

RECONSIDERING THE GEOGRAPHIC ORIGINS BASED ON SYNTHESIS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL
AND LINGUISTIC EVIDENCE AND THE NEWEST RESULTS IN GENETICS

– a Finno-Scythian hypothesis –

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(Abstract)

Tracking down prehistoric migrations and locating the geographical birthplace (if any) of language families has been subject to great interest for centuries. New statistical data in genetics built up in the first two decades of the 21st century now contribute to a new set of clues in this puzzle, a set of clues that only leads us to plausible conclusions however if used with a great degree of caution, and as part of a multidisciplinary synthesis involving scientific data reached by archeology and linguistics as well. This paper attempts to map the origins of the Uralic language family with such methods, reaching a conclusion that is inherently new.

Keywords: Uralic, Finno-Ugric, genetics, archaeology, linguistics

Outline of Article

Introduction – Previous research on the issue by the author, relevant literature, methodology

1. Genetic evidence suggesting a chain of Bronze Age migrations in Eastern Europe and Central Asia
2. Genetic evidence, Corded Ware culture and Finno-Ugric languages
3. The question of haplogroup N, the Seima-Turbino migration, and Samoyedic languages
4. Andronovo culture and the Ugric languages
5. The question of loanwords
6. The question of Indo-European origins

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*Conclusion*¹

The final conclusion of this paper is that the scenario synthesis of archaeological, linguistic and genetic evidence makes the most likely for the origins and expansion of Uralic languages is the Sredny Stog and Yamna cultures (5-4th millennia BCE) in the area of present day Ukraine being the urheimat in the proto-Uralic period, with the population developing Samoyedic languages breaking away from it and migrating

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¹ This paper summarizes those findings that are relevant from a Hungarian point of view of my research paper on the Uralic language family "Reconsidering the geographic origins based on the synthesis of archaeological and linguistic evidence and the newest results in genetics – A Finno-Scythian hypothesis" that has been published in the Asia Pacific Journal of Advanced Business and Social Sciences, and can be found on the following link: https://apiar.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/5_APJABSS_v5i2_2019_pp.-41-70.pdf

eastwards in the 4th millennium BCE forming the Afanasievo Culture, from which a much later northward migration marked by the presence of N-B170 carried the modern Samoyedic languages to the subarctic zone, while Afanasievan languages became extinct in their original territory much earlier than that. Finno-Ugric urheimat on the other hand appears to be the Corded Ware culture (2900-2350 BCE) formed by a population migrating to the temperate forest belt of Northern and Eastern Europe. Then, the formation of the Andronovo culture in 2000 BC by a population splitting away from the Corded Ware culture apparently marked the split between Ugric and Finno-Permian languages, with Ugric being developed by the population establishing Andronovo culture, and Finno-Permian by the population remaining in the original Corded Ware area. Then in the following millennia, Uralic languages wiped out of most of these areas by the expansion of Germanic, Balto-Slavic and Iranian languages from the south and Turkic languages from the east, with the present Uralic languages being the rare fragments surviving these trends. Due to the suggested Uralic urheimat in the area of what is today Ukraine, and Andronovo culture also appearing to be Uralic, perhaps the phrase “Finno-Scythian” could mirror the essence of this hypothesis the best. These conclusions are supported by matchings between linguistic, archaeological and genetic evidence as show in the following table:

Table 1: Hypothesized events and fitting matchings in linguistic, archaeological and genetic evidence,

Event	Linguistic evidence	Archaeological evidence	Genetic evidence
Samoyedic splitting away from proto-Uralic in the Pontic Steppe, with the population that developed the language that Samoyedic originated from, forming Afanasievo culture	Comfirms the linguistic split in question to have occurred around 3000 BCE	Population migrates from Sredny Stog/Yamna to Central Asia forms Afanasievo 3700-3300 BCE	R1b links between Yamna and Afanasievo, separation of R1a-Z283 and R1a-Z93 around 4000BCE, modern Samoyedic population linked to Afanasievo area by the spread of N-B170
Finno-Ugric developed from proto-Uralic, with the population that formed proto-Finno-Ugric, moving north from the Yamna culture, forming the Corded Ware culture	Comfirms the linguistic split in question to have occurred around 3000 BCE	Corded Ware deriving from Yamna around 2900 BC	Corded Ware population confirmed to have originated from Yamna, Yamna related R1a present in Finno-Permian populations of Northeast Europe today, distribution of R1a-M458 and I2 confirming Balto-Slavic population having arrived later than Corded Ware
Ugric splitting away from proto-Finno-Ugric, with population that formed Ugric, migrating eastwards from Corded Ware, forming the Andronovo culture	Confirms the linguistic split in question to have occurred around 2000 BCE	Andronovo deriving from Corded Ware around 2000 BCE	Andronovo population confirmed to have originated from eastern Corded Ware, much of R1a in Hungarians confirmed originating from eastern Corded Ware

We could also see patterns of consecutive migrations following the same routes, that can be explained by the deterministic role of natural environment. It was often the natural environment determining out of two neighboring societies, which one had the edge that enabled it to conquer territory of the other. Thus if in different historical periods, two societies emerged as neighbors of each-other in the same pattern of natural environment as a different pair of neighboring civilizations a few centuries earlier, it can easily result in a situation where out of the pair, the one gaining the upper hand will be the one living in the same territory as that of the one that gained the upper hand a few hundred years earlier. In certain geographical regions of characteristic natural environments, this seem to have created certain corridors of consecutive historical migrations, with demographic groups of different ethnic and linguistic identity following the same route in every couple of hundred years.

The theory presented of this paper is of course, highly hypothetical, but so are all the theories on this issue, prehistoric origins of language families, including the widely popular Kurgan hypothesis regarding the Indo-European family, as well as the traditional model of the Uralic urheimat in the subarctic. Hypothetical is however something all theories on this issue inherently have to be, as evidence from the given period is scarce and mostly indirect. The hypothesis presented in this paper is based on not less, but rather more hard evidence than earlier theories on the issue, as it not only recognizes the results of archaeology and linguistics, but also combines genetic evidence with them, such genetic evidence, that mostly became available only in the last decade, thus wasn't yet available for use when earlier hypotheses on the issue were constructed, therefore they had to be constructed without relying on them. Future genetic results will be the main judge of the hypothesis presented here, and viewing the speed newer and newer subclades of subclades are identified, more and more ancient DNA evidence is acquired, broader and broader statistical databases are built up, we still have to wait years, but perhaps not that many years for this to happen. Such recent results, being published in the past few years, and already referenced in this paper, are for example ancient DNA evidence confirming the population of the Corded Ware culture originating in a massive migration from the Yamna culture, and the population of the Andronovo culture originating from the Corded Ware culture in a similar manner. It is rather a question of when, than if, for such evidence clarifying the nature of relations between other such cultures to emerge.

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Horváth Csaba-Barnabás: Finnugor Reconsidering the geographic origins based on synthesis of archaeological and linguistic evidence and the newest results in genetics – a Finno-Scythian hypothesis. *International Relations Quarterly*, ISSN 2062-1973, Vol. 10. No. 3-4. (2019) 30 p. Your cooperation is highly appreciated. *The Editor in Chief*