

Ob-Ugric

Community of Practice in Uralic Studies (COPIUS)
Introduction to Uralic Studies

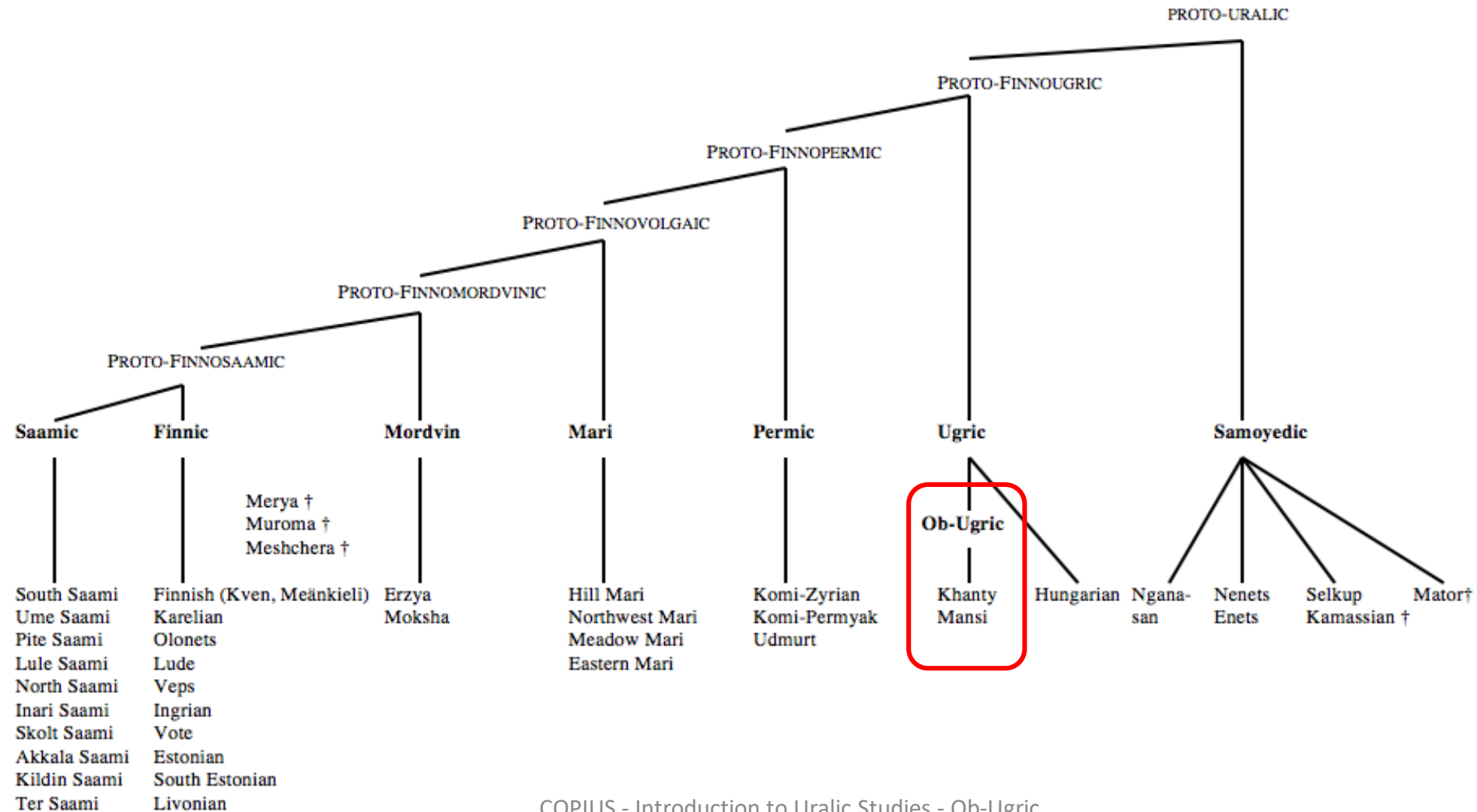
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Genealogical classification



for further theories, see Proto-languages slides

URALIC LANGUAGES

F Finno-Ugric

FO Baltic-Finnic

- FO1 Finnish
- FO2 Karelian
- FO3 Veps
- FO4 Ingrian
- FO5 Estonian
- FO6 Votic
- FO7 Livonian

FS Sami languages

- FS1 Western Sami
- FS2 Central Sami
- FS3 Eastern Sami

FU Ugric

- FU1 Hungarian
- FU2 Mansi
- FU3 Khanty

FP Finno-Permian

- FP1 Komi-Zyrian
- FP2 Komi-Permyak
- FP3 Udmurt

FW Finno-Volgaic

- FW1 Mari
- FW2 Mordvinic

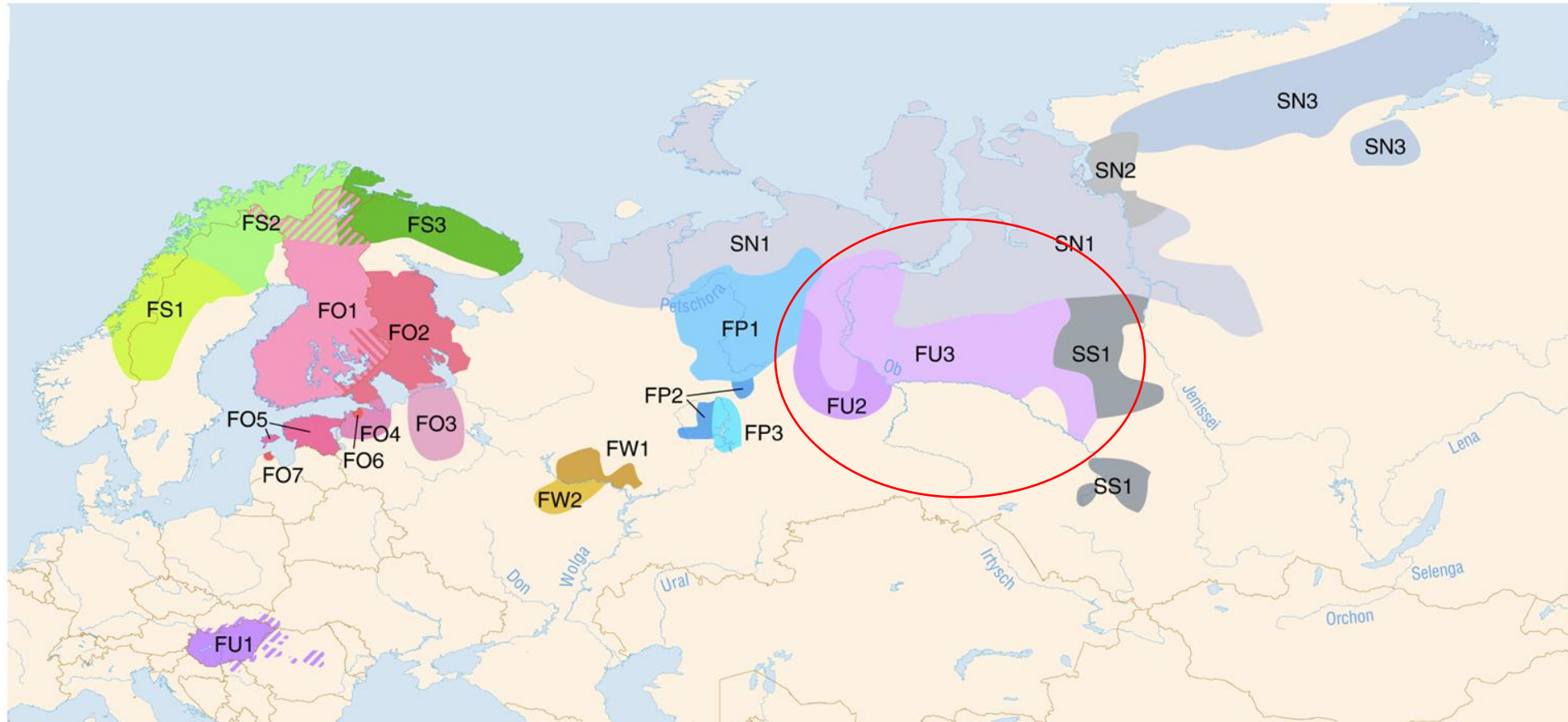
S Samoyedic

SN Northern Samoyedic

- SN1 Nenets
- SN2 Enets
- SN3 Nganasan

SS Southern Samoyedic

- SS1 Selkup



Nomenclature

	Khanty	Mansi
Endonym	ханты ясаң	мăньси лăтың
Russian	хантыйский язык остяцкий язык	мансийский язык вогульский язык
German	Chantisch Ostjakisch	Mansisch Wogulisch
English	Khanty Ostyak	Mansi Vogul
Hungarian	hanti nyelv osztják nyelv	manysi nyelv vogul nyelv
Finnish	hanti ostjakki	mansi voguli
Estonian	handi keel ostjaki keel	mansi keel voguli keel

NB: Ostyak-Samoyeds are Selkups, which are Samoyeds, not Ob-Ugrians

The Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug

Historical name is Yugra, which can be found in the current name of the territory

According to the Census 2010:
population: 1 532 243

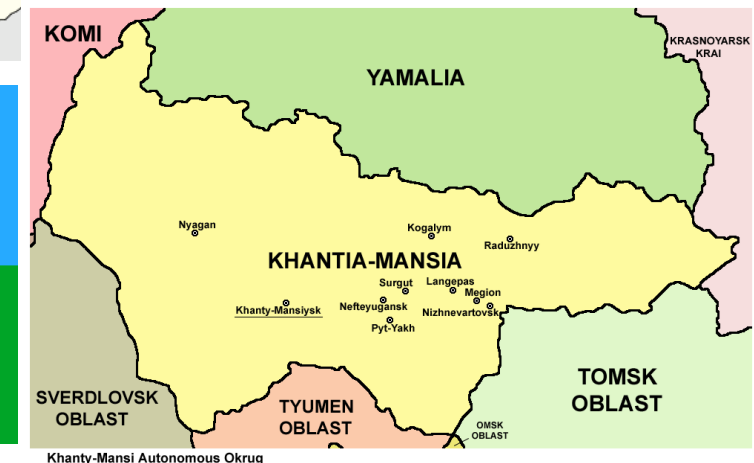
973 978 Russians (68,1%)

108 899 Tatars (7,6%)

19 068 Khanty (1,3%)

10,977 Mansi (0,8%)

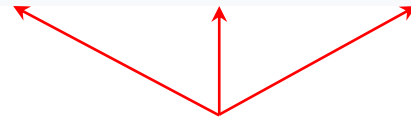
Capital: Khanty-Mansiysk



Percentage of Khantys and Mansis in the Autonomous Okrug

Ethnic group	1939 Census		1959 Census		1970 Census		1979 Census		1989 Census		2002 Census		2010 Census ¹	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Khanty	12,238	13.1%	11,435	9.2%	12,222	4.5%	11,219	2.0%	11,892	0.9%	17,128	1.2%	19,068	1.3%
Mansi	5,768	6.2%	5,644	4.6%	6,684	2.5%	6,156	1.1%	6,562	0.5%	9,894	0.7%	10,977	0.8%
Nenets	852	0.9%	815	0.7%	940	0.3%	1,003	0.2%	1,144	0.1%	1,290	0.1%	1,438	0.1%
Komi	2,436	2.6%	2,803	2.3%	3,150	1.2%	3,105	0.5%	3,000	0.2%	3,081	0.2%	2,364	0.2%
Russians	67,616	72.5%	89,813	72.5%	208,500	76.9%	423,792	74.3%	850,297	66.3%	946,590	66.1%	973,978	68.1%
Ukrainians	1,111	1.2%	4,363	3.5%	9,986	3.7%	45,484	8.0%	148,317	11.6%	123,238	8.6%	91,323	6.4%
Tatars	2,227	2.4%	2,938	2.4%	14,046	5.2%	36,898	6.5%	97,689	7.6%	107,637	7.5%	108,899	7.6%
Others	1,026	1.1%	6,115	4.9%	15,629	5.8%	43,106	7.6%	163,495	12.7%	223,959	15.6%	173,536	12.6%

¹ 102,138 people were registered from administrative databases, and could not declare an ethnicity. It is estimated that the proportion of ethnicities in this group is the same as that of the declared group.^[13]



Between 1970 and 1989 the population of the okrug has boomed by over a million newcomers

Number of speakers (in and outside of the Autonomous Okrug)

2002

2010

The Khanty

Total	28 678	30 943
Speakers	13 568 (47,3%)	9 584 (30,9%)

The Mansi

Total	11 432	12 269
Speakers	2 746 (24,0%)	938 (7,6%)

statistics from
<http://www.perepis2002.ru/index.html?id=86>
and
<https://rosstat.gov.ru/folder/10705>

Fishing and hunting advantages granted to indigenous peoples presumably motivated several inhabitants to register themselves as Khantys and Mansis in 2010.

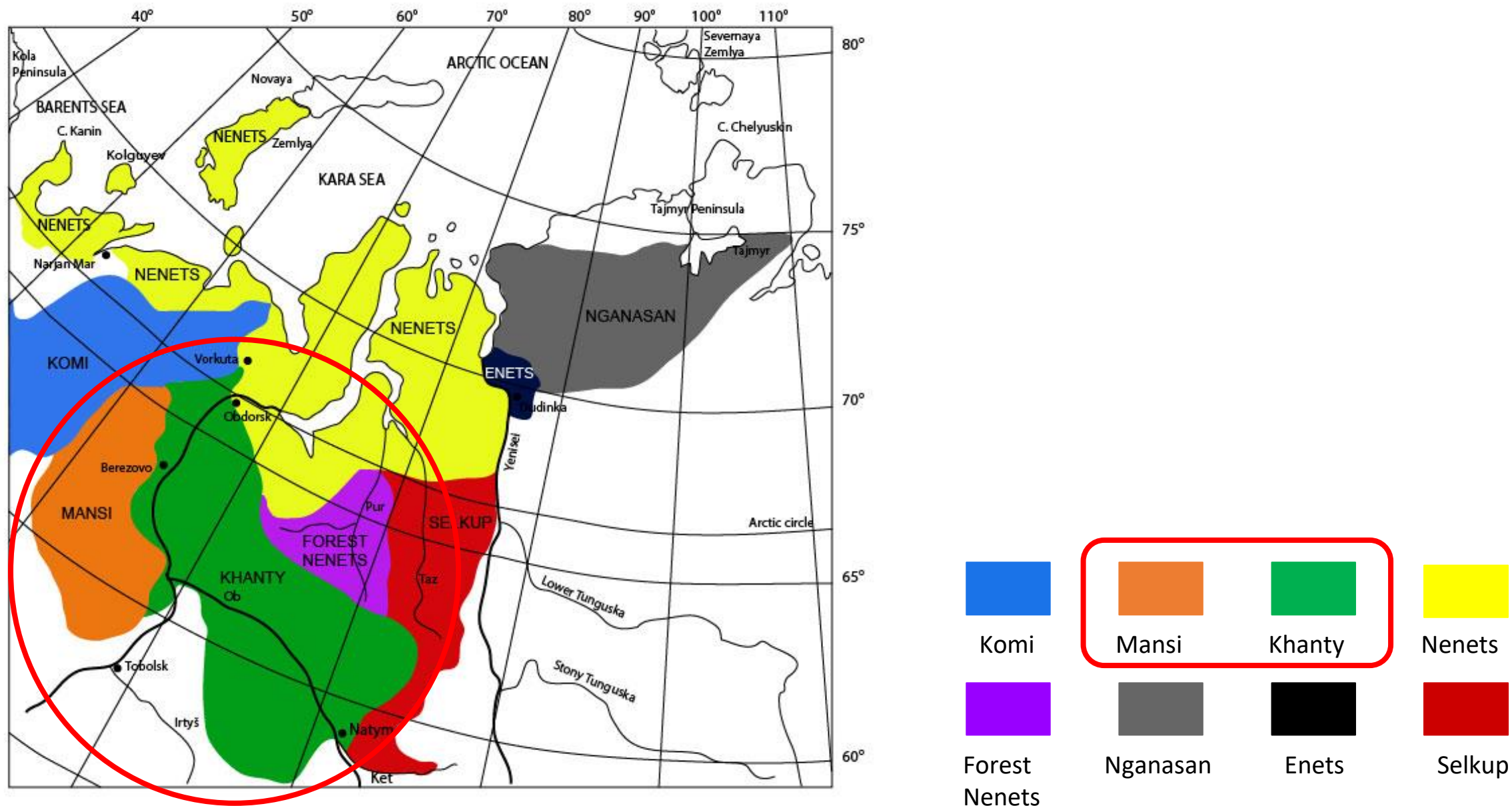
Regions and dialects

Khanty and Mansi settlements are situated along the river streams, therefore the dialects are named after the rivers

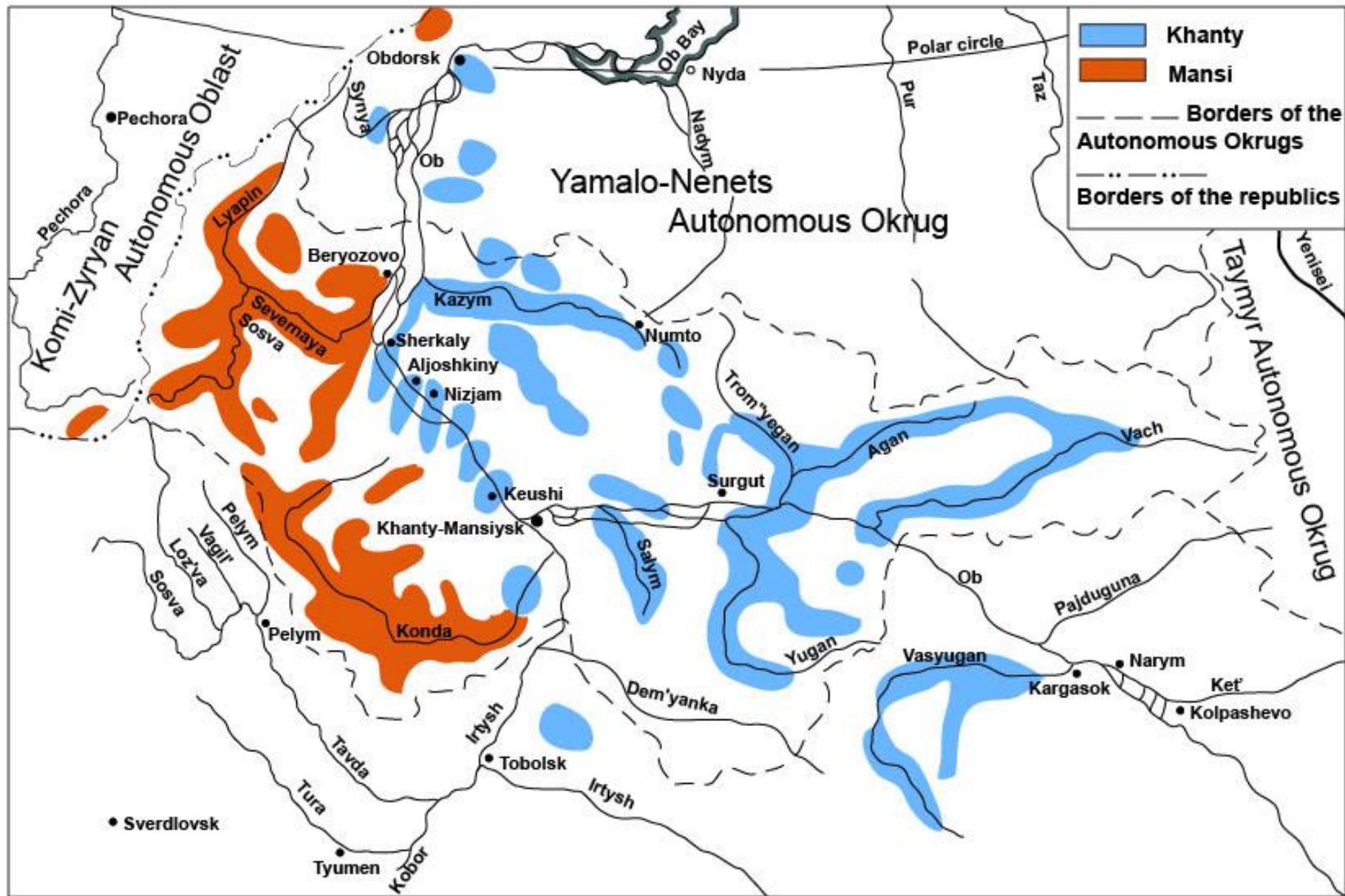
Since the area is vast, there are great differences between dialects within each language

e.g. Northern Khanty dialects show greater resemblance to the neighboring Northern Mansi

In general, Mansi live in the Western regions (closer to the Ural mountains, even west of them until the end of the 19th century), and Khanty in the East.



based on Collinder, Björn 1960. *Comparative Grammar of the Uralic Languages*. Stockholm. S. 425.



based on Décsy, Gyula 1965. *Einführung in die finnisch-ugrische Sprachwissenschaft*. Wiesbaden. S. 24.

Khanty dialects (or even languages?)

Northern Khanty

Sygva †

Obdorsk

Synja Šuryškary

Šerkaly

Kazym

Nizjam †

The Eastern Khanty dialects are significantly more complicated than the Northern dialects, and presumably the most archaic ones. Balandin (1955) regards them as two separate languages. Southern Khanty is somewhere in the middle between these extremes.

Eastern Khanty

Vakh-Vasyugan

Surgut (Pym, Yugan,
Tromagan)

Salym †

Southern Khanty †

Irtyš (Demyanka, Konda)

In the Eastern dialects there are 10-11 nominal cases, while only 3 in the Northern dialects.

The Southern dialect has 6 (see slide no. X)

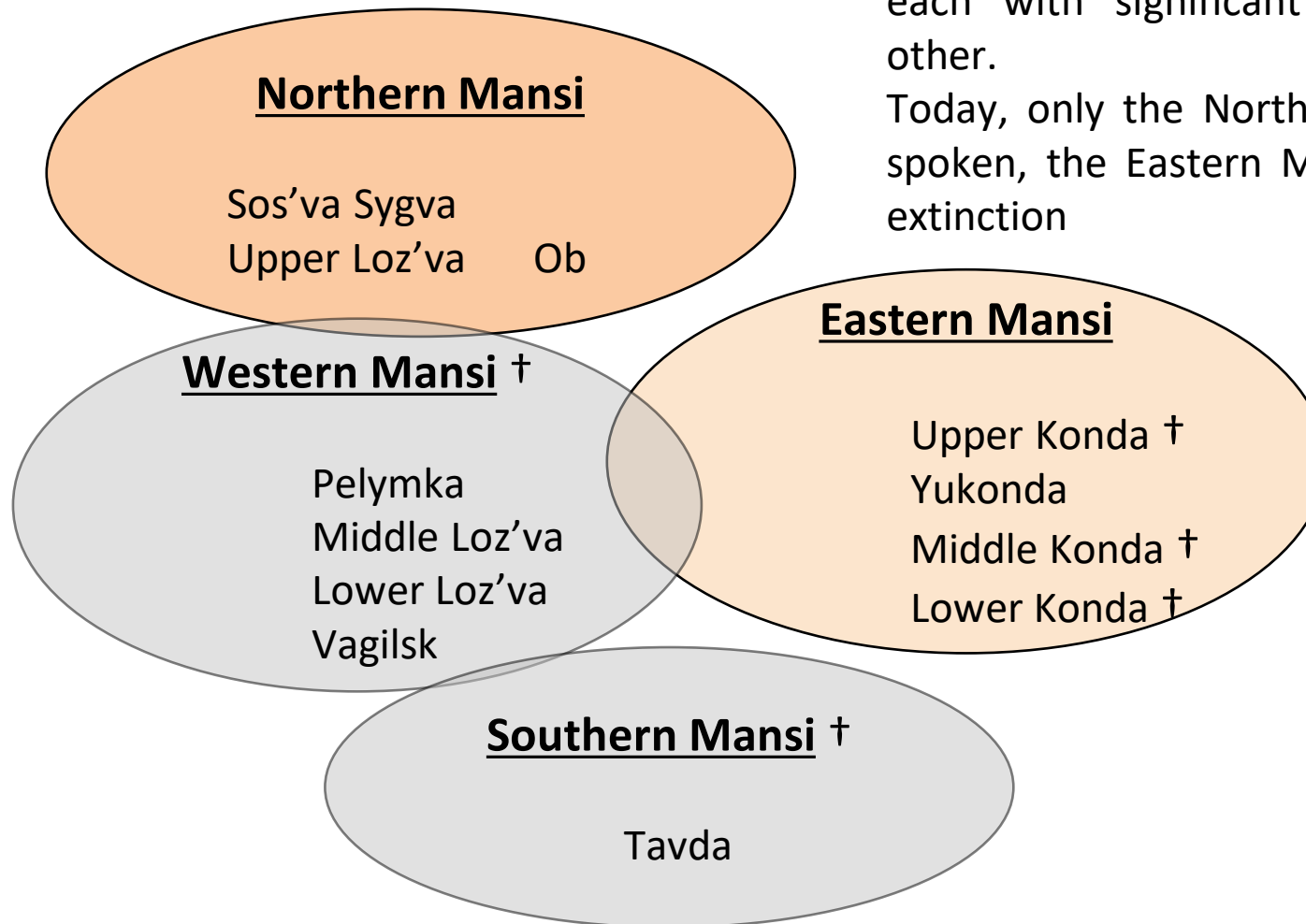
Khanty literacy

- The first printed book in Khanty is Matthew's Gospel from 1868
- Followed by ABC books in 1897 (Obdorsk dialect) and 1903 (Vakh dialect) in Cyrillic script
- Work on the literary standard started in the 1930s, first in Latin script
- in 1938 it was abolished and the orthography was re-Cyrillized in 1938
- Between 1930 and 1950 in total of five literary standards were created due to the large dialectal differences
- Today there are two standards in use, based on the Northern Kazym and Šuryškary dialects, the former used most widely
- The literary languages still lack an established norm (see more in the History of Literacy slides)

Mansi dialects

There are four main dialectal groups in Mansi, each with significant differences from the other.

Today, only the Northern Mansi is still being spoken, the Eastern Mansi is on the brink of extinction



Mansi literacy

- The first scattered language relics (words) can be found in Russian chronicles from the 1400-1600s
- The first longer texts are Matthew and Mark's Gospels from 1868, based on the Konda dialect
- The first ABC was printed in 1903 in Cyrillic script
- Development of the literary standard started in the 1930s, based mainly on the Northern dialects
- In the 1930s, there was a Latin-based script in use, but in 1938 it was abolished; the orthography was re-Cyrillized in 1938, several orthographic reforms followed (see more in the History of Literacy slides)

Brief history of the Ob-Ugric peoples

- Both Khanty and Mansi are divided into two distinct moieties (two clans within the exogamous clan system): the Mos' and the Por, probably originating from two different tribes
- Coexistence with the pre-Hungarians ended at around 1000 BC, when, probably due to climate change, the pre-Ob-Ugrians migrated northwards, while Hungarians moved westwards.
- During the 12-15th century, the Ob-Ugric „principalities” west of the Ural mountains successfully fought back offensives from Novgorod and later Moscow
- The Eastern and Southern Ob-Ugrians were subject to the Turkic Khanate of Sibir (1490-1598), later conquered by Moscow

Khanty as depicted by J.G. Georgi (1729–1802), the member of Pallas expeditions 1768–74



*Охотник на лосей Топноострогъ.
Ein Ostjakischer Hermelinjäger.
Un Ostjak à la chasse d'hermine.*

Khanty ermine hunter



*Охотник при реке Объ.
Ein Ostjak am Ob. Fluss.
Ostjak à la rivière d'Ob.*

Khanty man of the Ob



*Охотница съ сына.
Eine Ostjakin vorwärts.
Une Ostjake par devant.*

Khanty woman from the front



*Охотница съ сына.
Eine Ostjakin rückwärts.
Une Ostjake par derrière.*

Khanty woman from behind

Brief history of the Ob-Ugric peoples

- Russian expansion continued in the 16-18th century, often with the help of the local nobility
- the Siberia Governorate was established by Peter the Great in 1708
- heavy taxation caused frequent famines and uprisings amongst the Ob-Ugric peoples; alcohol and imported illnesses like smallpox led to the decrease of population
- 1930: establishment of the Ostyak-Vogul National Okrug (later in 1940: Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug).

Brief history of the Ob-Ugric peoples

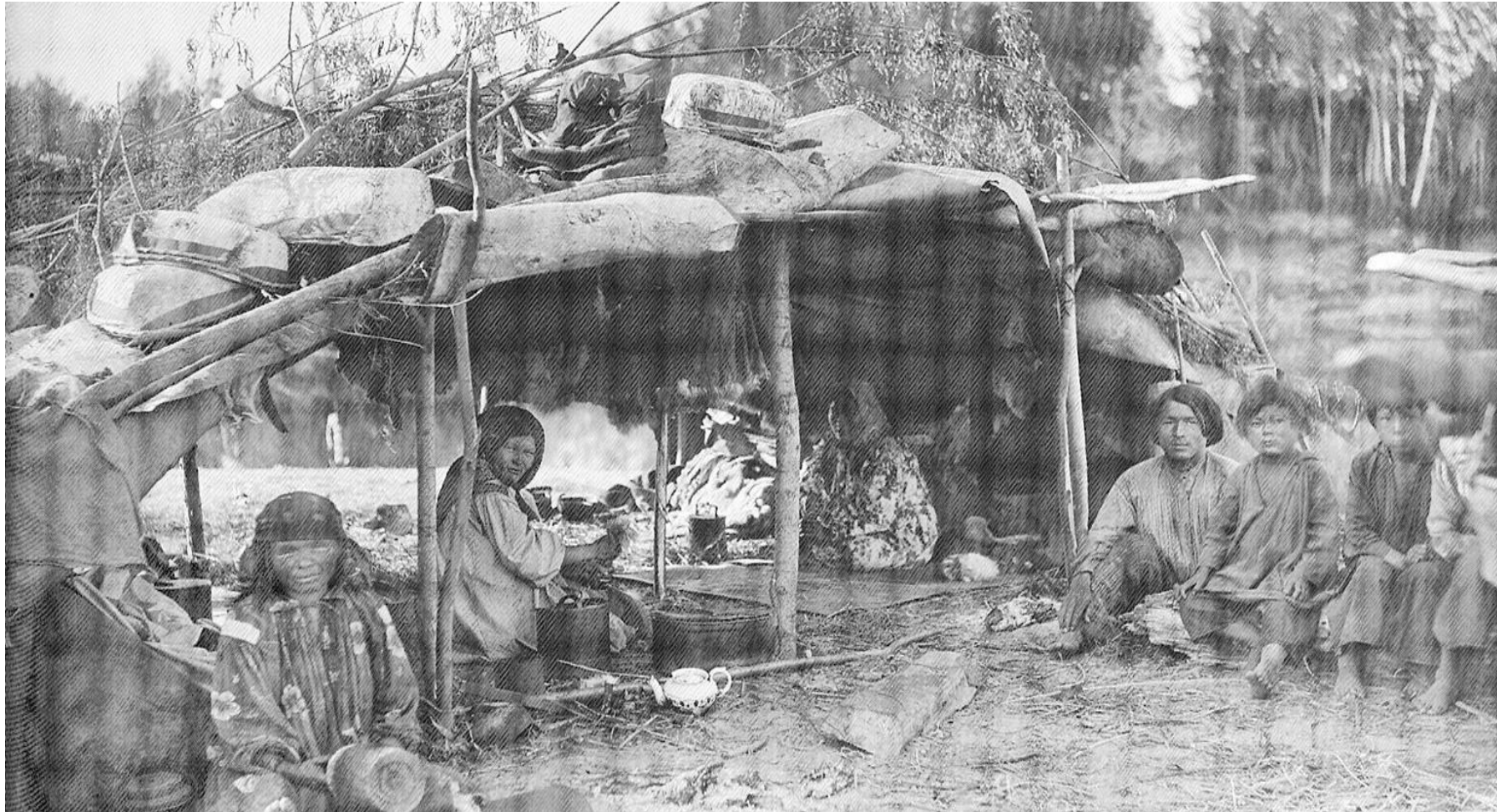
- The Soviet regime initially supported indigenous literacy and culture, but since the 1950's the policy was changed to Russification and children were sent to boarding schools with Russian as the language of teaching; in the 1960's classes in the native language were practically eliminated.
- Collectivization in the 1930s, the government decision to settle nomadic communities and to merge small collective farms in the 1950s, the policy of eliminating the so-called “villages with no future” in the 1970s made the traditional way of life impossible, resulting in a rapid shift to Russian especially in settlements with speakers of different dialects (Skribnik & Koshkaryova 1996).

Brief history of the Ob-Ugric peoples

- “- Catastrophic Environmental Pollution in Finno-Ugric Regions (Gas & Oil)
- Health of Finno-Ugric People Below Average
- Life-expectancy of Finno-Ugric Peoples Below Average
- Suicide Rate of Finno-Ugric Peoples Above Average”

(Katrín Saks: Situation of Finno-Ugric and Samoyed Peoples, Report of Committee on Culture, Science and Education, Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, Doc. 11087, 26 October 2006) [\(link\)](#)

A birchbark house, an Ostyak woman dressing a fell, the yurts of Penurovy, the river Nyurol'ka by **Alexandr Adrianov**, on his expedition in 1888 to Narym and Vasyugan



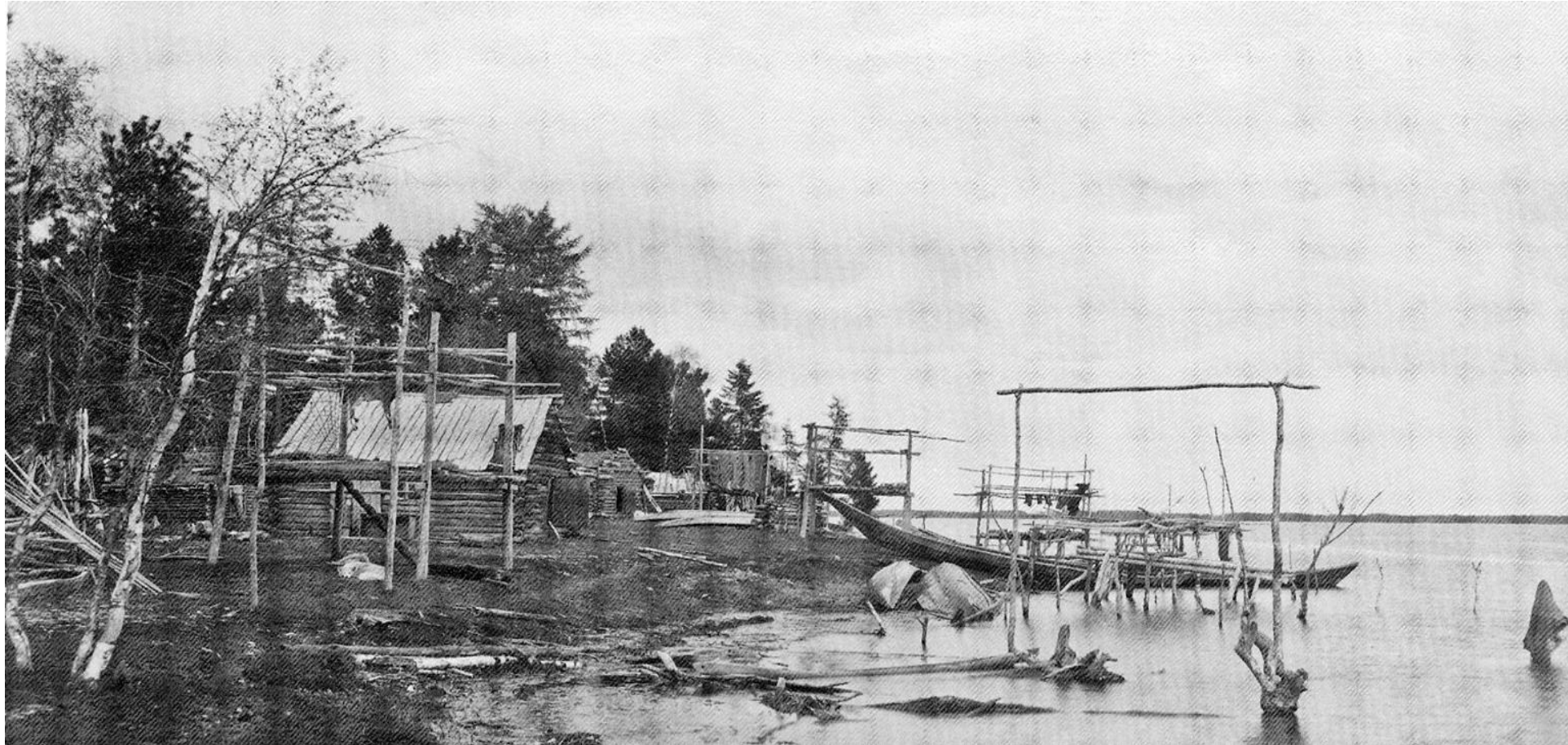
A group of tribal idols, the basin of Vasyugan (Ariadnov 1888)



A sacred tree (cedar), decorated with gifts (pori), the Shaman cape on the Vasyugan river (Ariadnov 1888)



A Mansi summer settlement on the river Sos'va by **Sergei Rudenko**, on one of his expeditions between 1906 and 1912



Mansi summer house. Xurum-paul on the river Sygva (Lyapin) (Rudenko 1906-1912)



Khantys at the cemetery, the yurts of Narykarsk, the bank of the river Ob (Rudenko 1906-1912)



Kazym Khanty from
Yilpi-gort near
Obdorsk (Rudenko
1906-1912)



Ob-Ugric people now

- Oil and gas was discovered in the area in the 1950s, which led to mass immigration: the percentage of Khanty and Mansi in their own region is now around 2% (see slide 6)
- nowadays, 51% of Russia's oil comes from the Yugra region
- Oil cities: Surgut, Nefteyugansk, Nizhnevartovsk, Khanty-Mansiysk
- Oil and natural gas extraction takes land away from the Ob-Ugric people and causes serious pollution
- Tat'yana Gogoleva, Khanty-Mansi parliament deputy, 2003: "The Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug is supposed to be one of the wealthiest of the 89 regions of Rossiia, a so-called donor region, but the wealth never reaches the village level, or the indigenous people" (Balzer 2004: 233).

Greenpeace press service photo 2012



Ob-Ugric people now

- In the late 1990s and early 2000s, fundings were raised for the survival of local minorities and revitalization of minority languages; additional payments were introduced for representatives of Khanty and Mansi, even persons with one Khanty or Mansi grandparent; as a consequence, their official number increased significantly (but the percentage of native speakers dropped down);
- The Institute of Applied Research and Development of Ob-Ugric languages and Cultures was founded in 1990s by the government of the Yugra Okrug;
- The Yugra University in Khanty-Mansiysk was founded in 2001 with a department for Khanty and Mansi philology;
- since 2010 it is merged with the Department of Russian Philology

The Yugra university





Ob-Ugric folklore

Phases of research

19th c.: collection of ethnographic materials by several researches; expeditions financed by academies (Hungary, Finland, Russia)

20th c.: fieldwork in the 1920s is interrupted by World War I and the October revolution; editing and publishing of the collected texts. The new interest to folklore after Perestroyka

21st c.: language documentation: the last possibility to get the data of the endangered languages

Languages of publication: German, Finnish, Hungarian, Russian, English, French

Collectors

- Matthias Alexander Castrén
- Antal Reguly
- August Ahlqvist
- Bernát Munkácsi
- Kustaa Fredrik Karjalainen
- Juha Artturi Kannisto
- Kai (Karl Reinhold) Donner
- Armas Otto Aapo Väisänen
- Wolfgang Steinitz

and many more



Antal Reguly (1819-1858)



Kai (Karl Reinhold) Donner (1888-1935)

Dr. Éva Schmidt (1948 - 2002)

Hungarian linguist and folklorist

founder of the Ob-Ugric folklore archive in
Beloyarsk (since 1992)

taught many people interested in their native
folklore to collect, edit and publish folklore
texts

supported revitalisation efforts of local
intelligentsia



New folklore publications

Several new folklore collections were published by local researchers; The materials of Munkácsi and Kannisto have been reprinted in Cyrillic orthography with Russian translations (online at https://ouipiir.ru/collections?field_sel_ethnos_value=mansi&field_authors_tid=All).



Genres of Ob-Ugric folklore

- extensive epic collections, songs a few thousand verses long
- “heroic songs” depict heroic beginnings, gods, mythical heroes, former princes of Jugra, their journeys seeking a bride or revenge
- these sacred songs are performed only a few times a year, e.g., at sacrificial ceremonies
- performed in first person singular, depicting events from the viewpoint of the hero

Genres of Ob-Ugric folklore

- Ritual poetry: Songs of gods and spirits; the main gods are (Numi-) Torum (the Heavenly Father), his seventh son (The Rider who watches the Earth) and the Mother Earth
- songs and performances at the Bear Festival: a feast must be held if the bear is overthrown, for the bear is a totem animal of the Ob-Ugric people whose main god has fallen from the sky in gold chains
- “personal songs” or “songs of destiny” are performed by women and describe a person's own life and experiences

Ob-Ugric epic poetry

- the singing style is recitative
- no rhymes or poetic measures
- parallelism within the verse, figura etymologica
- extensive use of parables and metaphors
- repetition (sevenfold)

Ob-Ugric music

- Khanty:
 - ritual, epic and lyric folklore
 - both vocal (solo and ensemble) and instrumental music
 - zither, harp, string instruments, *tumran* (mouth organ, played only by women)
 - ritual instruments (schamanic drums, different rattles)
- Mansi:
 - ritual vocal music: most richly represented during the bear festivals, sacrificial ceremonies, also schamanic songs *kaj sow* (calling the spirits) and *satxatne eriγ* (cursing songs)
 - epic heroic songs are forgotten (recorded by Munkácsi and Kannisto)
 - lyric songs (personal songs, songs of praise *ulilap*)

„Crane“ harp (*tarig ogip jux*) in the museum in Khanty-Mansiysk

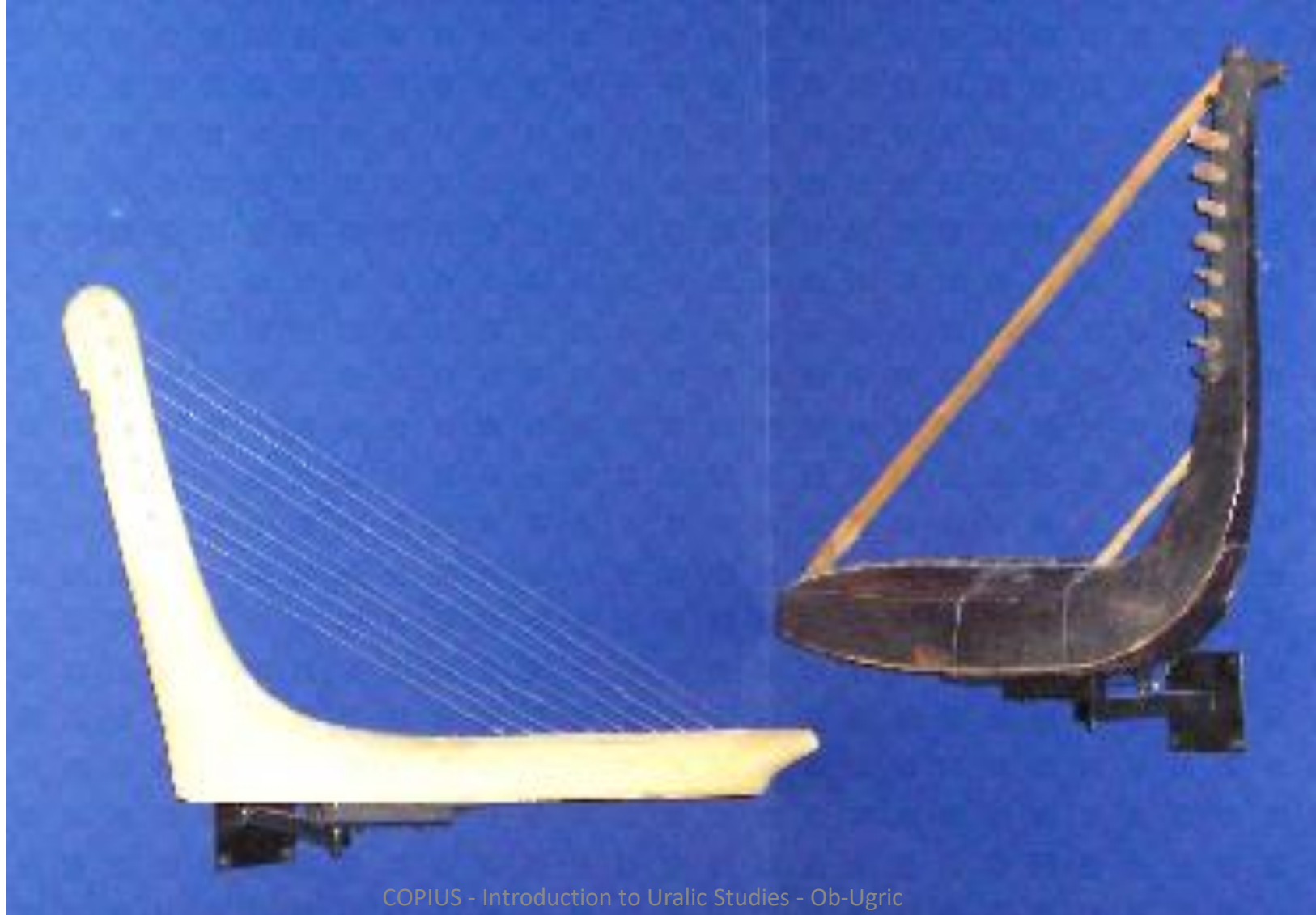


Photo: Elena
Skribnik



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Khanty string instrument „*ninjux*”

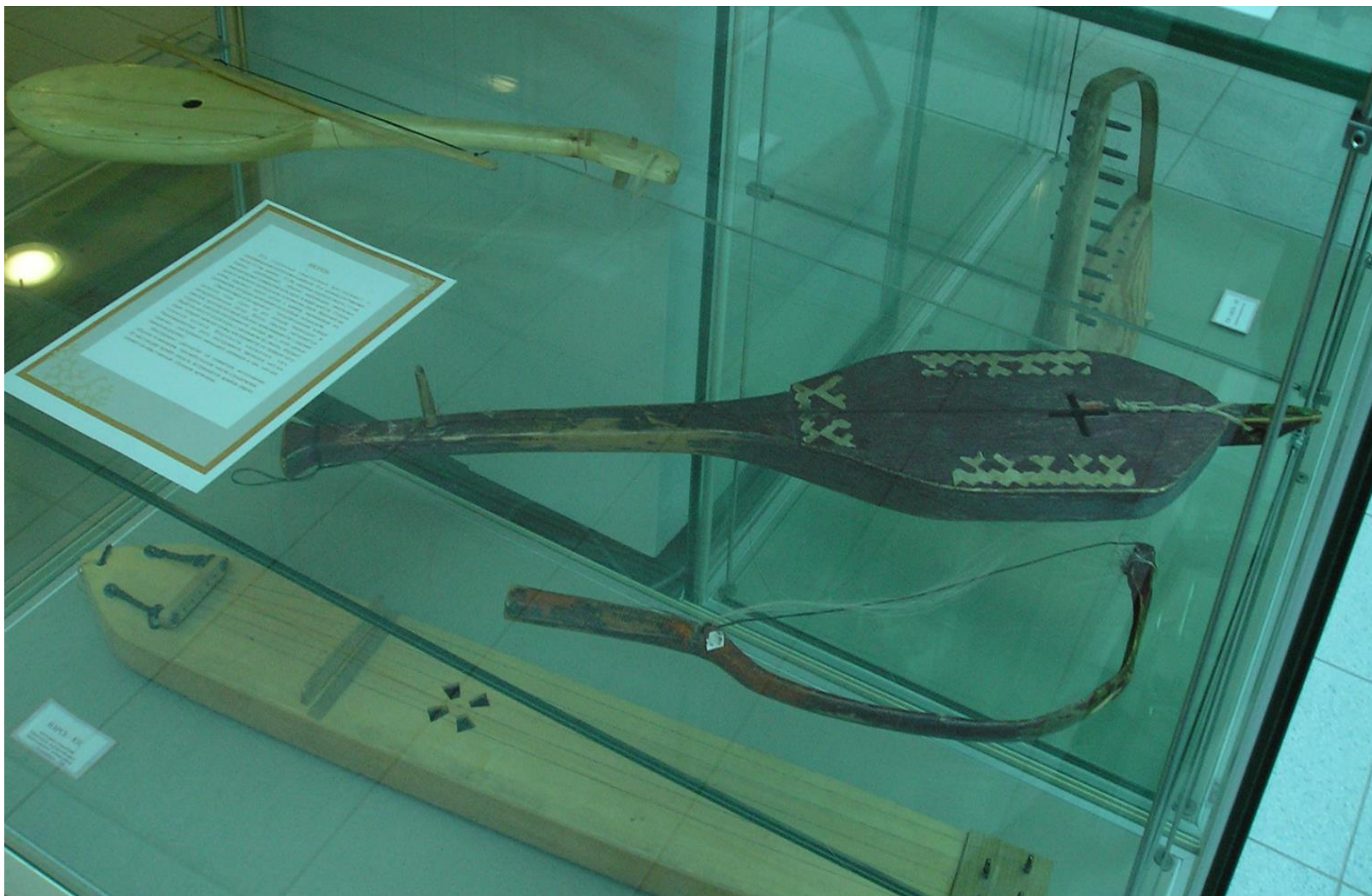
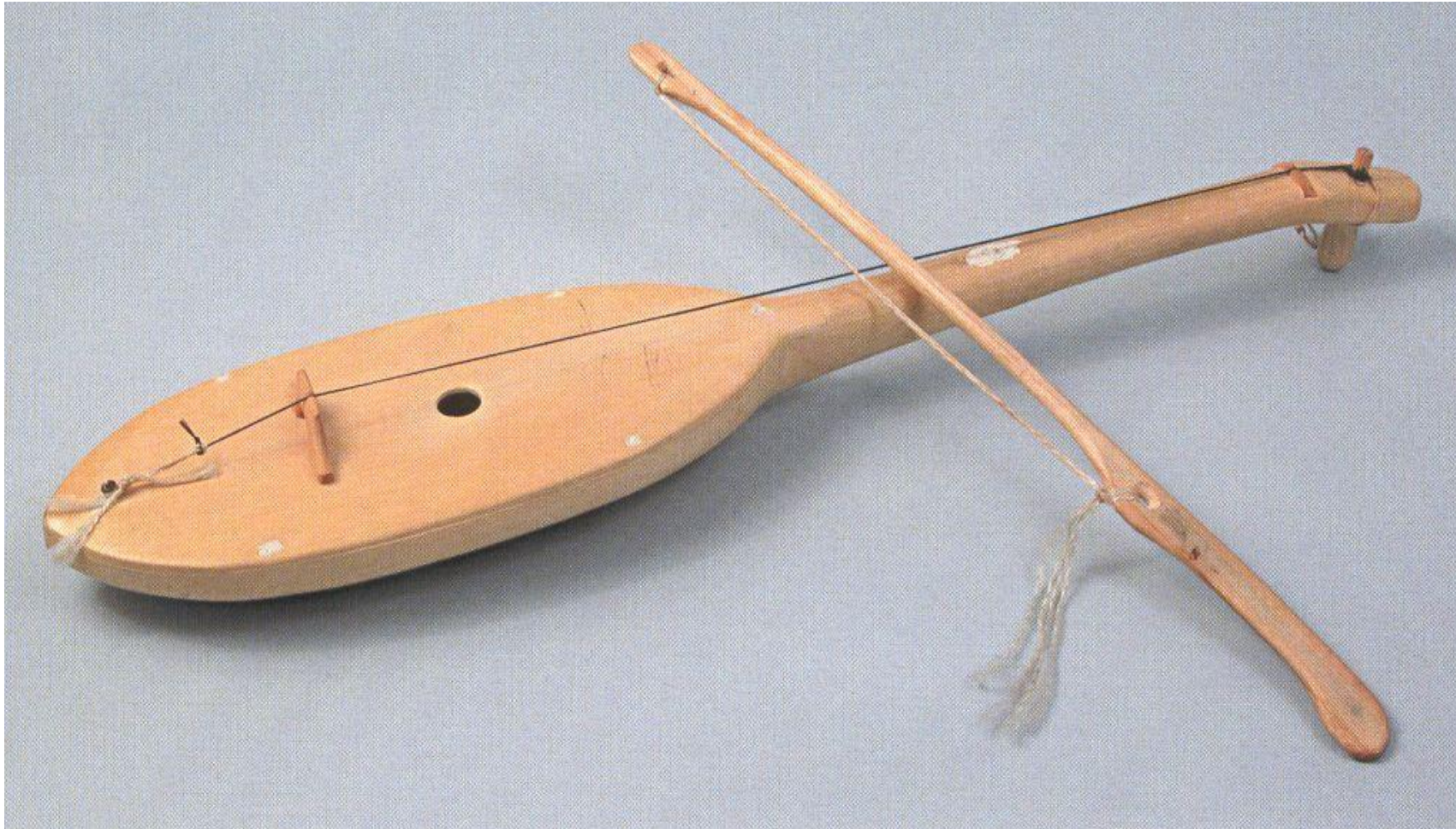


Photo: Elena
Skribnik

Mansi string instrument „*narne jiw*“



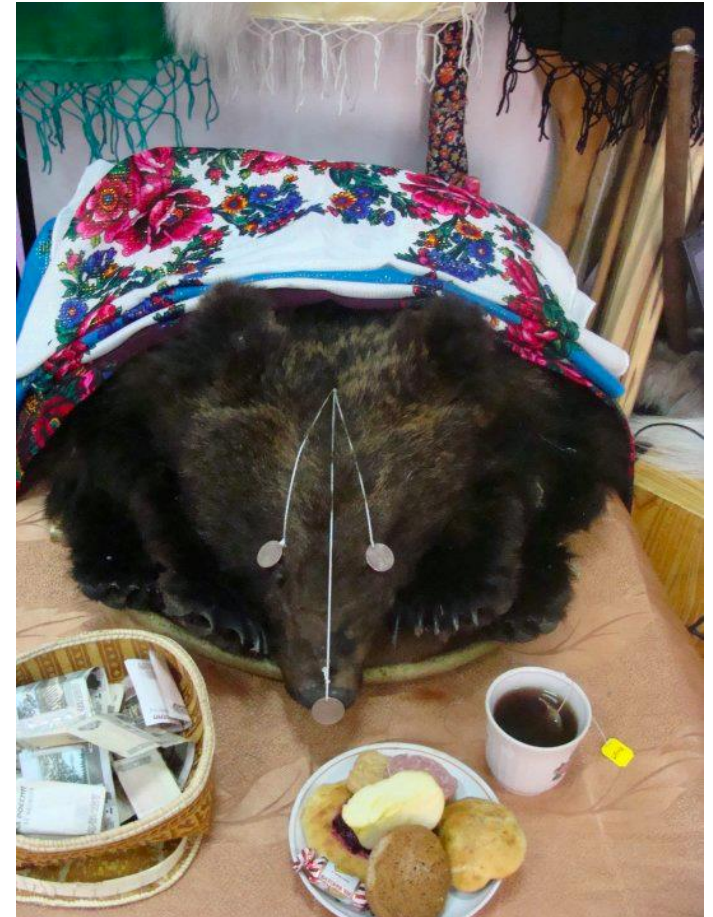
Zither, Khanty “*panaŋ jux*” (“wood with strings”), Mansi “*sāŋkwaltap*”



Photo: Elena
Skribnik

The Bear Festival

- The bear is a taboo animal: it is forbidden to hunt it, but it can be killed upon encounter
- if the bear is killed, it is required to held a feast for it
- depending on the age and the sex of the animal, the festivity lasts for several days
- the bear is dressed up, its eyes are covered with coins and the men perform holy songs that depict the life of the animal



The Bear Festival

- the bear is not to be called by its name, euphemism and periphrasis are used instead to describe it
- apart from sacred songs, drama performances also take place, to entertain both the bear and the audience
- in the end, the head of the bear is brought outside and put into a “sacred storehouse”
- women must cover their faces in the presence of the bear



[https://www.dumahmao.ru/ai_fill/File/assembly/SNS_\(22\)_2008.pdf](https://www.dumahmao.ru/ai_fill/File/assembly/SNS_(22)_2008.pdf)

The Bear Festival

It was forbidden in the Soviet times as a backward reactionary religious cult;
and reconstructed and re-introduced after Perestroika (partly in Russian, using the ethnographic and folklore sources collected in the 19th – beginning of the 20th c.)



Khanty and Mansi culture today

- writers and poets: Yuvan Shestalov, Yeremey Aipin, Anna Kon'kova and others
- painters: K. Rayshev (above: "A horse in stable"), K. Pankov (below: "Hunters")
([https://www.dumahmao.ru/ai_fill/File/assembly/NS_\(22\)_2008.pdf](https://www.dumahmao.ru/ai_fill/File/assembly/NS_(22)_2008.pdf))
- folklore: publishing of Kannisto's and Munkácsi's collections in the modern Cyrillic orthography with Russian translation, attempting to revitalize the oral tradition
(https://oupiir.ru/collections?field_sel_ethnos_value=mansi&field_authors_tid=All)



Khanty and Mansi culture today

- newspapers: “Lūjimā sēripos” (Mansi: ‘Northern sunrise’) and “Xanti jasaŋ” (Khanty: ‘Khanty language’ and some others;
- Theater of Ob-Ugric Peoples “The Sun” since 2002;
- programmes in radio and television;
- summer “ethnocamps” for schoolchildren with courses in traditional handicrafts, traditions and folklore





Basic grammatical features of Khanty and Mansi

General characteristics

Phonetics: no vowel harmony (except Southern Mansi and some Eastern Khanty dialects), long vowels, no voiced stops, no word-initial consonant clusters, accent on the first syllable and secondary accents on all odd syllables (3rd, 5th...)

Morphology: agglutination, postfixes

Noun: three numbers including dual, possessive suffixes

Verb: two personal paradigms (traditional terms: subjective and objective conjugations); a developed system of “preverbs” (separable prefixes) with local and aspectual meaning; frequent passive (a topicalizing category); evidential/mirative

Syntax: SOV, postpositions, modifiers precede their heads, topic-oriented pro-drop, non-finite clause combining

Consonantism: moderately small inventories

East (Surgut) Khanty:

		bilab.	alveo.	lateral	palatal	velar	uvular
Plosive		p		t			t'
	k		k̚				
Nasal		m		n			ń
	ŋ						
Affricate					č		
Fricative				s		ʌ	ʁ
			ɣ				
Lat. Fricative				l			
Glide		w					j
Trill				r			

t'ukim jeɣɫit wõɫət ,it was so cold'

Vocalism (first syllable)

North (Sosva) Mansi after Rombandeeva 1973

	Front	Central	Back
Close	ī, i		ū, u
Middle	ē, (e)		ō, o
Open		ā, a	

Surgut Khanty

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i	ǔ	j u
Middle	e	ǒ ə	ǒ o
Open	ǎ	a	ǎ ǎ

Traces of vowel harmony are present in Southern Mansi and Eastern Khanty.

Lexicon

<u>Finnish</u>	<u>East Khanty</u>	<u>North Mansi</u>	<u>Hungarian</u>	
<i>käte-</i>	<i>köt</i>	<i>kāt</i>	<i>kéz</i>	'hand'
<i>me</i>	<i>měŋ</i>	<i>mān</i>	<i>mi</i>	'we'
<i>poika</i>	<i>păŷ</i>	<i>pīŷ</i>	<i>fiú</i>	'boy, son'
<i>pesä</i>	<i>pěl</i>	<i>pit'i</i>	<i>fészek</i>	'nest'
<i>mene-</i>	<i>měn-</i>	<i>min-</i>	<i>men-</i>	'go'
<i>vie-</i>	<i>wě-</i>	<i>wiŷ-</i>	<i>vi(sz)</i>	'take, carry'

Lexicon: numerals

#	Surgut Khanty	Sosva Mansi	Hungarian
1	əj	ak ^w (a)	egy
2	kit/katɣən	kit(əɣ)	két/kettő
3	ɬoləm	χūrəm	három
4	ńələ	ńila	négy
5	wă̌t	at	öt
6	ɬut	χōt	hat
7	lapət	sāt	hét
8	ńɟləɣ	ńololow	nyolc
9	irjeɲ	ontolow	kilenc
10	jeɲ	low	tíz
20	ɬos	χus	húsz
100	sāt	(janəɣ) sāt	száz

Nominal morphology

In both Ob-Ugric languages, nouns and noun-like words (pronouns, nominalizations, many quantifiers) can be marked for number, case, and person – possessive suffixes marking a relation to speaker(s), hearer(s) or third person(s).

Accusative is present only in East and South Mansi dialects; personal pronouns have forms traditionally labelled accusatives, consisting of a pronominal stem and possessive suffixes of the same person; these “accusatives” take further adverbial cases.

Adjectives have no agreement and no comparative forms (recently some gradation particles get reanalyzed as comparative markers under the influence of Russian); as predicates they can take number marking.

Morphology: Number

The Ob-Ugric languages use singular, dual and plural in both verbal conjugation and nominal declension

Eastern Khanty:	<i>kẫt</i>	'house'
	<i>kẫt-γân</i>	'two houses'
	<i>kẫt-ât</i>	'houses'

- Northern Mansi:

<i>ā̃mp χortalti</i>	'the dog barks'
<i>ā̃mp-əγ χortalt-ēγ</i>	'the two dogs bark'
<i>ā̃mp-ət χortalt-eγ-ət</i>	'the dogs bark'

< *-kə (reconstructed Proto-Uralic dual)

Nominal cases

	Šerkaly Khanty (N)	Surgut Khanty (E)	Sosva Mansi (N)	Tavda Mansi (S)
Nominative	-∅	-∅	-∅	-∅
Accusative	-	-	-	-m, -mee/-mëë
Lative (=Dative)	-a	-a	-n	-n, -nää/-naa
Locative	-na	-nə/-ən	-t	-t, -tää/-taa
Ablative	-	-i	-nəl	-nääl/-naal
Instrumental	-	-	-(t)əl	-(t)əl
Translative	-	-γə	-əγ	-əw
Approximative	-	-nam	-	-
Abessive	-	-ləγ	-	-
Comitative	-	-nat	-	-
Instructive	-	-at	-	-

Pronominal cases: 1 sg 'I'

	Kazym Khanty (N)	Surgut Khanty (E)	Sosva Mansi (N)	Tavda Mansi (S)
Nominative	mɑ	mɛ:	am	
“Accusative”	mənət	mɛ:nt	anəm	
Lative (=Dative)	Dat. mənem Dat.foc.mənemɑ	Dat. mɛ:ntem Lat. mɛ:ntemɐ	anəm-n	
Locative	-	mɛ:ntemɐ	-	
Ablative	-	mɛ:ntemi	anəm-nəl	
Instrumental	-	-	anəm-təl	
Translative	-	mɛ:ntemyə	-	
Approximative	-	mɛ:ntemnəm	-	
Abessive	-	mɛ:ntemləy	-	
Comitative	-	mɛ:ntemnət	-	
Instructive	-	mɛ:ntemət	-	

Possessive suffixes

- The possessive paradigm in Ob-Ugric marks the number of the possessum and the person/number of the possessor
- E.g. North Khanty (Šuryškary): *sõχ* ,mountain‘

Possessor	Possessum		
	Singular	Dual	Plural
1	<i>sõχ-em</i> ‘my mountain’	<i>sõχ-ηətam</i> ‘my two mountains’	<i>sõχ-tam</i> ‘my mountains’
2	<i>sõχ-en</i>	<i>sõχ-ηətan</i>	<i>sõχ-tan</i>
3	<i>sõχ-ət</i>	<i>sõχ-ηət</i>	<i>sõχ-tat</i>
1	<i>sõχ-emən</i>	<i>sõχ-ηətamən</i> ‘two mountains of two of us’	<i>sõχ-tamən</i>
2	<i>sõχ-ən</i>	<i>sõχ-ηətan</i>	<i>sõχ-tən</i>
3	<i>sõχ-ən</i>	<i>sõχ-ηətan</i>	<i>sõχ-tən</i>
1	<i>sõχ-ew</i> ‘our mountain’	<i>sõχ-ηətəw</i> ‘our two mountains’	<i>sõχ-təw</i> ‘our mountains’
2	<i>sõχ-ən</i> ‘your (pl.) mountain’	<i>sõχ-ηətan</i>	<i>sõχ-tən</i>
3	<i>sõχ-et</i> ‘their mountain’	<i>sõχ-ηətat</i>	<i>sõχ-tat</i>

Morphology: Verb

Ob-Ugric verbs are inflected for tense, mood, and person (two personal paradigms, for subject and subject/object agreement); there are also various non-finite forms and a rich verb derivation. Voice is partly inflectional (passive), partly derivational (reflexive, causative). Ob-Ugric languages have also developed evidentials/miratives.

Conjugations I and II

Ugric languages - as well as Mordvin and Samoyedic languages - besides subject agreement have also subject/object agreement. Traditionally they are called **subjective** (aka indefinite or first) and **objective** (aka definite or second) conjugation. Agreement is topic-oriented: if not only the subject is topical (known, activated), but also the direct object, both must be marked on the verb:

North Khanty:

(What did Yuvan do?)

Juvan Petra reskəs

‘Yuvan hit Peter’

(What did Yuvan do to Peter?)

Juvan Petra reskəsli

‘Yuvan hit Peter’

Conjugations I and II

In the subjective conjugation, the personal ending only shows the person and the number of the subject. In the objective conjugation, the ending shows the number of the object; thus the paradigm contains 27 suffixes (3 numbers x 3 persons of the subject x 3 numbers of the object, see table in the next slide).

The Ugric person suffixes in the objective conjugation are similar to or even identical with the nominal possessive suffixes.

Conjugation I/II (North Mansi)

χańístaxtun ^w e ,to learn'		Conjugation I	Conjugation II		
			Sinugar object	Dual object	Plural object
Present	1SG	χańístaxt-ey-əm	χańístaxt-iləm	χańístaxt-ijay-əm	χańístaxt-ijan-əm
	2SG	χańístaxt-ey-ən	χańístaxt-ilən	χańístaxt-ijay-ən	χańístaxt-ijan(-ən)
	3SG	χańístaxt-i	χańístaxt-ite	χańístaxt-ijay-e	χańístaxt-ijan-e
	1DU	χańístaxt-i-men	χańístaxt-ilamen	χańístaxt-ijay-men	χańístaxt-ijan-men
	2DU	χańístaxt-ey-ən	χańístaxt-ilən	χańístaxt-ijay-ən	χańístaxt-ijan(-ən)
	3DU	χańístaxt-e-γ	χańístaxt-iten	χańístaxt-ijay-en	χańístaxt-ijan-en
	1PL	χańístaxt-e-w	χańístaxt-iluw	χańístaxt-ijay-uw	χańístaxt-ijan-uw
	2PL	χańístaxt-ey-ən	χańístaxt-ilən	χańístaxt-ijay-ən	χańístaxt-ijan(-ən)
	3PL	χańístaxt-ey-ət	χańístaxt-ijanəl	χańístaxt-ijay-anəl	χańístaxt-ijan-(an)əl
Preterite	1SG	χańístaxt-əs-əm	χańístaxt-əs-ləm	χańístaxt-as-ay-əm	χańístaxt-as-an-əm
	2SG	χańístaxt-əs-ən	χańístaxt-əs-lən	χańístaxt-as-ay-ən	χańístaxt-as-an(-ən)
	3SG	χańístaxt-əs	χańístaxt-əs-te	χańístaxt-as-ay-e	χańístaxt-as-an-e
	1DU	χańístaxt-əs-amen	χańístaxt-əs-lamen	χańístaxt-as-ay-men	χańístaxt-as-an-men
	2DU	χańístaxt-əs-ən	χańístaxt-əs-lən	χańístaxt-as-ay-ən	χańístaxt-as-an(-ən)
	3DU	χańístaxt-əs-iy	χańístaxt-əs-ten	χańístaxt-as-ay-en	χańístaxt-as-an-en
	1PL	χańístaxt-əs-uw	χańístaxt-əs-luw	χańístaxt-as-ay-uw	χańístaxt-as-an-uw
	2PL	χańístaxt-əs-ən	χańístaxt-əs-lən	χańístaxt-as-ay-ən	χańístaxt-as-an(-ən)
	3PL	χańístaxt-əs-ət	χańístaxt-əs-anəl	χańístaxt-as-ay-anəl	χańístaxt-as-an-(an)əl

Tense

The tense systems in Ugric are simple, usually merely differentiating between past and non-past. Many Ob-Ugric varieties have, alongside a past-tense marker (usually a descendant of Proto-Uralic *ś), also a present-tense marker (Mansi -γ-, Khanty -λ-); in East Khanty, the *ś past is lost and replaced with an unmarked form.

North Mansi: *min-as-əm* 'I went' – *min-ēγ-əm* 'I go / am going'

North Khanty: *ji-s-əm* 'I came' – *ji-λ-əm* 'I am coming'

Moods

Ob-Ugric mood systems mainly differentiate between realis (indicative, unmarked) and irrealis:

- imperatives: 2nd person forms, for other values (jussive, hortative) syntactic expressions are used.
- conditionals or optatives can be marked with suffixes (conditional-optative *-nuw-* in North Mansi) or with (cliticized) particles.

Non-finites

- infinitive;
- past and present participles (+ past passive participle in Mansi);
- negative participle (also described as adjective);
- converbs and participles with case suffixes or postpositions acting as predicates of adverbial clauses

All these forms are used in non-finite clause combining; A further Ob-Ugric characteristic is the development of certain non-finites into evidentials.

Evidentials/miratives

Evidentiality is the category expressing the source of information (immediate perception, indirect knowledge like inference etc.).

Mirativity is the grammatical marking of unexpected information (e.g. sudden discovery, surprise, or unprepared mind).

Ob-Ugric evidentials are grammaticalized from past and present participles used as finite predicates (Surgut Khanty has developed an additional analytic construction). Evidentials have also mirative nuances, which in North Mansi have become the primary meaning:

Manər jomas piś ōś-nē-n! ‘What an excellent skill you have!’
what good skill have-ptcp.prs-2sg (= mirative)

Voice

Ob-Ugric languages have productive reflexive and causative derivations:

East Khanty: pəməʈtə- ‘to heat’ : pəməʈtə-γəʈ- ‘to warm oneself’;

ke:βər- ‘cook [intr.]’ : ke:βər-t- ‘cook’ [trans.]

What clearly distinguishes Ob-Ugric from most other Uralic languages is the central role of a passive voice, which is used as a central means of topicalizing (Kulonen 1989, Skribnik 2001, Virtanen 2015); its markers are -w- in Mansi vs. -(V)j- in Khanty.
North Khanty: xuj-ən βant-s-aj-ən?

who-loc

see-pst-pass-2sg

‘Who saw you?’ (lit. by whom were you seen?)

Negation

Ugric languages differentiate negation in declarative and imperative clauses (prohibitive), additionally there is a special existential negator 'there is no':

Mansi

*tuw **at** sunsi*

'(He/she) does not look there.'

***ul** khårjen!*

'Don't be angry!'

*pasant ōln **ātim***

'There is no money on the table.'

Khanty

*tōwnam **antə** lejɫəɫ*

***aɫ** p̣jta!*

*stolnə way **antim-äki***

Hungarian

*oda **nem** néz*

***ne** haragudj!*

*az asztalon **nincs** pénz*

Preverbs (separable verbal prefixes)

E.g. North Mansi (Riese 2001: 59-60)

tiy	‘towards the speaker’	tot- ‘bring’, tiy=tot- ‘bring here’
tuw	‘away from the speaker’	mi- ‘give’, tuw=mi- ‘give back / away’
ak^wan	‘(bring) together’	ne:y- ‘tie, bind’, ak^wan=ne:y- ‘tie together’
kittiy	‘separating’	min- ‘go’, kittiy=min- ‘separate, get divorced’
kon	‘out of the house’	k^wa:l- ‘stand up, rise’, kon=k^wa:l- ‘go out’
juw	‘home; into’	min- ‘go’, juw=min- ‘go home; enter’
ela	‘farther’	min- ‘go’, ela=min- ‘go away’
jol	‘down’	powar- ‘roll’, jol=powar- ‘roll down’
no:ŋx	‘up’	ʃu:ʃi- ‘stand’, no:ŋx=ʃu:ʃi- ‘stand up’
puliy	‘in fragments’	ra:ti- ‘hit’, puliy=ra:ti- ‘break in pieces’
pa:liy	‘apart, in different directions; opening up’	xarti- ‘pull’, pa:liy=xarti- ‘stretch out’
xot	‘away; momentaneous action; intensity of action’ (the most grammaticalized of all preverbs in aspectual meaning):	wi- ‘take’, xot=wi- ‘take off’,
roxt-	‘be afraid’, xot=roxt- ‘get frightened’	
lap	‘completion of the action’	panti- ‘close’, lap=panti- ‘shut, slam’
pa:y	‘from-water-to-shore; away from the fire’	k^wa:l- ‘stand up, rise’, pa:y=k^wa:l- ‘go out of the water to the shore’
na:luw	‘towards the river; towards the fire’	x:jti- ‘run’, na:luw=x:jti- ‘run to the water’.

Syntax

- SOV and nominative-accusative alignment, though in many dialects substantives don't have accusative case

North Mansi:

χum χāp wār-i
man boat make-3SG
'The man makes a boat.'

- Eastern Mansi has accusative in *-m* and differential object marking: accusative for topical, and nominative for focal direct objects:

<i>tøtø=kar-mø</i>	<i>tø</i>	<i>äln-ii-løm.</i>	vs.	<i>kom</i>	<i>sågrøp</i>	<i>öälmønt-i.</i>
PRON=guy-ACC	PARTIC	kill-PRS-SG<2SG		man	axe	carry-PRS.3SG
'I will kill that guy there.'				'The man carries an axe.'		

Syntax: subjectless constructions

As in most if not all other Uralic languages, there are many clause types (with verbal and nonverbal predicates) that do not allow a subject in the nominative case. Meteorological verbs and adjectives build subjectless structures with 3sg suffixes of subjective conjugation:

North Mansi: *tūj-i* snow-PRS.3SG ‘It is snowing’.

Adjectives of physical states allow only locatives (place, time) or datives (experiencer), and adjectives of psychological states only datives:

North Mansi: *kol-t* / *ānəm-n* *aśirma*
house-LOC / 1SG-DAT cold
‘In the house it is cold / I feel cold.’

Syntax: Nominal predication

- There are no copulas in indicative present in Ob-Ugric; predicate nominals agree with their subjects in number:

East Khanty: mən səkkən-ət mən βi:tʲən-ət
 1PL pretty-PL 1PL beautiful-PL

‘We are pretty, we are beautiful!’

- Copulas carry tense and mood markers other than indicative present, as well as person and number marking of subjective conjugation:

North Khanty: ʈin ɔtʃam-ŋən βəs-ŋən
 3DU stupid-DU be.PST-3DU

‘The two of them were stupid.’

- Change of state (with the copula ‘become’) is marked by the translative case on the predicate nominal

Syntax: information structuring

Differential object marking: in dialects with accusative case (East, South and West Mansi)

Differential object agreement: in all dialects via subject vs. subject/object agreement

Syntax

- In passive transitive clauses the theme/patient is promoted to subject and the agent is marked with the lative case:

χum-n χāp wār-awe-∅.
man-LAT boat make-PASS-3SG
'The boat is made by a man.'

- In passive ditransitive clauses

Clause combining

Ob-Ugric languages, like many languages of Siberia, non-finite clauses with converbs and participles are used; participles are additionally accompanied by case suffixes or postpositions. In contrast, Hungarian has developed a Standard Average European system of coordinating and subordinating conjunctions.

East Khanty:

pi:tʲəŋkəli jaqə joβət-m-eʃ-e

little.bird home come-PTCP.PST-3SG-DLAT

je:stəy

say.PST.3SG

‘After coming home, the little bird said.’

Databases and learning

- [Ob-Babel project \(Münich\)](#)
- [Typological Database of the Ugric Languages \(Budapest\)](#)
- [German-language Mansi textbook based on Balandin \(1960\)](#) (Vienna)

Sources

<http://www.perepis2002.ru/index.html?id=86>

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