation between the perfect and evidential was also given a special analysis.

Nominal inflection was dealt with in several papers. A general overview of the most interesting problems of formal description was presented by Aleksey Andronov (St.Petersburg). Contrasting Lithuanian and Latvian declension, the author concentrated on cases where similar features are given different treatments in traditional grammar. Baiba Metzāle-Kangere's (Stockholm) report was devoted to the category of case and especially to the problem of the interrelation of formal and semantic cases as illustrated by Latvian data. Ala Lichačiova

(Vilnius) presented a contrastive study of Lithuanian and Russian paradigms of case forms and singled out several items that are problematic for a formal approach. Ričardas Petkevičius (Vilnius–Riga) viewed Latvian case paradigms historically, analyzing the peculiarities of the declensional classes in the translation of the New Testament (1685).

Syntactic features were analyzed from the areal point of view by Birute Klaas (Tartu), who gave an account of the nominative object in the area of the Baltic Sea and commented on some of the theories of its origin, and Mirjam Fried (Berkeley), whose contribution dealt with the use of the dative of possession in Lithuanian and Latvian in comparison with similar constructions in other European languages. Anatoly Nepokupny (Kiev) drew attention to a common peculiarity of the Baltic, Slavic and Finno-Ugric languages consisting in the repetition of the initial syllable of the word as an affirmative answer (Lith. *Ar buvote susirinkę? – Bu.*). Bernhard Wälchli (Stockholm) made a complex analyses of the innovative features of the Low Latvian dialect (in phonetics, morphology and syntax), presented against the background of the neighboring languages. He also briefly characterized a forthcoming collection of articles edited by the Scandinavian typologists Ö. Dahl and M. Koptjevskaja-Tamm “The Circum-Baltic Languages: Their Typology and Contacts”.

Guido Micheli (Parma) investigated some grammatical deviations from the German original in M. Mažvydas’s “Gesmes Chriksczoniskas” and proposed several explanations for them.

Jury Otkupshchikov (St. Petersburg) undertook a historical analysis of derivative models of Indo-European *ē*-stem verbs, consistently setting apart denominative and deverbative formations and concentrating especially on such oppositions as Lith. *karti* : *karėti* (action : result of action), quite productive in Baltic and Slavic.

Nicole Nau (Kiel) studied some tendencies in the anaphoric use of the Latvian pronouns *viņš, tas* and *šis* on the basis of a comprehensive body of texts, focusing especially on phenomena where spoken varieties differ from the written standard.

Evija Liparte’s (Greifswald) report, read by Inga Klevere (guest teacher of Latvian in Szombatheli), was devoted to the ways of expressing the notions of opening and closing in 10 languages of the Baltic Sea region.

The reports of a few colleagues who were unable to attend the conference, were represented by abstracts in the collection of papers covering both conferences*. The participants were invited to send in their papers to the editors of the annual “Studia Russica”.

The Budapest conference on Baltic studies was undoubtedly an outstanding academic event and its organizers deserve the warmest gratitude for the high scholarly level of this meeting. Let us wish them further success in their efforts towards the advancement of Baltic studies in Hungary!

Aleksey Andronov

BALTISTIKA MASKVOJE

Maskvoje baltistika turi senas, jau daugiau kaip šimtmečio tradicijas. XIX amžiaus pabaigą, kai Maskvos universiteto Filologijos fakultete buvo įsteigta lyginamosios gramatikos katedra ir vienu jos studentų tapo žymus Rusijos kalbininkas ir baltistas F. Fortunatovas, galima laikyti Maskvos baltistikos pradžia. F. Fortunatovas buvo ne tik pirmas lietuvių kalbos dėstytojas Maskvos universitete, bet ir Maskvos baltistinės mokyklos steigėjas – jo studijos suformavo ypatingą mokslinį požiūrį į baltistines problemas, požiūrį, kuriuo vadovavosi vėlesnių kartu mokslininkai. Jis parengė ir stiprią mokslinę pamainą: V. Poržezinskis, po jo M. Petersonas tęsė lietuvių kalbos kursą, ruošė Maskvos universitete lyginamosios kalbotyros specialistus. Net sunkiausiaisiais metais, kai dauguma Universiteto skyrių ir fakultetų buvo uždaryta dėl „socialistinės mokslo orientacijos“, šis kursas nutrūko neilgam – 1947 m. studentams pareikalavus M. Petersonas vėl pradėjo dėstyti lietuvių kalbą. Nors kursas buvo fakultatyvinis, jį lankė nedaug studentų ir ne visi iki pabaigos išklausė, to užteko, kad baltistika Maskvoje pradėtų naują savo istorijos puslapį.

Gal būtent iš tokių fakultatyvinių kursų ir atsiranda ryškiausias ir įdomiausias mokslo kryptys...

* Hungaro-Baltoslavica 2000. Abstracts, ed. by A. Laczházi, E. Szmolinka and A. Zoltán, Budapest, 2000. Among the Baltic contributions presented at the conference on the languages of the Grand Duchy one should mention reports by A. Andronov (St. Petersburg), P. U. Dini (Pisa), I. Koshkin (Riga), A. Laczházi (Budapest), Ju. Otkupshchikov (St. Petersburg), T. Timchenko (Vilnius), M. Zavjalova (Moscow).