

ASSOCIATION for the STUDY of LANGUAGE IN PREHISTORY

LETTER TO MEMBERS, NO.2

MARCH 10, 1993

Re MOTHER TONGUE 18, December 1992.

Let us imagine that it appeared and it was very interesting. These four pages are remnants of that worthy issue, let it be said! The rest got away because of editorial problems.

EDITORIAL PROBLEMS

The editor went into Pittsburgh's best hospital in early November, came out in mid-month, re-entered soonly, and stayed there until mid-January. The hospital repaired his heart (aortic valve and coronary artery), making it impossible for him to sneak up on people any longer due to the loud ticking noise made by the shiny steel valve. Iatrogenically, the hospital kindly gave him a bonus, a massive sepsis or toxic shock syndrome; that basically succeeded in killing him, except for some unexpected divine intervention (a miracle, they said) at the last moment. The gods were looking forward to MT-18, it seems, being unable to produce such bizarre material on their own.

The rest of the time was spent bringing the body back to life and re-building it, since it resembled a Dachau survivor until recently. Its present condition is weak -- with wounds still healing -- but slowly slowly gaining strength.

But MOTHER TONGUE 18 got lost somewhere. So sorry.

IMPORTANT NOTICES. YOU SHOULD READ AND NOT SKIP OVER.

1. ANNUAL DUES. They are now fifteen US dollars (\$15) everywhere except Europe where Ekkehard Wolff requests twenty Deutsche Mark (DM 20) in check or cash (or International Money Order)--or \$15. The Board of Directors voted an increase in annual dues last April; we explained that to you in MT-17. It is postage, of course, which is driving up our costs. Mailing MT-17 to Alaska cost \$1.44 (3rd class) but it cost \$5.58 to Africa and \$5.69 to Australia or Japan (all A-0 rate). Please tell Ekkehard what year you are paying for.

2. DELINQUENT MEMBERS. Most long rangers pay their annual dues, often promptly. Like all organizations which are mail based we have a constant problem with members who never respond -- most of all to requests for annual dues. Organizations with large amounts of money -- well, they usually take no crap at all. You don't pay your dues? Well then, they cross you off the list -- promptly.

So we too will ask for annual dues initially each year, then send two dunning post cards at appropriate intervals. Then we will strike the delinquent's name from the ASLIP rolls, if no response has come after the two postcards. Why should we waste time and money chasing delinquents?

3. ANNUAL MEETING. All members of the Board of Directors are hereby notified that the annual meeting of the Board of ASLIP will be held on April 21, 1993 in Boston, Massachusetts at the same location as the annual meeting of ASLIP. All members of ASLIP are notified that the Annual Meeting will be held 21 April at 6:00 pm at Boston University, African Studies Center, 264 Bay



State Road, Boston, Massachusetts. Please call Alan Bomhard at 617-227-4923 for further details. The date has been moved to the 21st from the 15th because of conflicts in schedules.

Except for the election of the Board and the Officers, there is one informal item on the agenda, viz., funding of a new full-time editor and expansion of MOTHER TONGUE. Members may bring up new business. Other informal discussions are likely to occur.

#### HUMAN GENOME WORKSHOP A BIG SUCCESS

One of the best conferences we have ever attended was held at Penn State in late October. Sponsored by the Anthropology dept., Human Genome committees, and other interested bodies, the conference in a few days of hard work drew up a master 'list' of those peoples or populations whose genes were particularly important to record.

Experts on most of the ethnographic areas around the globe gathered together with their suggestions for those linguistic, cultural, physical, or biomedical groups which most of all needed to be represented in a true human genome. Such little peoples as the Shabo, the Ongota, and the Hadza, as well as huge nations like the Chinese or Russians, got represented. The difference between this and normal population sampling was very great. In the latter the Chinese would be vastly over-represented, of course, while Shabo or Ongota would never be sampled at all.

#### FORTHCOMING: SOME MAJOR FEATURES OF MOTHER TONGUE 19.

1. Symposium on the linguistic taxonomy of the western Pacific Rim (S/SE Asia & Pacific) by a group of 15 experts on that subject. Not only is the western Pacific Rim one of the great areas of diversity on earth, matched only by Africa, but also it is THE most successful taxonomic area, possibly matched by Africa. There is boldness in hypothesis but also much heart-warming application of the comparative method.
2. Three archeologists (Hoffecker et al) report in SCIENCE that they have solved the riddle of the Americas. The Clovis horizon in mid-latitude North America is derived from the Nenana culture of central Alaska around 11,000 BP (9,000 BC). Although SCIENCE gave it the space said to be reserved for major break-throughs, the article argues mostly by insisting -- that contrary evidence can be dismissed. I would call that dishonest.
3. Cavalli-Sforza et al report more of their labors at relating human genetic data to other things like linguistic taxa, historical events, etc. In their rich material there is an astounding finding about Japan -- sometime between 10 kya and 4 kya -- there occurred a population explosion among the very successful foragers of Japan who then crossed over to Korea and north China and northeastward along the Pacific maritime towards Kamchatka and Beringia and/or the Aleutian islands. There is no linguistic or archeological correlate that I know of for this development. Yes, it might relate to Ainu, Gilyak, and Chukotian. Even Korean.
4. Japanese geneticists make a valuable contribution to mtDNA and the peopling of the Americas. Horai et al confirm some things said by Douglas Wallace and associates but conclude that four



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founding lineages for native Americans were not bound together in one migration but rather represent four separate migrations. They also find pre-Clovis dates for any one migration or all four. And they also think Africa has more diversity than anywhere else.

Their conclusions are not valid for Na-Dene, however, or Eskimo, since in a sample of 72 'native Americans', there was but one (Apache) and no Eskimaux. L'Apache was not salient.

5. C. Loring Brace, distinguished scientist and author of textbooks in physical anthropology, gave a lecture in Indiana. Using logic and his vast knowledge of fossil man, and beating the drums for Hrdlička, he concludes that we moderns are descended from Homo sapiens neanderthalensis, not some African woman.

6. Wilfried Schuhmacher, Bert Seto, et al have written a book on the Pacific Rim about which they are most copiously informed. There is much comparative linguistic data in it. I have the honor of reviewing the book in WORD later this year.

7. "Tiddlypush" is a delightful British term to describe things of not much consequence, things that amount to a row of urine holes in the snow. I was forbidden to use the term once by my thesis adviser because it is not standard English. But when I  
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As promised, you are going to elect ten permanent Fellows of the Council of Fellows. Those will serve in addition to the Fellows you elected previously. From a list, consisting of the Fellows temporarily appointed by the Board of Directors plus those persons nominated in the past year, you will choose TEN. Please mail your questionnaire to Ms. Anne W. Beaman whose address is given overleaf. Please cast your ballots forthwith, since we will not wait longer than May 1st, 1993 for you to return it.

Please circle or underline the names of ZERO to TEN people.

John Stewart (Edinburgh)	Sydney Lamb (Rice University)
Hans Mukarovsky (Vienna)	Irving 'Ben' Rouse (Yale)
Ben Ohiomamhe Elugbe (Ibadan)	Karl-Heinrich Menges (Vienna)
Igor Diakonoff (St.Petersburg)	Dell Hymes (Virginia)
Luca Luigi Cavalli-Sforza (Stanford)	Lyle Campbell (Louisiana)
Terrence Kaufman (Pittsburgh)	Colin Renfrew (Cambridge, UK)



look at what is considered historical linguistic research these days in Americanistics or Indo-European, well, tiddlypush comes to mind. Or majestically glacial movement is more apropos.

8. Good colleagues! Do enlighten me for I've been confined. Is there anything going on in historical linguistics (of the LC = linguistically correct variety)?

9. In the mid-20th century standard linguistics which can be called Bloomfieldian linguistics appeared to be dull and lifeless -- machines could be trained to do it -- and thus remarkably easy for the Chomskyites to transform. Which they did. Does not historical linguistics (of the LC variety) strike you as equally dull and lifeless nowadays? In the 19th century it was a lot more interesting and vigorous! What we solicit letters about is this : is not the above true? and ought we not start a new and more interesting field, prehistoric linguistics?

10. LETTERS of considerable substance are waiting to be read:

a) Saul Levin replies at length to Fleming's criticisms in MOTHER TONGUE 17. It is well-written and well-argued.

b) Carleton Hodge writes about his reconstructions and thoughts about Indo-European and Afro-Asiatic. His analyses are finely honed and require proper attention. Responses desired!

c) Alvah Hicks unveils some of his thinking on the South American origins of Homo sapiens sapiens and the unrecognized great age of Amerinds in the New World. Bucking the mainstream!

d) and many more

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Mail ballots to:

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