

Slavic & Baltic: defining their borders in Finnic lexicon

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Main layers of borrowings in Proto-Finnic

Proto-Finnic, approx. 2200 reconstructable word stems, from them

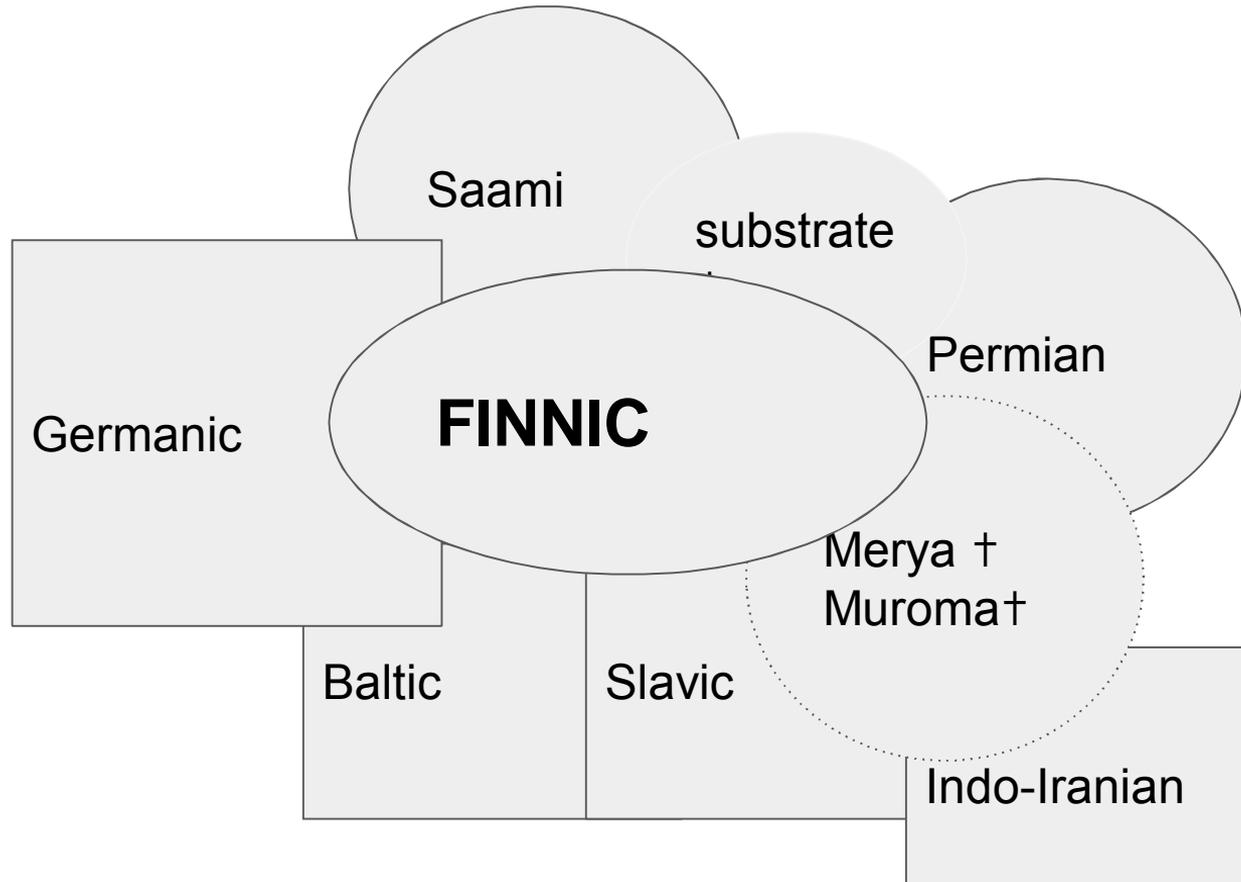
Baltic borrowings over 200 words

Germanic borrowings over 500 words

Slavic borrowings, approx 150 words

Indo-Iranian (small layer, largely shared with other FU branches)

Proto-Finnic and its contacts



The Slavs in the Baltic Sea region

600-1000 AD: Beloozero, Staraja Ladoga, Novgorod, Pskov etc. independent Slavic centres with their own dialects many of which substantially differed from the Moscow vernacular and the East Slavic proper

The emergence of Slavic in Baltic Sea region since largely not understood; the Baltic Sea region Slavs were divided from the Slavs of Kievan Rus' by a corridor of Baltic-speaking tribes

Dating of oldest Slavic contacts

Status quo:

Baltic: from Pre-Proto-Finnic (protolanguage of Finnic AND Saami) to Pre-Finnic

Slavic: late Proto-Finnic to the adoption of Christianity

Status quo: from northern Proto-Slavic, due to reflexes of nasal vowels (*kuontalo* ~ Ru. *кудель*) and reduced vowels (*lusikka* ~ Ru. *ложка*)

Koivulehto 2007: there is a continuum from Baltic to Slavic layers of borrowings in Baltic Sea area

Kallio (2007): redefining the substitution model

Russian *шмель* < *чьмель* ‘bumblebee’ < Finnish *kimala-inen* ‘id.’ NOT from Pre-Slavic, as supposed by Mikkola (1894), but from Slavic with the substitution *č > k (also known from the field of Saami-Finnic contacts)

cf. IF this is accepted, how about:

Fi. *kiittä-* ‘thank, praise’ < *čiti-* > *почитать, почитумь* ‘id’.

Fi. *kirva, kirvu, kirvi* ‘small insect’ (> *kirppu* ‘flea’) < *čьrvь* > *червь* ‘worm, small insect’

Junttila: “Baltic borrowings from Slavic”

Junttila (2015) proposes a few borrowings from “Baltic” on the basis of Slavic lexical evidence; the idea is based on the assumption of Balto-Slavic protolanguage

Fi *leuka* ‘chin’ < Balto-Slavic **kleukā* > *ven* *клюка* ‘*Krücke, Krummstab, Ofenkrücke*’ (REW)

Fi. *kylki* < Balto-Slavic **kulkā* > OCS *кѣка* ‘*Kniekehle*’

Russian dialects and the Finnic borrowings

Novgorod birch bark letters missing the 2nd palatalisation

→ grounds to consider Fi. *käämi* ‘Weberspule; quill’ as a Slavic borrowing from **kvъvĩ* > Ru. *цѣв* ‘id’ (proposed already by Ernits 1917, Plöger 1973)

how about then Fi. *kir(i)kko* ‘church’ (traditionally considered a Germanism) from **цѣр(ь)кы* > Ru. *церковь* (cf. *pappi* ‘priest’, *pakana* ‘heathen’, *raamattu* ‘text; bible’ that are all Ru. borrowings)

Est. *ahvatleda* ‘tempt; lure; allure’ ~ Ru. *oxoma* ‘desire’ ~ Pskov *oxama*

Russian dialects and the Finnic borrowings:

vocalism

Fi. *Lauka-* ~ Ru. *Луга* suggesting a diphthong-like realization of the old Ru. *au*-sequence in the early Novgorod dialects

cf. *hauki* ~ Ru. *щука*

How about then Fi. *rauta* 'iron' < *pyḁa* 'ore'

Discussion

Many new Slavic etymologies can be proposed for the Finnic words

In many cases the “Baltic” borrowings denote rather to an early and dialectal Slavic origin; the question is ultimately about the course of the development of Slavic in the vicinity of the Baltic Sea (locating, dating)

The Russian dialectal material is so far little employed in the search of etymologies for the Finnic words, albeit

the old Slavicisms of Finnic DO NOT derive from RUSSIAN but from NOVGOROD, PSKOV and other INDEPENDENT SLAVIC VERNACULARS