

Vihi, ANOTHER FINNISH TRAPPING TERM FROM BALTIC

The majority of Baltic loans in Baltic Finnic pertain either to nature, agriculture, and primitive technology or to stable social interaction (*helle* 'hot weather', *metsä* 'woods', *apila* 'clover', *hirvi* 'moose', *käki* 'cuckoo'; *herne* 'pea', *heinä* 'hay', *siemen* 'seed', *hirsi* 'log', *seinä* 'wall', *silta* 'bridge'; *heimo* 'tribe', *morsian* 'bride', *tytär* 'daughter', etc.). In trapping, aside from fishing terminology, words referring to snaring small game like birds are notable. Of these *ansa* 'snare' and *lahto* 'a noose within a branch hoop for grouse and hazelhen', reflect rather accurately the semantics of the Baltic originals, i. e., also the Baltic sources designate traps or similar things, whereas *virka* 'snare, trap, trap line', also shown to be of Baltic origin, is a trapping term in only part of Finnish dialects (in the Far North [Perä-Pohjola]) [Posti, 1932, 46–50; Kalima, 1941, 210–211], with no such readings recorded in modern Baltic contexts; and also Finnish *virka* is above all an abstract term. One could theoretically think that the meaning of a Baltic–Baltic Finnic trapping term would have survived only in the Northern Finnish hunting and trapping economy. But it is more likely that the more general meaning 'line, row' (attested in Ingrian) was narrowed in the old Finnish hunting context. It is understandable that the specific narrow meaning of *virka* would have been lost with the corresponding practise in the dialects spoken in agrarian communities. The general, abstract meaning of the word 'occupation, position, office, post, career, task', occurs already in Agricola and in Modern Standard Finnish *virka* is one of the most central terms of urban society. A similar development is attested for *toimi*, a synonym of *virka*, whose old original specific meaning 'warp thread, line, pattern' is only sporadically codified in dialects [SKES, Nirvi, 1964, 44–62].

It seems that Finnish *vihi*, a word developed from an old trapping term into a Modern Standard metaphor and abstract sign, can be shown to be a Baltic loan. In support of this assumption one has to examine its formal and semantic contexts in Modern Finnish, in old dictionaries of Finnish, as well as in the collections of the dialect archives, to analyze its phonological development, and to treat the etymologies suggested earlier.

Nykysuomen sanakirja (Dictionary of Modern Finnish) glosses *vihi* as 'the funneling fence of the snare' and 'presentiment, inkling' in the phrase *saada vihiä* 'to get inkling, a hint of'. The older dictionaries do not diverge from this in any essential way¹: Juslenius (1745) *vihi* 'laqueus aucupis / fågelsnara', Renvall (1823) *vihi* 'saepes virgea, max. circa decipules aucupum / reiserer Zaun', Helelius (1838) *vihi* 'risgård, risgård', Lönnrot (1880) *vihi* 'hemligt tecken, aning, förebud', *vihi, vihe* 'riskoja, risgård, dålig gärdesgård'.

The dialects agree with the Standard in that the most common shape is the *i*-stem, *vihi*, genitive *vihin* 'a low dense brushwood fence to lure or guide the birds into the snare'. Attestations particularly as a trapping term come from Northern Karelia, Kainuu, Northern Ostrobothnia, the Far North, Savo, and Central Finland, with only sporadic mention from the Western dialects, the Kymi Valley, Häme, and Northern Satakunta. This line, crossing the country roughly from Central Ostrobothnia to(wards) the Southeast, was long and in many contexts the border between field and forest Finland. There exists also an *-e(h)*: *-ee-* stem of narrower distribution than *vihi, vihe (vihes), vihje*, which inflects according to two paradigms: genitives *viheen* ~ *vihjeen* or *vihkeen* (Karelian Isthmus, Northern Karelia, and the Far North).

In the Modern Standard language *vihi* is known only in the idiomatic expression *saada vihiä* (explained by Hakulinen, 1927, 208–231 as an old trapping term). Its geographic distribution is interesting because the majority of the attestations hug the (South)western edge of the hunting and trapping regions in a rather clear and continuous manner, from Southern Ostrobothnia through Satakunta and Häme to the Kymi Valley. This seems to indicate a typical transition zone (for the history of the item): a term having lost its concrete contexts survives in an abstract metaphoric expression. The coastal dialects (except for the estuaries of the big rivers in Northern Ostrobothnia) do not supply any evidence, nor do the oldest agricultural regions like Finland Proper. It is in fact to be expected that terminology pertaining to game birds would have been marginal in these areas to begin with, and in any case lost early.

A rare formal variant *vihja* becomes particularly interesting for the etymology of the cluster. J. Länkelä has noted down on the interleaves for 1870–1880 in Eurén's dictionary *vihja* 'small path in the woods', without indicating the place of origin (probably Savo). But Länkelä gives a synonym, *kuuska*, which means a 'foot path or drive-way, badly discernible, often overgrown (= dim trail)' in Sa-

¹ One must emphasize that NS is not really a corpus of the modern standard language, because it is based on literary samples of over a century, and these bring in considerable archaistic material and dialect forms.

vo! *Vihja* probably retains the old base form of *vihi*, as well as its original meaning (which will become important for the Baltic etymology below).

Vihi as an *i*-stem is clearly secondary and late [cf. Hakulinen, 1979, 122]. Ojansuu [1916, 35] is certainly right in assuming that *vihi* goes back to **vihji* through the same Medieval sound law that produced *nelikko* 'firkin' (**neljikkoi*), *nurin* 'inside out' (< *nurjin*), *veli* 'brother' (< *velji*), etc. **Vihji* for its part derives from **vihja* or **vihjä* on the same principle as *väli* 'interspace' < **välji* < **väljä*. *Vihje* and *vihe* (*vihes*) can for their part be regular *-e(h)-* derivatives from the same base. *Vihe* with its Eastern distribution can be naturally explained as the same kind of zero outcome of the weak grade as e. g. *lahe* 'trouser leg' vs. Western *lahje*. The *lahe* : *lahkeen* paradigm and its ilk may have influenced the expected inflection *vihe* : *viheen* and *vihje* : *vihjeen* and produced parallel forms like *vihje* : *vihkeen*. Even new nominatives with *-k-* have been sporadically abstracted, as *vihki* (Korpiselkä) and *vihke* (Sodankylä) show. Such analogical nominatives occur also in Karelian and Veps (SKES). The oldest form of the cluster is thus probably, on internal grounds *vihja*, in fact attested in the nonce occurrence (above) with the concrete meaning 'path'. The lost noun continues in the metaphoric denominative verb *vihjata* 'to hint at, to insinuate', also rather central in the Modern Standard. Dialects seem to preserve more concrete connotations, e. g. 'to show the right way, to guide' (Mäntyharju). Länkelä's old concrete gloss for *vihja*, 'trail, path, way, guiding (fence)', should be directly reflected here. Dialects provide examples of the following kind: *Minä nyt vähä vlevihjaks laiton siihen rajalle aitoo* (Muuruvesi) 'I put down a shaky semblance of a fence there at the boundary'. The meaning of 'path, guide fence' comes out also in such phrases as (*olla*) *kahen vihjalla* '(to be) of two minds, to doubt whether...' (Harlu, Kitee, Sortavala) and *vlevihjaksi* (translative), *vlevihjaa* (partitive) 'treacherously, for the appearances' (widely in Savo). Also the old dictionaries reflect early metaphorization of *vihja* in relation to the secondary *vihi* : *vihi-*, e. g. Juslenius glosses *vihja* 'nutus / winck', Lönnrot 'vink, antydning, hemligt tecken'.

Vihja has been clearly taken as a secondary item essentially dependent on the verb *vihjata*. As a concrete, archaic trapping term *vihi* has occupied the minds of lexicographers and etymologists, and a few explanations have been put forward, but without general approval. Äimä [1919, 197–198] proposed to connect *vihi* 'guide fence' with *vihkiä* 'consacrate' of Finno-Ugric origin by denying its obvious Germanic source [cf. Karsten, 1915, 186; SKES]. His rationale takes Zyrien *veža* 'holy, baptismal' and *vežös* 'Brettenverschlag, fence' from the fencing off of a sacred spot. Also Toivonen [1928, 95–96] thinks *vihi* a possible correspondence to Zyrien *vežös* and connects them further with Mordvin *oš, voš* 'Stadt, alte Festung' and Vogul *uš, uoš* 'város'. This etymological connection with Permian

and Volga Finnic sounds impeccable phonologically, but semantically it is very doubtful. It is true that regular sound correspondences were the only guideline of the Neogrammarians; meaning could be treated at will (cf. Äimä's *vihkiä* ~ *vihi*). The leading principle was to maximize Finno-Ugric etyma in the lexicon. A Finno-Ugric *vihi* collapses expressly on its shaky semantic arguments.

Rytkönen's [1940, 94] purely onomatopoeic origin for *vihi* is in itself not bad at all in the context of expressive expressions like *vihjata* 'to whisper' and *saada vihiä*. It just gets refuted with the central and most concrete *vihi*.

The basic meaning of the cluster of *vihi*, *vihe* (< *vihja*) seems thus to be 'trail, path, guide' from which developed a 'snare guide', a low twig fence leading to the snare' in the trapping context. There is a parallel for this meaning development in e. g. Finnish *keino*, in the Standard language an abstract 'means, method, measure, way', but originally perhaps 'way, trail, path' (cf. Lönnrot *keino* 'gångstig för fågelgiller'), specifically also 'snare, traps' on the *keinotie* 'trap trail, trap line' [Hakulinen, 1927, 214]. Also *virka*, mentioned above, means, besides 'snare trail, trap line', the 'snare, trap' itself [Posti, 1932, 48]. Likewise *ura*, in dialects generally a 'forest trail trodden by cows' is connected with trapping, as comes out in *permet laitetaan kankaalle ja karjaurille* 'the snares are placed on the heath and cattle trails' (Haukivuori). It is perhaps *ura* that best explains and lets us understand the development 'trail' > 'snare trail, trap line' > 'snare'. The dialect material on *vihi* contains viz. certain descriptions of how the snares for game birds were often placed on cattle trails, where dung had been noticed to act as handy bait (SMSK = The Archives for the Dictionary of Finnish Dialects).

A nominal derivative of the Baltic verb *vèžti* (< PIE **weǵh-*) 'fahren, führen, tragen; drive, lead, carry' seems to be a good source for the cluster *vihi*, *vihja*, up till now without an acceptable etymology. The closest point of comparison is Lithuanian *vèžė* 'Wagen-, Schlittengeleise, -spur', with its variants *vèžà*, *pràvèžà*, and Latvian *veža*, *vèžes* 'Geleise, Spur', *váža* 'Spur' [Fraenkel, 1965]. In many cases the Baltic *ē*-stems have been contracted from an older sequence **-ijā-* [Stang, 1966, 203–204], and hence **vèžijā-* would seem to be workable here. Lithuanian dialects provide examples of the older shape: *eilià* (vs. *eilė*), *ežià* (vs. *ezė*). Also Lithuanian *mėdė* 'woods' (cf. the masc. forms *mėdžias*, *mėdis* 'tree') seems to go back to **medja* [Otrębski, 1965, 48], the likeliest source for Finnish *metsä* 'woods' [cf. Koivulehto, 1981, 169].

Two other Baltic loans in Baltic Finnic deserve discussion about the shape of the original Baltic stem: Finnish *keli* 'road, snow condition' and Estonian *vähi* 'crayfish'. *Keli* (: *kelin*) is the same kind of secondary *i*-stem as *vihi* (: *vihin*) and it cannot directly reflect the stem of its Baltic source [cf. Kalima, 1936; Lith. masc. *kėlias*]. The probable form that entered Late Baltic Finnic was **kelja*, where

the same contraction as in *väli* < *väljä*, *nuri(n)* < *nurja*, and *vihi* < *vihja* took place, producing the attested *keli*. Already Thomsen reached a similar conclusion in surmising that *keli* had shortened its final syllable by losing *a*. He also compared it with Estonian *vähi* (gen. *vähja*). Kalima [1936, 183] derives this through a Late Baltic Finnic change **väši* > *vähi* (cf. Lith. *vėžys*), but this seems to base on too recent forms (both in Baltic Finnic and in Baltic). The genitive *vähja* should in fact reveal the more original shape as in *põhi* : *põhja* < **pohja* 'bottom, ground, north' and *kari* : *karja* < **karja* 'cattle'. It reflects a word-final sound change *-ja* > *-ji* > *-i* in Estonian [Kettunen, 1962, 114] compared with which the Finnish contraction reconstructed by Ojansuu is quite marginal. The Baltic masculine nouns in *-īs* go back to **-ijas*, reflected e. g. in Estonian *takijas* 'bur(dock)' (Fi. *takiainen*) (cf. Lith. *dagys* 'thistle', contracted from an earlier **dagijas*) [Stang, 1966, 190]. The loan retained in Estonian, or borrowed only into it, seems to have been **vähja*, from the Baltic source **vėžijas*. The same substitution should also come out in Fi. *tyhjä* 'empty', cf. Lith. *tùščias* < **tuštja-*. All these forms are parallels to **vihja* as far as their stem type goes.

The expected vocalism of such a loan in Baltic Finnic should have been **vešja*, although **višja* is also feasible, when we consider all the ablaut possibilities in Baltic, cf. e. g. Latvian *vizināt* '(im Wagen, Schlitten, Boot) spazieren fahren, treiben (lassen)' and Lith. *pavyžėti* 'jmd. eine kurze Strecke Weges fahren'. Baltic is full of *e ~ i ~ a* alternation [Stang, 1966, 121, 124]. In some texts Old Prussian renders Baltic *ē* (Lith. *ė*) with *i* (= *ī*) [Stang, 45]. Otrębski [1958, 187–188] draws attention to an alternation between *e* and *ė* in verbal forms and derivatives, e. g. *tekėti* : *tēka tēkmē*, *vėžti* : *vėža vėžė*. Such facts make it rather natural that the vowels in first syllables could go different ways in the borrowing language. Baltic *e* has been substituted with *i* in such central all-Baltic Finnic loans as Fi. *sisar* 'sister' (cf. Lith. *sesuō* : *seseřs*). Fi. *virka*, which like *vihi* ended up as a trapping term, is another parallel, as its closest Baltic point of comparison, Latvian *verdze* (**verge*) 'eine lange Reihe, eine verworrene Reihe, ein grosser Haufen', shows. The same cluster carries also *i* and *a* variants, Latvian *virgele* and *vařga* [Kalima, 1941, 210–211]. Either both *virka* and *vihi* have been adopted from an *i* form, or else *e* has been replaced by *i* as in *sisar*. If the Finnish *elki-* 'nature, mischief, guile' and *ilki-* 'evil, stark' clusters belong together as Kalima [1936, 93] and Collinder [1932, 187–188] think, and if Kalima's etymology from Baltic (cf. Lith. *elgesys* 'behavior') is accepted (SKES considers it uncertain), we would even have a double outcome *e ~ i* from Baltic *e*.

The opposite development is also interesting: in *herne* (cf. Lith. *žirnis*) and *herhiläinen* 'hornet' (cf. Lith. *širšalas*) the Baltic *i* has given *e*, and *ä* in *härkä* (cf. Lith. *žirgas*) and *käärme* 'snake' (cf. Lith. *kirmis*). Kalima [1936, 69] notes this

„irregularity“ before *r*. However, retention of *i* in the borrowing language is as common (e. g. *kirves* ‘ax’, *hirvi* ‘moose’, *pirtti* ‘the big (living) room in the farm house’), and Kalima has to concede defeat in finding the reasons for all this (p. 70). The same problem recurs before *l* in *helle* (cf. Lith. *šiltas*) and *kelle* ‘split log, big surface chip’ (cf. Lith. *skiltis*). This vacillation can best be assigned to a tendency toward an alternation *e* ~ *i* on the borrowing side. Estonian in particular shows old alternation like *liha* ~ *leha* ‘flesh, meat’, *kiha* ~ *keha* ‘body’ and particularly *i* for *e*: Fi. *kenkä* ~ Est. *king* ‘shoe’, Fi. *mennä* ~ Est. *minna* ‘to go’, Fi. *nenä* ~ Est. *nina* ‘nose’ [Kettunen, 1962, 128]. But Estonian is not alone, witness Finnish *ehkeä*, *eheä* ‘whole’ ~ *ihka* ‘entirely’, *nehkeä* ~ *nihkeä* ‘sticky’, *kehottaa* ‘admonish’ ~ *ki(i)hoittaa* ‘arouse’, *kerma* ~ *kirma* ‘cream’, and *elkeä* ~ *ilkeä* ‘malicious’ [Collinder, 1932, 36–38, 187].

Baltic Finnic **vihja* can thus well correspond in sound to a Baltic deverbial noun, a modern representative of which, Lith. *vėžė*, was taken here as a point of comparison. On the semantic side the meanings ‘path, trail’ that are in the process of disappearing from the Finnish dialects match closely the meanings ‘Geleise, Spur’ of the Baltic nouns. The synonyms of *vihhi* in dialects, *ohje* (cf. *ohjata* ‘to guide, steer’) and *johde* (cf. *johtaa* ‘to lead’) enhance the typological weight in support of this analysis from the verb *vėžti* ‘to lead’ as a starting point.

In Indo-European the three basic roots **aǵ-* ‘drive/act’, **wéǵh-* ‘move, drive’, and **bher-* ‘carry’ cover an incredible stretch of central interlocking semantic territory. As the first one got lost in Balto-Slavic its semantic domain was taken over by the second. **Weǵh-* was borrowed early into Finno-Ugric, and its rich semantics is still there in Finnish *viedä*. Through Baltic the agrarian West of the Northern Late Baltic Finnic borrowed *vehmaro* ‘wagon tongue for a pair of oxen’ with retention of *e* [Posti, 1972, 153–156; 1977, 270], and further to the East we find the trapping term *vihhi* from the same word family, supported by the longer retention of the practices involved. Germanic channels filter through *vaunu* ‘wagon’, and *vaaka* ‘scales’, and Russian provides *vossikka* ‘horse cab’. Habent sua fata verba.

REFERENCES

- Collinder, 1932 – Collinder B. Die urgermanischen Lehnwörter im Finnischen. – Uppsala, 1932.
 Fraenkel, 1965 – Fraenkel E. Litauisches etymologisches Wörterbuch. – Heidelberg, 1965.
 Hakulinen, 1927 – Hakulinen L. Koulujemme kielihistorianopetuksen etymologisesta puolesta. – Virittäjä, 1927, 31, p. 206–231.
 Hakulinen, 1979 – Hakulinen L. Suomen kielen rakenne ja kehitys. – Keuruu, 1979.
 Helenius, 1838 – Helenius C. Suomalainen ja Ruotsalainen Sana-Kirja. – Åbo, 1838.

- Juslenius, 1968 – Juslenius D. Suomalaisen Sana-Lugun Coetus 1745. – Facsimile Porvoo, 1968.
- Kalima, 1936 – Kalima J. Itämerensuomalaisten kielten balttilaiset lainasanat. – Helsinki, 1936.
- Kalima, 1941 – Kalima J. Baltofennica. – Virittäjä, 1941, 45, p. 206–211.
- Karsten, 1915 – Karsten T. E. Germanisch-finnische [Lehnwortstudien. – Helsingfors, 1915.
- Kettunen, 1962 – Kettunen L. Eestin kielen äännehistoria. – Helsinki, 1962.
- Koivulehto, 1981 – Koivulehto J. Zur Erforschung der germanisch-finnischen Lehnbeziehungen. – Sovetskoe Finno-ugrovedenie, 1981, 17, p. 161–175.
- Lönnrot, 1930 – Lönnrot E. Suomalais-Ruotsalainen Sanakirja 1880. – Facsimile Porvoo, 1930.
- Nirvi, 1964 – Nirvi R. E. Sanoja ja käyttäytymisiä. – Suomi, Helsinki, 1964, 111, 1.
- NS – NS = Nykysuomen sanakirja. – Porvoo, 1951–1961.
- Ojansuu, 1916 – Ojansuu Il. Suomen kielen tutkimuksen työmaalta. – Jyväskylä 1916.
- Otrębski 1958–1965 – Otrębski J. Gramatyka języka Litewskiego I–III. – Warszawa 1958–1965.
- Posti, 1932 – Posti L. *Virka*. – Virittäjä, 1932, 36, p. 46–50.
- Posti, 1977 – Posti L. Some New Contributions to the Stock of Baltic Loan-words in Finnic Languages. – Baltistica, t. 13, Vilnius, 1977, p. 263–270.
- Rytkönen, 1940 – Rytkönen A. Eräiden ims: *in* *tm*-sanojen historiaa. – Jyväskylä, 1940.
- SKES – SKES = Suomen kielen etymologinen sanakirja 1–6. – Lexica Societatis Fenno-ugricae XII, Helsinki, 1955–1978.
- Stang, 1966 – Stang Che. Vergleichende Grammatik der baltischen Sprachen. – Oslo–Bergen–Tromsø, 1966.
- Thomsen, 1931 – Thomsen W. Berührungen zwischen den finnischen und den baltischen (litauisch-lettischen) Sprachen. – Samlede Afhandlinger 4, Copenhagen 1931.
- Toivonen, 1928 – Toivonen Y. H. Zur Geschichte der fiugr. inlautenden Affrikaten. – FUF, 1928, 19, p. 1–270.
- Äimä, 1919 – Äimä F. Astevaihtelututielmia. – MSFOu, Helsinki, 1919, 45.

SMULKMENA LXII

Rytų Lietuvoje per slavus atėję skoliniai dažnai turi balsį *o* vietoj įprastinio *a*, pvz., *kovà* ‘kava’ ir kt. (Baltistica X 92). Tai gali būti susiję ne tik su palyginti vėlyvu **ā* virtimu *o*, bet ir ankstyvu tų žodžių patekimu į vietos tarmę. Šiuo atžvilgiu įdomių duomenų yra neseniai išleistame J. Petrausko ir A. Vidugirio „Lazūnų tarmės žodyne“ (V., 1985 m.). Čia *o* neretai turi žodžiai, kitur rytų Lietuvoje nevartojami arba išlaikantys *a*, pvz., *dōkas* ‘stogas’ (br. *dax*, 1. *dach*), *kanovà* ‘griovys’ (*канáва*), *kvōsas* ‘gira’ (*квас*, *kwas*), *morkà* ‘pašto ženklas’ (*мáрка*, *marka*), *mornavóti* ‘veltui gaišti’ (*марнаваўць*), *mozà* ‘terpalas’ (*мазь*, *maź*), *ronà* ‘pana, panelė’ (*пáнна*, *ranna*), *porà* ‘garas’ (*пáра*, *para*), *pōrabkas* ‘samdinys’ (*пáрабак*), *romà* ‘rėmai’ (*рáма*, *rama*), *ronyčią* ‘skiriamoji