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Pars II

Summaria acroasium in sectionibus et symposiis factarum

Redegit

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the old ones.

The throwing games are represented mainly by various (folk and sport) balls games; old games using knife or stone can be met rarely.

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UDMURT PAGAN PRIESTHOOD: STATUS, HIERARCHY AND FUNCTIONS

There were still no professional priests in the traditional Udmurt society when one could see a certain group of people performing worship service. Udmurt pagan priesthood was usually represented by electoral members of community with a special status.

According to the names of the two main sacred places there were usually two endogham worship groups in the Udmurt village: *Kua/la vyzhy* and *Lud vyzhy* (*Kua/la* and *Lud* kins). Accordingly there was a certain priest for each worship complex. There was specially worked out ceremony of the election of the main priest – *vös'as'*, *kuris'kis'*, *kua/lalud utis'* – 'person who prays; person who asks god for something; person who keeps sacred place'. And it was a wizard (*tuno*) who by special shaman means of witchcraft could determine future main priest. And only married man belonging to the priest's kin (*vös'as' vyzhy*) could be chosen as a main priest. Besides people preferred to choose red-haired man as the most loveable by god. Sometimes even a child could fulfil the function of the main priest and in such case there should be chosen the so-called "tutor". Usually the main priest was elected for the period of twelve years, but sometimes for life.

Those people who took a lower position in the church hierarchy, helped the main priest: they were his assistants: *kanul kutis'* ('person taking the main priest under his arms'), *parchas'* ('person sacrificing animals'), *tyals'* ('person responsible for the sacred fire'), *tus'ty-dury mis'kis* ('person responsible for the ritual dishes'). Usually

two persons should be responsible for each kind of duties mentioned above. Highly original figure among the members of the Udmurt priesthood was *türo* ('a person taking place of honour'). Besides one could see the so-called "priests for one day" in the Udmurt priesthood. The function of a priest for one day was fulfilled by the people of one and same faith in turn.

The priests of the Udmurt pagan worship were not only the founders and keepers of the worship etiquette rules, but they were creators of religious-mythological ideas, they were the interpretators of these ideas and to some extent mediators between the god and their kindred.

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GENRE METAMORPHOSES OF THE UDMURT WEDDING SONGS

The following genre varieties should be found in the modern Udmurt wedding song: *s'uan gur* (bridegroom's tribe tune), *börys' gur* (bride's tribe tune), *kel'an gur* (seeling off tune).

The comparison of some local peculiarities of modern and archaic wedding ceremony and also the analysis of figurative symbolism and motives as a structural components of the text makes possible to see the evolution of the wedding song genre.

Ritual complex *s'uan-börys'* (a feast at the bride and bridegroom) and *s'uan-börys'gur* which is closely connected with ritual complex itself are considered to be obligatory attributes of the wedding ceremony. Possible it is one of the innovations in the wedding ceremony description.

The wedding ceremony is accompanied by folklore means, but one can see some changes in the system of folklore means which appeared as a result of ceremony evolution and contamination of the tunes of the archaic farewell songs belonging to the bride's tribe (*kuin' maj krez'* 'a tune which is sung on a third day of the wedding ceremony', *nyl bördyton gur* 'a tune which

makes bride cry' and farewell songs which are sung by a bride herself (*byzis/byzem nyllen kyrzanez*).

The loss of the ceremonial stage *beren puks'on* (the girl being proposed to a man as a wife just before the wedding feast should come back to her parent's home) lead to the loss of farewell songs of a bride (*byz'em nyllen kyrzanez*). The main tune of bride's farewell songs – alientation/initiation which panitrates the mythological line maiden life/marriage = life/death turns into bride's tribe tunes (*börys' gur*). The differentiation of the status a girl/a woman is well seen here because of symbolic contracting of her/not her parents; her/not hear home; girl's woman's costume and hair-do; man's/woman's fate; youth/old age.

Outside the ritual context the tune connecting with the loss of maiden life/youth/life enriched with assotiative images of broken/dead tree, whitered/fallen becomes the main genre line of a lyric song.

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ON FINNO-UGRIC SEMIOTICS

Within the domain of Finno-Ugric studies semiotics appeared during the last decades, as important works were published in linguistics, literary studies, art history etc. from semiotic points of view. Thus, detecting the signs in different cultures became a favoured topic. There are relatively frequent research historic surveys as well – but until recently there was no attempt to summarize the scope and possibilities of a "Finno-Ugric Semiotics". My sketch is:

1. Finno-Ugric background of semiotic terms

Hungarian *jel/jegy* and its FU background. The meaning of those terms in medieval and later Hungarian sources.

In the other FU languages we do not find such old semiotic term. Fi *merkki* or Est. *märgistüstem* are recently coined terms. In other languages similar terms are quite new.

2. Semantic development and recent status of terms denoting the "scientific study of signs" in Finno-Ugric perspective

Following the development and terminology of international semiotics, Est. *semiootika* has been invented recently (following the similar Russian terminology in the sixties).

Somewhat later Fi. *semiotiikka* appeared (following the main international semiotic trends and terms).

Somewhat earlier Hu. *szemiotika* was used (in fact influenced by Russian works, but within international frame of reference, and with regard to much older usage).

In the other FU languages there is no special term (in general use) for semiotics or for study of signs.

It is another striking phenomenon that (regardless to some early attempt) in no FU language a "native" term for "semiotics" became dominant – and the "French" form (*sémiologie*) was not dominant either.

3. Development of recent "schools" or "circles" in FU semiotics

Initiated by Lotman from the mid-sixties on in Estonia the Tartu-Moscow school was created. Other Soviet scholars belong to the same trend, a method still alive today.

In Hungary by about 1968 structural studies, researches for models of social and cultural phenomena were transformed into semiotics. Although it is still active, there is no "Hungarian school" of semiotics.

After a very few professors Tarasti started the Finnish Semiotic Society (1979). Its membership mostly came from late French structuralism and by now Finnish semiotics is one of best structured semiotic trend around the world.

In other FU countries there is no particular semiotic school or trend – at present.

4. All the above statements are according to my best (limited) informations. I shall be very grateful to any comment and criticism – especially for current informations concerning flourishing FU semiotics any time and anywhere.