The 1993 NTUG Annual Meeting

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The 1993 annual meeting of the NTUG ("Nordic TEX User Group") took place on November 29th at the University of Helsinki in Finland. The following talks were presented:

Typesetting of multilingual documents with ScholarTEX Johannis Likos talked about the problems of typesetting text with non-latin characters. He mentioned the need for such typesetting in both the academic world and commercial enterprises, and also the need to combine various alphabets in a bilingual or even multilingual document.

One package that can make it possible to typeset such documents using TEX, is **ScholarTEX**. This package was created by *Yannis Haralambous* and is commercially available for various platforms. It contains several alphabets, including Arabic, Hebrew, polytonic Greek.

The TEX multilingual effort Enn Saar gave a summary of the present status of this project, and particularly the TWGMLC ("TEX Working Group on Multiple Language Coordination"). This group had for the Aston TUG meeting formulated the contents of a minimal TEX language package, and has since extensively discussed the subtleties of the future language-switching commands. Most languages will be able to use the Cork code table for output, but one of the most serious problems is how to incorporate into the packages the myriad of existing input encodings. The mechanisms proposed include filters, TEX active characters and the TEX codepage extension. Saar favoured the latter as the most complete solution, although this does not belong to the standard TEX.

PostScript fonts for Scandinavian languages Dag Langmyhr first told the history of the particular Scandinavian letters (like *æ*, *þ* and *ä*) and quotation marks (like « and „) in TEX and Computer Modern. The Cork encoding made all these characters available and made it possible to use the letters in hyphenation patterns.

Using the Scandinavian characters in PostScript fonts was also difficult for many years, until it became possible to specify an encoding vector to the DVI-to-PS driver. The most important remaining problem is that PostScript font metrics seldom give any kerning pairs for the Scandinavian characters. This issue has now been solved by *Alan Jeffrey's* package `fontinst`, which creates kern pairs based on character similarity.

The final part of the meeting was spent discussing how to make it easier for Scandinavian users to install and maintain an up-to-date TEX. It was decided to split the Nordic TEX archive in two: One in Finland for PC-implementations, and the other in Sweden for UNIX and Mac installations.

The next NTUG meeting will be held in Oslo on May 16th this year.