

*Essays in the History of Languages and Linguistics.*

*Dedicated to Marek Stachowski on the occasion of his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday.*

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**Iwona PIECHNIK**

Jagiellonian University in Kraków

## UJFALVY'S PLACE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF FINNO-UGRIAN LANGUAGE STUDIES IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY IN FRANCE

The article presents the work of Charles Eugène de Ujfalvy de Mező-Kövesd [Hung. Mezőkövesdi Ujfalvy Károly Jenő] (1842–1904), still less known French-Hungarian researcher, who played an important role as an initiator of the Finno-Ugrian language studies in France. His interests were very wide and he worked hard with a real scientific passion. He left behind numerous publications on linguistics, anthropology and ethnography, which contributed to the increase of the general knowledge about Asia's many peoples in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Ujfalvy, Finno-Ugrian languages, Finno-Ugrian studies, historical linguistics

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The kinship of Finnic and Ugrian languages was truly established in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1</sup> Yet, there were still debates about their origins and relationships to other languages throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Among others, intense debates took place

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- 1 A Hungarian Jesuit János Sajnovics (1733–1785), after an expedition to Lapland (for astronomic observations), was the first to demonstrate the relationship between Hungarian and Saami in his study *Demonstratio idioma Ungarorum et Lapponum idem esse* in 1770, and, soon afterwards, another Hungarian linguist Sámuel Gyarmathy (1751–1830) proved the affinity of Hungarian with Finnish in his *Affinitas Linguae*

in Hungary, Estonia and Finland<sup>2</sup> (see Häkkinen 2014), even though many Finnish fruitful expeditions, especially those of a Finn Matthias Alexander Castrén (1813–1852), already brought reliable sources of information. That is why this comes as no surprise that those issues were discussed in other countries too, especially in the context of the young historical linguistics and in relation with the “newborn” Indo-European linguistics which was flourishing primarily in Germany;<sup>3</sup> French linguists were in turn inclined more towards Oriental studies,<sup>4</sup> initially focusing on Turkic,<sup>5</sup> later chiefly on Persian and Arabic,<sup>6</sup> and finally on the languages of

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*Hungaricae cum Linguis Fennicae Originis grammaticae demonstrata* in 1799. See e.g. Korhonen (1986, 1987a). Nevertheless, nowadays it is Martin Fogel or Martinus Fogelius Hamburgensis (1634–1675) who is regarded the first discoverer of the kinship of Finnish and Hungarian, but E.N. Setälä found his letters in Uppsala only in 1888 and his manuscript even later in Hannover (Setälä 1892: 181–182; Korhonen 1986: 28–29, 127). However, a Danish professor of theology at the University of Copenhagen, Marcus Wøldike (1699–1750), can be considered the first to show similarities between those languages: he drew (Wøldike 1746) a comparison between Greenlandic and about two dozen other languages (including Hungarian, Finnish and Saami/Lappish) and, as it turned out, Greenlandic was the most similar to Hungarian and this one to Finnish and Saami/Lappish. See Plank (1990).

- 2 It is interesting to note that at that time Finland, Estonia and Hungary were occupied by the empires of Russia and Austria (until 1867, when the Austro-Hungarian kingdom was born). Undoubtedly the quest for their Finno-Ugric cognates contributed to the maintaining of their identities and to the consolidation of folklore research.
- 3 In the first generation of outstanding German Indo-European linguists, we can mention: Jacob Grimm (1785–1863), Franz Bopp (1791–1867), August Friedrich Pott (1802–1887), August Schleicher (1821–1868) who also made an attempt to describe all the European languages (*Die Sprachen Europas in systematischer Uebersicht*, 1850), and finally Johannes Schmidt (1843–1901) and Karl Verner (1846–1896). Of course, we cannot forget the eminent linguists of a slightly earlier period, who were not involved in purely Indo-European research, but whose impact on linguistic studies is important: Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835) and his brother Alexander (1869–1859) as well as Friedrich von Schlegel (1772–1829) who proposed the term *vergleichende Grammatik* (comparative grammar). And later there were also *Junggrammatiker* (Young Grammatarians) who gathered in Leipzig in 1870s.
- 4 French Oriental studies have their roots in the activities of the Collège de France established in 1530 and of the École des jeunes de langues established in 1669. The latter is today's Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO) which is probably the oldest institute of Oriental studies in Europe. And the first international congress of Orientalists took place in Paris in September 1873.

Africa and Southeast Asia due to the French colonisation; Anglo-Saxon countries conducted even more extensive research. However, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was still a significant number of links between languages to discover, and there was a rush to the East in order to explore Asia and to find more cognates there.

This article is devoted to the “spark” that set off the Finno-Ugrian language studies in France, i.e. to one of the scholars whose interest and passion for Finno-Ugrian languages helped to pave the way for the historical linguistics in France and in the world: Charles Eugène de Ujfalvy de Mező-Kövesd [Hung. Mezőkövesdi Ujfalvy Károly Jenő] (1842–1904), who is called a “pioneer of the Finno-Ugrian studies in France” (Le Calloc’h 1986–1987 and 1987).<sup>7</sup> He was a linguist, ethnographer and anthropologist. He was born in Hungary, but emigrated to France at the age of 25 and soon became an important part of the rich French tradition of scholarship in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, although he is not well remembered today. His contributions and achievements concern not only studies of Finno-Ugrian languages (this field was important to him because of his Hungarian descent),<sup>8</sup> but also a considerable part of his life was devoted to anthropology and ethnography as well as to his travels to Central Asia and exploration of its peoples and languages. Interestingly, his university education mainly covered philosophy (Bonn) and German philology (Paris), and yet he gained knowledge of Finno-Ugrian philology, anthropology and ethnography – the passion of his life – on his own.<sup>9</sup>

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- 5 The so-called Franco-Turkish alliance was established already in the 16<sup>th</sup> c. Among others, it was a stimulus to create a school of dragomans for diplomatic circles.
  - 6 Undoubtedly, Napoleon’s campaigns in Egypt and Syria 1798–1801, Champollion’s successes in Egyptology and the recent French conquest of Algeria (from 1830) or even the construction of the Suez Canal (1859–1869) and French military interventions in Indochina contributed to a more intense development of Oriental studies in France in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
  - 7 Actually, the first Finno-Ugrist in France was Aurélien Sauvageot (1897–1988), who took the first chair of Finno-Ugrian languages in the École des Langues Orientales (now INALCO) in Paris in 1931. See Gergely, Sakari (1958), Toulouze (1995), Perrot (2009).
  - 8 See bibliography, where we cite only his publications pertaining to Finno-Ugrian studies.
  - 9 We do not know whether before his departure to France he had any interest in those fields and was acquainted with the achievements of other Finno-Ugrists in Hungary, such as his contemporaries, Pál Hunfalvy (1810–1891) and József Budenz (1836–1892), or earlier Hungarian explorers of the Central Asia who tried to find the homeland of the Hungarians in that part of the world, Sándor Csoma de Kőrös (1784–1842),

Before Ujfalvy, linguistic and literary research on Hungarian or Finnish did not really exist in France, and even notes about them were sparse. According to Henri Toulouze (1995: 129), the first mentions about Hungarian language are to be found in short reviews published in the *Journal des Sçavans*: in 1720 (Mathias Bel's<sup>10</sup> *De vetere litteratura hunno-scythica exercitatio*), 1725 (Bel's *Hungariæ antiquæ & novæ Prodomus*) and 1736 (Bel's *Notitia Hungariæ Novæ historico-geographica*). In 1772, the same journal noted the publication of János Sajnovics's *Demonstratio...* (1770) and devoted an extensive anonymous review to it, which highlighted the importance of such a study. A similar, quite enthusiastic reception of Sámuel Gyarmathi's *Affinitas...* (1799) can be found later in the famous Arabist Silvestre de Sacy's review in *Magasin encyclopédique, ou Journal des sciences, des lettres et des arts*. However, the first real articles about Hungarian language and literature in France were not written until 1813, when a Hungarian anti-Habsburg emigrant and poet János Batsány (1763–1845), hiding under the pseudonym of Charles de Bérony (Hanus 1993: 116–120; 2001), started to describe them in the journal *Mercur Etranger ou Annales de la littérature étrangère*, including some linguistic considerations about the origins and cognates of the Hungarian language, with comparison to e.g. Lappish/Saami. The same journal also included articles dedicated to Lapland and Finland. While they were rather geographical and historical in scope, one can also find statements about the affinity of Finnish, Lappish and Hungarian. Their author was Jean-Pierre Catteau-Calleville (1759–1819), German-French historian and geographer who had lived in Sweden. Nevertheless, only four issues of the *Mercur Etranger* were published between 1813 and 1816, and Batsány, after the fall of Napoleon, was handed over to the Austrians and forced to reside in Linz. Finally, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some interest in those languages arose with the development of the historical linguistics.

Naturally, Ujfalvy was not the only researcher in France to be interested in the Finno-Ugrian languages and their relationships to other languages at that time, however such linguists were rare and their curiosity was rather superficial, their knowledge based only on reading grammars and they did not even speak any of Finno-Ugrian language. Among them worth noting are:

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a great explorer of Tibet, author of the first dictionary and the first grammar of the classical Tibetan language; or János Jerney (1800–1855). While this is not very likely, it is possible that he had heard of Ármin Vámbéry (1832–1913), who came to be known for his travels in Turkey and in the Middle East (see e.g. Ross 1928).

10 In Latin: Matthias Belius.

- Prince Louis-Lucien Bonaparte (1813–1891), specialist in the Basque language and the author of two short works dedicated to Finno-Ugrian issues: *Langue basque et langues finnoises* (1862)<sup>11</sup> and *Remarques sur la classification des langues ouraliques* (1876).<sup>12</sup> In the first study, he analyses four analogies between Basque and Finnic languages (plural in the nominative, definite conjugation, objective pronominal conjugation and vowel harmony) on the basis of Matthias Alexander Castrén's, Hans Conon von der Gabelentz's, Jens Andreas Friis', Pál Hunfalvy's, Elias Lönnrot's, Antal Reguly's and August Ahlqvist's works. In the second study, he discusses what he believes to be the whole family of the Uralic languages, yet unbeknown to him, he only refers to the Finno-Ugrian languages not including the Samoyedic branch. Nonetheless, he promotes the importance of vocabulary and grammatical forms rather than phonetic observations in comparative research. Much later, Bonaparte wrote another study in this field: *Italian and Uralic possessive suffixes compared* (1884) in which he showed surprising parallels between possessive enclitics in some Italian dialects and in Uralic languages. Bonaparte also rendered considerable services to the popularization of the Finno-Ugrian languages: at his own expense he published numerous Finno-Ugrian versions of the Gospel of Matthew, edited by Ferdinand Johann Wiedemann (1805–1887): Udmurt, Eastern and Western Livonian (1863); Komi-Zyrian and Southern Karelian (1864); Erzya Mordva (1865); Northern Komi-Permyak and Hill Mari (1866), and finally Meadow Mari (1870). Bonaparte was also an honorary member of the Finno-Ugrian Society nearly from its establishment (in 1883).<sup>13</sup>
- Hyacinthe de Charencey (1832–1916), philologist and advocate of folklore research, who was interested in Basque and ancient languages of Asia and America; in 1862 he published a small book *La langue basque et les idiomes de l'Oural*, in which he tried to show grammatical and lexical similarities of those languages (chiefly Finnish, Saami/Lappish and Hungarian);

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11 Interestingly, this publication disposed a Hungarian historian Ferenc Ribáry (1827–1880) to write a study on Basque (!): *A Baskk nyelv ismertetése* (1866). It was later translated into French and annotated by Julien Vinson: *Essai sur la langue basque* (1877).

12 This study was published in the journal *Revue de Philologie et d'Ethnographie* edited by Ujfalvy, so it is certain that Bonaparte knew Ujfalvy personally. In the same issue, Bonaparte published another article *Remarques sur plusieurs assertions de M. Abel Hovelacque concernant la langue basque* (1876), where he refers to Ujfalvy's work *Étude comparée...* (1875a).

13 Soon afterwards Julien Vinson, Eugène Beauvois and Paul Sébillot joined him there.

- Lucien Adam (1833–1918), specialist in Amerindian languages and author of a few short studies on Uralic and Altaic languages, e.g.: *La déclinaison ural-altaïque* (1870) or *De l'harmonie des voyelles dans les langues uralo-altaïques* (1874);
- Eugène Beauvois (1835–1912?), historian and translator, who spoke Nordic languages, and was interested in the history and popular traditions of their peoples. As a young man he published two articles in the *Revue Orientale et Américaine* in 1864, where he described Finno-Ugrian peoples: *Etudes sur la race Nordaltaïque* and *Les populations riveraines de l'Océan Glaciale*. Later he also published a few articles about Finnish literature and traditions.

Naturally, there were also other linguists who partially raised the Finno-Ugrian or generally Uralic (often called “Turanian” at that time) issues in their publications devoted to other languages, e.g. François Lenormant (1837–1883), author of *La langue primitive de la Chaldée et les idiomes touraniens...* (1875a) and *Les principes de comparaison de l'accadien et des langues touraniennes...* (1875b).

Around the same time, two significant French scholars specialized in Hungarian history.<sup>14</sup> The first of these, Auguste de Gérando (1819–1849), who moved to Hungary with his Hungarian spouse Emma Teleki (from the famous Transylvanian aristocratic family), wrote the *Essai historique sur l'origine des Hongrois* (1844), in which he rejected any link between the Hungarians and the Uralic (including Finnic) peoples, and he supported the Hunnic theory. His works also included *La Transylvanie et ses habitants* (1845) and *De l'esprit public en Hongrie...* (1848). The other one was Édouard Sayous (1842–1898), who produced a number of books, namely *Histoire des Hongrois...* (1872), *Les origines et l'époque païenne de l'histoire des Hongrois* (1874a), *Histoire générale des Hongrois* (1876), and reports e.g. *Les Provinces russes de la Baltique...* (1873) or *Musées ethnographiques...* (1874b), etc.<sup>15</sup>

14 Of course, there had been even earlier French historians who wrote about Hungarian history, e.g. Martin Fumée, author of *Histoire des troubles de Hongrie...* (1595); Martin Fumée & Nicolas de Montreux, authors of *Histoire générale des troubles de Hongrie et Transylvanie...* (1608); or Claude-Louis-Michel de Sacy, author of *Histoire générale de Hongrie* (1778–1780). And many other political publications, see e.g. Horel (2013) and Toulouze (1995).

15 Outside France, there were also two Catholic priests who published their studies on Hungary and Hungarian language in French: János (Jean) Eiben (a Hungarian chaplain of an infantry regiment), who wrote the *Nouvelle grammaire hongroise...* (Lviv, Chernivtsi 1843), as well as Edme-Léon Fauvin (a French priest who settled

Moreover, Ujfalvy was not the only Hungarian in France to show interest in the Hungarian history and language and, what is more, to publish books in French. Just before him, there was Ógyallai Besse János Károly (1765–1841), who used a Gallicised name, Jean-Charles de Besse. He travelled in the Middle East in search of the origin of Hungarians and he even published a book *Voyage en Crimée, au Caucase, en Géorgie, en Arménie, en Asie-Mineure...* (1838). Later, when Ujfalvy was almost at the height of his fame, another Hungarian Ákos Földváry (1823–1883) published a book *Les Ancêtres d'Attila...* (1875) in which he tried to prove that Hungarians derived from Scythians and that their language had a connection to the Breton language. He also proposed some strange etymologies of Hungarian words. The publication of this book did not go unnoticed by Ujfalvy, because in the first issue of his journal *Revue de philologie et d'ethnographie* (October–December 1874), we can find a short anonymous article criticising Földváry's book.<sup>16</sup> Another scholar that may be mentioned is Ignác Kont (1856–1912), who moved to France in 1881 and published in French, e.g.: *La Hongrie littéraire et scientifique* (1896) and *Étude sur l'influence de la littérature française en Hongrie...* (1902), and developed Hungarian literary studies at Sorbonne (surprisingly in 1913 he published the “first” French study of the Hungarian language and literature).

Finally, we have to mention János Ludvigh (1812–1870), Hungarian politician and journalist, who, after the Hungarian war of independence, fled to Brussels, where he lived from 1850 to 1869 (see MEK). Although he worked in Belgium rather than France, he deserves a place in our survey, not only because he wrote in French (under the name Jean Ludvigh) on politics and history, but also because he is the author of an interesting article (Ludvigh 1858) devoted to Finno-Ugrian language history. He is an excellent example of a non-linguist who spoke out about linguistic issues in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At the beginning of his article, Ludvigh rightly states that advances in philological and ethnological research can refute traditional history, which abounds in unfounded legends, but this is probably the only correct statement in this paper. He vehemently criticises the linking of the Hungarian people to the Ural-Altaiic “race” and says that the Hungarian language has nothing in common with Finnish, giving many examples of pseudo-etymologies.

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in Hungary), author of *Études sur la langue magyare, essai de grammaire hongroise* (Pest 1870). See also Toulouze (1995).

16 It seems Ujfalvy had access to Földváry's book even before its publication: the book bears the date 1875 and the journal bears the date of October-December 1874.

The above demonstrates that there was some interest in the Finno-Ugrian languages and cultures in France in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but it was rather confusing and controversial due to the lack of comprehensive knowledge.<sup>17</sup> And there were no other linguists as involved in the development of the linguistic study of Hungarian and its relatives as Ujfalvy. He was the most diligent, even zealous, prolific and ambitious scholar,<sup>18</sup> and for that reason he should be well remembered in the history of the Finno-Ugrian linguistics.

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17 As far as popular knowledge of the Finno-Ugrian languages in French society is concerned, we can also quote *Dictionnaire de la conversation et de la lecture* (Dictionary 1832–1852; the first edition in 1832–1852 followed by a second corrected and enlarged edition in 1853–1876), a kind of multi-volume compendium which served educated people to broaden their interests and knowledge so that they were capable of holding a discussion on various topics. Each entry is prepared by a different specialist. In vol. 27 (1836), there is an entry “Finnois” (Finns) written by a Napoleonic general and writer Guillaume de Vaudoncourt, who, describing the Finns in rather mythological terms, situates them within the “Finnish-Tatar” family along with the Hungarians. However, in the second edition (vol. 9, 1855) this entry (anonymous this time) is rewritten and contains more modern facts: in reference to Castrén (!), the family of Finns is considered one of the four branches of the Altaic “race” (others are Tungusic, Turkic and Samoyed).

Let us now take a look at the entries concerning Hungary. In the first edition of the Dictionary, in vol. 32 (1836), the entry “Hongrie” (signed C.L.) explains Hungarians’ origins rather vaguely and the Hungarian language is called “the centre of Semitic and Finnic languages”, emphasizing that scholars yet do not agree about the affinity of Hungarian with Lappish/Saami. However, in the second edition (vol. 11, 1868), the entry, anonymous this time, is rewritten too, and a wider discussion of the origins of Hungarian is presented: “Le magyare appartient à la même famille que la langue des Uzès ou Koumans, des Polowzes, des Chazares, des Petschenègues, peuples qui avaient tous une origine commune. Jusqu’à ces derniers temps on a discuté la question de savoir s’il avait aussi de l’affinité avec le lapon et le finnois, ainsi que le prétendent Budbök, Eccard, Ihre, Hell, Sajnovits, Gatterer, Schlözer, Büsching, Hagen et surtout Gyarmathi; ou bien avec les langues orientales, comme Otrókotsi Oertel, Kalmár, Verseggi et surtout Beregszásyi ont essayé de le démontrer. Différent complètement de toutes les langues européennes (excepté le finnois et, à certains égards, le turc)” (Dictionary 1868, vol 11: 161–162).

18 Interestingly, each of his numerous publications is dedicated to an important person. Except for the vogue dedications at that time, this fact can signify not only his humbleness, but also his ambitions and aspirations to a high career.



Ujfalvy's character and life have been presented by Bernard Le Calloc'h (1986, 1986–1987, 1987), Gubina (2013), Gorshenina (2003: 271–277), as well as briefly by Setälä (1904), Szinnyi (1914), Wichmann (1919) and Goršenina (1998, 1999). Here, we are able to outline only a fraction of his numerous books about the Finno-Ugrian languages. We want to highlight the life of a scholar who was very active and hard-working, who read, wrote and travelled extensively with the aim of exploring and describing new facts and findings. As a young man, he spent many years at military school,<sup>19</sup> which he left when promoted to the rank of second lieutenant. In 1864, he went to Bonn in Germany, where he defended his doctoral thesis in philosophy less than two years later. In 1866 he was already in Paris with the intention of preparing his “agrégation”<sup>20</sup> in German, which he obtained as the best student. Then he settled permanently in France, married Marie Bourdon and started to teach German at the secondary school in Versailles. However, he never ceased to broaden his knowledge and with time he became a member of a number of academic societies (Société de géographie, Société asiatique, Société de numismatique et d'archéologie, Société d'anthropologie and Société philologique of which he even became vice-president).

Ujfalvy initially devoted himself to studying languages: first of all in order to outline his native Hungarian to the French readers, and secondly, just because of his Hungarian roots he was very interested in cognates of his mother tongue that were still under debate. At that time, of course, linguists already knew that Finnic languages (including Saami/Lappish) were related to Hungarian, but their classification and relations to other languages remained questionable: the first attempt to classify languages now considered Altaic and Uralic together was made by a Swedish officer Philipp Johann Strahlenberg (1676–1747) in 1730 as the “Tatar family”, which included Finno-Ugrian, Turkic, Samoyed, Mongol-Manchu, Tungus and Caucasian. This classification was revised by Rasmus Rask (1782–1832) who renamed (Rask 1834) the grouping the Scythian family (including Mongolian, Manchu-Tungus, Turkic, Uralic, Eskimo, Chukchi-Kamchatkan, Caucasian, Basque) and later by Wilhelm Schott (1849), who spoke of the Altaic or “Finnish-Tatar” family which split into two groups: Chudic (Finno-Ugrian, Samoyed) and Tatar (Turkic, Mongolian, Tungus).<sup>21</sup> This latter vision was quite similar to

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19 In keeping with the family tradition: his father was a cavalry officer of Sicule descent.

20 In France, „agrégation” is a kind of a high-level competitive examination for recruitment of teachers.

21 These classifications are plainly presented e.g. in Ruhlen (1991: 128–129).

that of Matthias Alexander Castrén (see e.g. Castrén 1850).<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, Max Müller (1854a, 1854b, 1855) (along with Christian Karl Josias von Bunsen) proposed the name “Turanian”<sup>23</sup> for a large group of languages which did not only include the languages which Rask had classified as Scythian, but also Thai, Tibetan, Dravidian and Malay. Subsequently this classification and its name began to be abused by linguists who lumped together hardly known or still unclassified languages, especially those featuring agglutination. Many other linguists proposed alternative names (e.g. North-Altaiic, even Ugro-Japanese or Finno-Japanese<sup>24</sup>), but as far as the Finno-Ugrian languages were concerned, they were still linked at least to the Turkic languages, and the name “Turanian” became very popular among linguists and even anthropologists.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, many scholars were opposed to this name, e.g. August Friedrich Pott in Germany or many linguists in France (see Desmet 1996: 129), including Ujfalvy. Nevertheless, Ujfalvy used it in his earliest publications, e.g. in his first book he wrote: “Müller enfin appelle ces langues des langues touraniennes, en opposition des langues ariennes, sémitiques, etc., et nous sommes parfaitement de son avis; la Touranie ayant été de tout temps le centre de leur habitation première” (Ujfalvy 1871: 10). He even included the name in the title of his book published in 1873: *Les Migrations des peuples et particulièrement celle des Touraniens*. However, it was as early as 1874 that he changed his mind: „Dans les derniers temps, on a généralement adopté le nom de *Touranien* pour indiquer ces brachycéphales du centre et du nord-ouest. Nous avons proposé, à l’instar de Castrén et d’autres savants, de lui substituer celui d’*altaïque*” (Ujfalvy 1874c: 14).

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22 And see his other works on the relationship between Uralic and Altaic languages, which were published after his death in 1852.

23 The name is controversial and changed meanings. It can derive from the Avestan sense ‘enemy’ as a name given to Turkic peoples threatening Iranians from the North. Or it can come from an Iranian legendary character Tur. Later the term *Turan* as ‘land of Tur’ started to mean ‘region in Central Asia’, and subsequently to be identified with nomadic Turks, and eventually to mean generally Asiatic peoples except for the Indo-Europeans (so-called Aryans in the 19<sup>th</sup> c.) and Semitic peoples. See e.g. Gorshenina (2014: 397–413) and Rodet (1877–1878).

24 Such was the proposal of a French Japanist Léon de Rosny (1837–1914), who tried to show many grammatical similarities between those languages, see Congrès (1874: 422–430).

25 This issue was discussed by linguists even at the First International Congress of Orientalists in September 1873, see its many reports.

Although the term “Turanian” is no longer used nowadays and even forgotten, the hypothesis of the Ural-Altai possible familial affinity remains controversial. Marek Stachowski put it very accurately saying that both Uralic and Altaic families are at best “bosom friends who shared their Siberian past” (Stachowski 2008: 176).

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ujfalvy tried to find the right way through the tangle of theories, not only as a curious scholar, but mostly as a Hungarian. Subsequently, his ambitions became greater and eventually he tried to implement Finno-Ugrian language studies in France. Here, we will briefly look through his publications about the Finno-Ugrian issues.

His first book (*La Langue magyare, son origine, ses rapports avec les langues finnoises...*) appeared in 1871, four years after his settling in France. This book laid the foundations of his scholarly activity, and was written with the aim to present his native language to the French public. Moreover, his natural curiosity pushed him to explore the ancestors of the Hungarian nation. At that time, the descent of Hungarians was still a subject of much controversy: most Hungarians and even some scholars preferred to recognise their ancestors in the Huns, who invaded those lands in the past. The myth of the origin of Hungarians from Attila's valiant but barbarian tribe had strong roots in the Hungarian romantic imagery and folk legends, which also put together the name of the Huns and the occidental name of the Magyars (e.g. *Hungarians* in English). The notion of linguistic relations between Hungarians and Finns and inhabitants of the Ob River or generally of the Ural mountains was still weak and was almost unknown in France, despite publications by the above mentioned linguists. Ujfalvy adopted a hypothesis about the relationship between Hungarian and Finnish, but he did not rule out links with Basque. He admitted that these languages could belong to the oldest stratum of languages in Europe (Ujfalvy 1871: 5–6). Mainly, he tried to prove that grammatical and lexical similarities between Hungarian and “Tchudic” (i.e. Finnic) cannot be accidental despite the distance. However, he did not distinguish the Finno-Ugrian languages and peoples from the other Uralic cognates or the Turanian and Altaic “race” at that time.

The following year he published a new book on a similar topic (Ujfalvy 1872), in which he maintained and developed the same ideas. This work also contained excerpts of Hungarian poetry in his French translation. His activity and knowledge were noticed by the French governmental authorities and in the same year the French Ministry of the Public Education dispatched Ujfalvy to Austria-Hungary to collect data on effective methods of teaching in order to bring fresh ideas and solutions which could be implemented in the French educational system.

In 1873 a volume of Hungarian verse *Poésies magyares* came out, which included poetry, chosen and translated by Ujfalvy and Hippolyte Desbordes-Valmore (1820–1892). The same year Ujfalvy published two new studies (1873ab) in which his growing interest in ethnography and anthropology was clearly visible. These publications earned him the status of a well-known scholar who was invited to give lectures. For example, on 26<sup>th</sup> December 1873, during a session of the Société française de numismatique et d'archéologie, he gave a lecture on the mythical land Thule, which was mentioned by a Greek explorer Pytheas (4<sup>th</sup> c. BC) travelling in the North. Ujfalvy opted for the hypothesis whereby Pytheas met the ancestors of the Finns. This lecture was later published (Ujfalvy 1874d).

From 1873 on, Ujfalvy clearly broadened the range of his interests: his publications started to raise questions pertaining not only to Hungarian, but also to the Finno-Ugrian languages. Perhaps he noticed this gap in the development of modern sciences. Interestingly, in September 1873 the First International Congress of Orientalists took place in Paris, at which Lucien Adam expressed his regret at the lack of extensive and thorough research on those languages:

Bien que cette partie du domaine oriental ait été l'objet de défrichements auxquels s'attachent les noms des Klaproth, des Abel-Rémusat, des Conon de la Gabelentz, des Castrén, des Schott, des Wiedemann, des Anton Schieffner et des Boehlingk, on peut dire, sans manquer de respect à aucun de ces vrais savants, que la grammaire comparée des langues ouralo-altaïques attend encore son Bopp et son Schleicher. (Congrès 1874: 418–419)

And further, on the comprehensibility of their results:

Encore si tous les travaux partiels pouvaient être utilisés par ceux qui se sentent le courage d'entreprendre le grand œuvre ! Mais, hélas ! tandis que les uns écrivent en danois, ou en suédois, les autres se servent, qui de la langue magyare, qui de la langue suomi, qui de la langue russe. A cette difficulté, déjà considérable, ajoutez, Messieurs, qu'il n'existe pas de recueil périodique spécialement consacré aux études tartares, et vous ne serez pas étonnés d'apprendre qu'on en est encore à se demander si les langues du groupe ouralo-altaïque forment une famille naturelle. (Congrès 1874: 419)

It is not implausible that Ujfalvy heard these words and took them to heart.

The year 1874 was very active in Ujfalvy's career. First of all, he published two new books. The first was *Mélanges altaïques* in which he blends diverse subjects, mostly borrowed from publications of several authors. Although his

erudition is clearly evident, at times he had a tendency to intertwine the reality with fantasy and repeat someone else's errors, e.g. on the etymology of the name of Chudes (Ujfalvy 1874a: 120). Moreover, he frequently included the exact excerpts from his earlier publications, e.g. about the land Thule (Ujfalvy 1874d). The other book he published that year was *Aperçu général sur les migrations des peuples ...* (1874b). In both he discusses ethnographical and historical subjects rather than linguistic ones.

Thanks to those publications, l'École des langues orientales invited him to give lectures on history and geography of Central Asia. His inaugural lecture was delivered on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1784 and later published (1874c). This occupation encouraged him to study Asiatic languages and peoples more thoroughly.

Interestingly, starting from 1784, Ujfalvy quoted a Finn Yrjö Koskinen in many of his publications, as the highest authority in the history of migration of peoples. Koskinen (1830–1903)<sup>26</sup> was not only a professor of general history, writer and journalist, but also an influential statesman and one of the leaders of the Fennoman movement. He was also Francophile (Klinge 2012: 159). Moreover, he participated in the First International Congress of Orientalists in September 1873 in Paris as a Finnish delegate (his name is in the register of participants). Among his publications in Swedish and Finnish, Koskinen published studies of the Finnic history in French (1866) and in German (1874a).

We know that Ujfalvy initiated correspondence with the famous Finn around 1873–1784, but Koskinen had not known him before. For example, on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1874 Koskinen wrote to Pál Hunfalvy (1810–1891), a great Hungarian Finno-Ugrist:

Minulle on viime aikoina pari kertaa kirjoittanut eräs Unkarilainen tiedemies Ch. Ujfalvy de Mezö-Kövesd. Mistä hän on? ja kuinka hän on siirtynyt Pariisiin? – Hänen suuri teoksensa osoittaa kenties paikoittain vähän ranskalaista pintapuolisuutta sekä liian hätäisiä resultateja, mutta paljon tieteellistä intoa. Hän on luvannut tulla tänne Suomeen. (Tervonen 1987: 268)

I have recently received a couple of letters from a Hungarian scholar Ch. Ujfalvy de Mezö-Kövesd. Where is he from? and how did he move to Paris? – His great works show, perhaps in some places, a little French levity and too hasty results, but a lot of scholarly enthusiasm. He has promised to come here, to Finland.

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26 Yrjö Koskinen was his pen name. Until 1882 his real name was Georg Zakarias Forsman, which he Fennicized into Yrjö Sakari Yrjö-Koskinen.

Later that year, Koskinen published a study *De l'origine des Huns* in Ujfalvy's *Revue de philologie et d'ethnographie*, a journal which would only run for three issues: the first one in 1874, the second in 1876, and the third in 1877–1878, and then disappear, probably because of its too extensive thematic range (mostly non-Indo-European) and due to competition from other journals, which were dedicated primarily to Indo-European matters, as well as a progressive split between linguistics and anthropology or ethnography (Auroux 1984: 313; Desmet 1996: 19). The 1874 issue also featured articles by Paul [Pál] Hunfalvy (*Essai d'une grammaire ostiaque*), by Maurice [Moritz] Grünwald (*Quelques observations sur les affinités du turc avec le magyar* and *Grammaire samoïède*), by Lucien Adam (*Une genèse vogoule* as well as some Vogul texts with his French translation), and *Bibliographie altaïque* by an anonymous writer: X.Y. (maybe Ujfalvy?). Of course, there were also 3 studies by Ujfalvy himself (1875a, 1875b, 1875c).<sup>27</sup> The latter (1875c) offered a survey of A. Ahlqvist's and E. Lönnrot's works on Veps, including some original texts with French translation. The following two issues of the journal included articles by such scholars as Zsigmond Simonyi (on the Ugrian languages), or Vladimir de Mainof (on Mordvins), as well as the aforementioned study on the classification of the Uralic languages by Bonaparte.

As far as our topic is concerned, the most interesting among the three above-mentioned articles by Ujfalvy is *Étude comparée des langues ougro-finnoises* (1875a), which covers both linguistics and ethnography (including migrations of those peoples, their religions and cultures). From Ujfalvy's perspective "Ugro-Finnic" peoples are:

1. Western Finns or Chudes: proper Finns (including Karelians, Tavastians and Kvens), Vepsians (anciens Chudes), Votes, Lapps; Estonians, Lives; as well as almost extinct at that time Krevinians and Livonians;
2. Eastern Finns or Permians: Permians (Bjarmians), Zyrians, Votyaks;
3. Volga Finns or Bulgars: Mordvins and Cheremis people;
4. Ugrians: Ostyaks, Voguls, Magyars.

The Samoyed peoples were allegedly situated between "Ugro-Finns" and Altaic peoples.

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27 The 1874 issue of the journal was actually published early in 1875, and the offprints of Ujfalvy's articles under discussion bear the date 1875, which is why they are marked as 1875abc in the bibliography.

The same year, Ujfalvy gave another special lecture on Asia, which would later be published, *Cours complémentaire de géographie...* (1875d). At that time his next article came out under the title *Sur l'importance de la voyelle "i" dans les suffixes des langues ougro-finnoises* (1875e).

In January 1876 he put into print a short study of the Finnish phonetics (Ujfalvy 1876c), where he also translated only the first song (*runo*) of the Finnish national epic, despite the fact that a French translation of that Finnish masterpiece already existed: Louis-Antoine Léouzon Le Duc (1815–1889) translated the first version of the *Kalevala* in 1845 and he retranslated the final version of this epic in 1867. Léouzon Le Duc's translation in French is up to standard, although written in prose. By contrast, Ujfalvy's version of the first song is regrettably not very accurate, owing to the literal translation because of his inadequate command of the Finnish language.

The same year, his "twin" grammars came out (1876a, 1876b). The first was conceived as a philological, not practical, study of Hungarian, inspired by a Hungarian scholar Anselm Mansvet [Szende] Riedl's (1831–1873) *Magyarische Grammatik* (1858). The latter was written with Rafael Hertzberg (1845–1896), a Finnish writer and journalist. This Finnish grammar was prepared on the basis of the grammars by a Finnish scholar Gustaf Erik Eurén (1818–1872), written in Swedish (1846; 1849, reprinted 3 more times; 1851, reprinted 1865), and finally in Finnish (1852, reprinted 4 times later). Eurén wrote also a Swedish-Finnish dictionary (1860).

The year of 1876 was crucial in Ujfalvy's career. In July, the Ministry of Public Instruction sent him on a mission to Asia. At that time there was an international rivalry for supremacy in Central Asia, and therefore many Occidental countries sent their expeditions there, mostly to Turkestan, whose Western part had just been conquered by Russians. Ujfalvy's knowledge and interests were ideal for such a mission on behalf of France. In total, he led three French scientific expeditions, which made him famous at that time:

- I (1876–1877): Saint-Petersburg, Helsinki, Moscow, Orenburg, Turkestan, Syr Darya, Tashkent, Samarkand, Zarafshan, Kohistan, Fergana, Kokand, Alma-Ata (Verny), Semey (Semipalatinsk), Omsk, Dzungaria, Bashkiria.
- II (1879): Kazakhstan, Bukhara.
- III (1881): Bombay, Western Himalayas, Kashmir.

While on all these expeditions, his aim was to discover ethnographic and anthropological types of peoples as well as their languages, although we have to

say that during that time Ujfalvy's studies on languages became only a marginal part of his activity, as he acted as an anthropologist and ethnographer<sup>28</sup> rather than a linguist and during his explorations in Central Asia, he described clothes, ornaments and races of peoples including cephalic measurements among others.<sup>29</sup> It seems that with the passing of time, his initial passion to broaden studies on Finno-Ugrian languages waned; moreover, during those explorations he had more contact with non-Uralic peoples.

In terms of the Finno-Ugrian languages, only his first expedition resulted in some superficial contacts. We know about this trip also thanks to his wife's memoirs (Ujfalvy-Bourdon 1880).<sup>30</sup> And we know that at the beginning, they spent four months in Saint-Petersburg in order to arrange necessary permits from Russian authorities. During this stay, they briefly visited Finland and their arrival was keenly noticed by Finnish scholars: we found mentions in letters of two Finns to their Hungarian friends:

1. August Ahlqvist to Pál Hunfalvy (December 2 1876):

Pari viikkoa takaperin kävi täällä meidän kaupungissamme Ujfalvy puolisonsa kanssa. Hän näyttää olevan sievä mies, vaan on ehkä ottanut liian suuren työn toimitettavaksensa, kuin läksi nykyiselle matkallensa (Tervonen 1987: 169)

A couple of weeks ago Ujfalvy and his spouse were here in our town. He seems to be a nice man, but maybe he has taken on too much work to do, when he set out on the current journey.

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- 28 He regarded ethnography not only as the scholarly investigation of folk customs and beliefs, but also as a discipline oriented towards studying languages, which especially applied to one of its branches, linguistic ethnography (Ujfalvy 1874c: 10, 17). Such a distinction becomes clear, as we remember that the linguistics before Ferdinand de Saussure was rather associated only to philology, grammar and lexicography.
  - 29 However, this work was not always easy and successful, e.g. in 1878 he complains about disapproval of his investigations in Russia: „l'Anthropologie rencontre encore de nombreux adversaires en Russie, et un savant et quelques pseudo-savants de Pétersbourg ont essayé de contester l'utilité de mes recherches" (Ujfalvy 1878: 8).
  - 30 In 1885, it was also published in Budapest in Hungarian translation: *Ujfalvy Károly utazása Páristól – Samarkandig: a Ferganah, Kuldzsa és nyugati Szibéria: egy párizsi nő úti élményei.*



2. Antti Jalava<sup>31</sup> to József Budenz (December 16 1876):

Noin kuukausi sitte kävi täällä Ujfalvy rouvineen. Hän oli muun muassa kutsuttu eräasen ylioppilasjuhlaan, jossa Carinus' en<sup>32</sup> suomentaja Koloman = Päivärinta (ennen Svan), tervehti häntä unkarinkielisellä puheella. (Tervonen 1995: 29)

About a month ago, Ujfalvy came here with his wife. He was, among other things, invited to a university celebration, during which Carinus' translator Koloman = Päivärinta (formerly, Svan), greeted him in the Hungarian speech.

Thanks to Mrs. Ujfalvy-Bourdon's memoirs (1880: 18), we know that in Helsinki he also met Johannes Reinhold Aspelin (1842–1915), the first Finnish archaeologist. Nevertheless, it seems that he did not spend much time studying Finnic languages. At the end of his expedition, in Omsk, he only inquired about Ostyaks, and in Troitsk he saw two young travelling Samoyeds.

But when he came back after his first two expeditions to Central Asia, he published his reports as *Expédition scientifique française en Russie, en Sibérie et dans le Turkestan* in 6 volumes between 1878 and 1880. Only two volumes are related to the Finno-Ugrian issues (1880a, 1880b). In the first he described some findings during his visit in Finland in 1876, namely the archaeology of Finland, Vepsians on the shore of the lake Onega (including samples of their language) and Votes near Saint-Petersburg. The latter featured reproductions of objects found by a certain doctor Ivanovski in Votia, southwest of Saint-Petersburg as well as those found by Europaeus<sup>33</sup> in the region of Vepsians and by Aspelin in Finland.

In the first volume of his reports, Ujfalvy acknowledged, that during his expeditions he concentrated only on ethnographical and anthropological issues, and he made use of his philological skills only in Finnic countries (Ujfalvy 1878). Thus ethnography and anthropology attracted his attention for good. Yet, the many interesting studies of the Finno-Ugrian languages which he had produced earlier bear testimony to the convoluted and circuitous developments in linguistics in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

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31 Until 1906 his name was Anton Fredrik Almberg.

32 The novel *Carinus: históriai novella* was written by a Hungarian Mór Jókai, a very popular and often translated writer of his time. The novel has been translated into Finnish as *Carinus: historiallinen novella* in 1875 by Jaakko Haniel Päivärinta (Jakob Haniel Swan [or Svan] until 1877), publishing under the pen-name Koloman.

33 Probably Daniel Europaeus (1820–1884), Finnish poet and specialist in folklore studies.

Just in 1878, the Société de Linguistique de Paris, in its series *Mémoires*, published an article (Donner 1878) featuring an overview of recent issues in Finno-Ugrian language studies: *Revue de la philologie ougro-finnoise dans les années 1873–1875*<sup>34</sup> by Otto Donner (1835–1909), Finnish professor of comparative linguistics at the University of Helsinki,<sup>35</sup> member of the Société since 1869.<sup>36</sup> This article was meant as the first of a series of studies showing achievements in different linguistic fields. Originally written in German, it was translated for publication in French by Édouard Sayous. Donner quotes a few of Ujfalvy's publications in it: *Essai de grammaire vèpse...* (1875c), *Étude comparée des langues ougro-finnoises* (1875a) and *Éléments de grammaire magyare* (1876a). Admittedly Donner points out some of Ujfalvy's shortcomings, but appreciates the value of his works for the general public in France. Soon afterwards, in Berlin in 1884, a German Finno-Ugrist Heinrich Winkler (1848–1930) published a famous study *Uralaltaische Völker und Sprachen*, in which he, too, quoted Ujfalvy on numerous occasions.

As we can see, Ujfalvy's studies were appreciated and well received by readers at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but shortly after, they sank into oblivion. From the 1880s on, Ujfalvy's eyesight was failing fast. He could not work anymore. Undoubtedly his retirement was a significant loss to the world of science.

During this time, Finno-Ugrian language studies made significant progress, and the number of linguists devoted to those studies grew, especially in Finland and Hungary. Some of them published their works on the Finno-Ugrian languages, cultures and peoples even in France, e.g. the Finnish historian and statistician Karl Emil Ferdinand Ignatius (1886), the Hungarian literary historian Vilmos (writing in French as Guillaume) Huszár (1896) or the above mentioned Ignác Kont. However, France still had to wait for her first genuine Finno-Ugrist, Aurélien Sauvageot (1897–1988), who had just been born in... Constantinople.

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34 Such a time frame is due to the fact that the article under discussion is a continuation of another study by the same author written in Swedish and published in Helsinki six years earlier (Donner 1872): *Öfversikt af den finsk ugriska språkforskningens historia* [Survey of the history of Finno-Ugrian language studies].

35 In 1883 he would establish the Finno-Ugrian Society (Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seura).

36 Apart from Donner, another Finnish member of the Société at that time was Carl-Gustaf Estlander (since 1867), professor of literature and aesthetics at the University of Helsinki. The next to be accepted (in 1885) was Fridolf Gustafsson, professor of Latin language and Roman literature.

## Conclusions

The aim of this article was to celebrate Ujfalvy's life, work and contribution to the humble beginnings of the Finno-Ugrian language studies, anthropology and ethnography in France.

Ujfalvy wanted to be one of those researchers who earned a place in history. He lived in an era when linguistics and anthropology were still undeveloped, with unreliable and questionable sources of knowledge and information. It was only the beginning of the studies on the Finno-Ugrian languages and generally Uralic linguistics. Ujfalvy wanted to contribute to its development, partly because he was Hungarian and wanted to spread the knowledge about his native language and its relatives in France, his new homeland, and partly because he was a very ambitious and curious scholar. Although his works are not perfect and sometimes contain, unbeknown to him, mistakes, inaccuracies, or plain myths (which was not uncommon at that time), he deserves his place in the history of Uralic linguistics and should be remembered as a "pioneer" of such studies in France and a hard-working polymath.

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