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## On the Earliest Slavic Loanwords in Finnic

As is well-known, the earliest Slavic loanwords in the Finnic languages (i.e. Finnish, Karelian, Veps, Votic, Estonian, Livonian, etc.) seemingly go back to their common Finnic proto-language generally dated to the first millennium AD. According to the famous Finnish Slavist Valentin Kiparsky (1963: 75–84), these earliest loanwords were borrowed from Proto-Russian, whose vowel system he reconstructed as the following:

i	ī		u	ū		ь	и		ъ	ы
æ	ǣ			ō	>	е	ѣ			оу
		a	ā					o	a	

Of course, the concept of ‘Proto-Russian’ is anachronistic when referring to any Slavic stage anterior to the loss of the quantitative opposition,<sup>1</sup> whose existence in the source language can be demonstrated by the following examples (N.B. only the initial syllables matter because Common Finnic had no long vowels in the non-initial syllables)<sup>2</sup>:

- stressed *\*a* → *\*ā*: Old Russian *бобъ* ‘bean’ ~ Finnish *papu* ‘id.’
- unstressed *\*a* → *\*ā*: Old Russian *окъно* ‘window’ ~ Finnish *akkuna* ‘id.’
- stressed *\*ā* → *\*ā̄*: Old Russian *нāсмо* ‘skein’ ~ Finnish *paasma* ‘id.’
- unstressed *\*ā* → *\*ā̄*: Old Russian *санōгъ* ‘boot’ ~ Finnish *saapas* ‘id.’

<sup>1</sup> Especially if even Proto-Slavic itself is considered to be posterior to the loss of the quantitative opposition (but cf. Lindstedt 1991).

<sup>2</sup> For the sake of brevity, all the examples in this article are given without references because they can easily be found in the standard handbooks concerning the earliest Slavic loanwords in the Finnic languages (e.g. Mikkola 1894; Kalima 1952 [= 1956]; Plöger 1973).

As we may see above, accent did not yet play a part here, contrary to the more recent Russian loanwords where the Russian stressed and unstressed vowels regularly used to be replaced by the Finnic long and short vowels, respectively.

However, Kiparsky's idea that *\*u* coexisted with *\*ɨ* does not look equally plausible, because from a typological viewpoint, the delabialization *\*u* > *\*ɨ* most likely coincided with the delabialization *\*ū* > *\*ɨ* (Kortlandt 1989: 50; 2003: 219). As the Slavic source language had not yet undergone the delabialization *\*u* > *\*ɨ* (cf. Old Russian *лъжка* 'spoon' ~ Finnish *lusikka* 'id. '; Old Russian *търговъ* 'marketplace' ~ Finnish *turku* 'id. '), it had hardly undergone the delabialization *\*ū* > *\*ɨ* either. The table presented above should therefore replace *\*ɨ* with *\*ū*, although no reflexes of *\*ū* seem to have occurred in the earliest Slavic loanword strata (exc. Old Russian *сыръ* 'cheese' ~ Votic *sūra* 'id. '?).

Moreover, just as the table includes *\*ō* due to the monophthongization of *\*au*, it should similarly include *\*ē* due to the monophthongization of *\*æi* (Kortlandt 1989: 48; 2003: 216). Still, while the substitution Slavic *\*ō* → Finnic *\*ō* (> Finnish *uo*) has long been unquestionable (cf. Old Russian *кумъ* 'godfather', *кума* 'godmother' ~ Finnish *kuoma* 'godparent, friend'),<sup>3</sup> the substitution Slavic *\*ē* → Finnic *\*ē* (> Finnish *ie*) has never occurred to anyone, but the examples of the latter (cf. Old Russian *вихръ* 'gust of wind' ~ Karelian *viehkuři* 'id. ') have been explained away by postulating a dialectal Russian development *i* > *e* (e.g. Kalima 1952: 50–51). As such a development should be dated very early (N.B. in the case of Karelian *viehkuři* above, the sound correspondences *x* ~ *hk*, *ъ* ~ *u*, and *ь* ~ *i* point to very early borrowing), Finnic *\*ē* here more probably reflects Slavic *\*ē*, which was not raised to merge with *\*ɨ* until Slavic *\*ō* was simultaneously raised to *\*ū* (Kortlandt 1989: 50; 2003: 219).<sup>4</sup>

For these reasons, the following vowel system seems most probable for the source language of the earliest Slavic loanword stratum in Finnic:

i	ī	u	ū		ь	и	ъ	ы
	ē		ō	>		и		oy
æ	ǣ	a	ā		e	ѣ	o	a

<sup>3</sup> So has been the substitution Slavic *\*ō* → Pre-Latvian *\*ō* (> Latvian [u]o), whereas Pre-Lithuanian borrowed its earliest Slavic loanwords after the raising of Slavic *\*ō* to *\*ū* (cf. Old Russian *кумъ* 'godfather' ~ Latvian *kuoms* 'id. ', but Lithuanian *kūmas* 'id. '); Kiparsky 1948: 32–34; 1952: 74–75).

<sup>4</sup> Similarly, there seems to have occurred the substitution Slavic *\*ē* → Pre-Latvian *\*ē*<sub>2</sub> (> Latvian *ie*), too (cf. Old Russian *кривичь* 'Krivičian' ~ Latvian *krievs* 'Russian'; Kiparsky 1948: 31).

Largely following the relative chronology by my Leiden mentor, Frederik Kortlandt, the vowel system above (leaving aside the nasal vowels) bears a close resemblance to the vowel system at the end of the Early Middle Slavic period (Kortlandt 1989: 49; 2003: 218). Excluding the notational differences (e.g. my \**ǣ* and \**ē* correspond to his \**ě* and \**ē*, respectively), the only difference is his inclusion of \**ū* (< Early Slavic \**-uih* < Proto-Indo-European \**-ois*). Still, no reflexes of \**ū* could appear on the Finnic side, as its distribution was only limited to certain grammatical endings. On the other hand, as sound substitutions are not phonemic but phonetic, Early Middle Slavic allophones, such as the fronted variant of \**ā* after a palatal consonant, had their own Finnic reflexes (cf. Russian *жалъ* ‘pity’ ~ Finnish *sääli* ‘id.’).

Although Kortlandt has avoided giving any absolute datings in his more recent articles, he earlier dated the end of the Early Middle Slavic period as early as 300 AD (Kortlandt 1982: 182). As is well-known, the earliest Slavo-Finnic contacts are usually dated centuries later mainly because the earliest Slavic loanword stratum in Finnic already seems to include some Christian terminology (cf. Old Russian *нонъ* ‘priest’ ~ Finnish *pappi* ‘id.’; Old Russian *крѣстъ* ‘cross’ ~ Finnish *risti* ‘id.’) whose *terminus post quem* is sometimes even dated as late as 988 AD “when the Russians adopted Christianity” (Kiparsky 1952: 70).<sup>5</sup> Strictly speaking, however, it was the Grand Duke of Kiev who at last adopted Christianity in 988 AD, whereas numerous Russians had already done so centuries earlier, as Russian has many Christian terms which can be traced to Common Slavic (see already Kalima 1952: 195).<sup>6</sup>

As closer examination shows, however, the earliest Christian terminology in Finnic was posterior to the Early Middle Slavic period (e.g. in the case of Finnish *pappi* and *risti* above, the correspondence *ѣ* ~ *i* would seem to indicate that the Late Middle Slavic delabialization \**u* > \**ɨ* had already taken place). Besides, as the Slavic sources of the earliest Christian terms in Finnic were often Old High German loanwords themselves (e.g. Old Russian *нонъ* and *крѣстъ* above from Old High German *pfaffo* ‘priest’ and *Krist* ‘Christ, crucifix’, respectively), the eighth century AD may be regarded as the *terminus post quem* of their bor-

<sup>5</sup> Even though “Christian terminology may well have preceded formal conversion” (Kiparsky 1952: 71).

<sup>6</sup> Leaving aside Nestor’s tale about the Apostle Andrew visiting the places where Kiev and Novgorod were eventually founded, the first Christian missionaries must have arrived in the Slavic speech area as early as the mid-fourth century AD when the neighbouring Goths adopted Christianity.

rowing into Finnic.<sup>7</sup> Most remarkably, some Finnish archaeologists (e.g. Purhonen 1998; Salo 2005) have recently argued that vulgar Christianity could have spread to Finland as early as about 800 AD, which would well fit the dating of the earliest Christian terminology in Finnic.

Some archaeologists (e.g. Selirand 1992) have indeed dated the arrival of the earliest Slavic speakers among the Finnic speakers as belonging to the latter half of the eighth century AD. The problem with this dating is that the earliest Slavic loanwords in Finnic were borrowed from Early Middle Slavic, which must be dated centuries earlier. Granted, Kortlandt himself cautiously regarded his dating to 300 AD as “a rough approximation” (Kortlandt 1982: 181), but this does not mean that the margin of error could be as large as half a millennium. Thus, I prefer other archaeologists (e.g. Sedov 1990) who have maintained that it was only the second Slavic (i.e. Slověne?) wave that began during the eighth century AD, whereas the first Slavic (i.e. Krivičian?) wave had already begun during the fifth century AD.

While the earliest Slavic loanword stratum in Finnic could thus be dated to the fifth century AD, a few isolated Slavic loanwords in Finnic might be considered even earlier (Koivulehto 1999: 10). In this connection, the eminent Finnish Fennicist Eemil Nestor Setälä (1929: 35, 37) mentioned the following three examples, all of which had already been discussed by the true founding father of the field, Jooseppi Julius Mikkola (1894: 114–115, 116, 178)<sup>8</sup>:

1. Old Church Slavonic *igo* (pl. *ižesa*) ‘yoke’ ~ Finnish *ies* (pl. *ikeet*) ‘id.’. – This etymology presupposes that the Finnic stem *\*ikese-* was borrowed from the Slavic oblique stem,<sup>9</sup> not to mention that the initial development *\*ju > \*jü > \*ji*

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Kiparsky (1975: 57): „(...) schon seit der Errichtung des Bischofssitzes in Salzburg (696) dringt lateinisch-deutsche christliche Terminologie unter die Slaven der Ostmark“.

<sup>8</sup> Indeed, what Thomsen (1869; 1890) had done for Germanic and Baltic loanwords, Mikkola (1894) did for Slavic loanwords, although later in life (1938) he denied this greatest achievement of his career. Apparently, the Slavic loanwords in Finnic were less ‘politically correct’ on the eve of the Winter War than what they had been in the Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire.

<sup>9</sup> Some Slavists (e.g. Nieminen 1949: 103–107; Kiparsky 1952: 69) have argued that Old Church Slavonic *igo*, pl. *ižesa* ‘yoke’ primarily belonged to the neuter *o*-stems (cf. Russian *uzo*, pl. *uza* ‘id.’) and that its neuter *s*-stem type was only due to the secondary analogy of *kolo*, pl. *kolesa* ‘wheel’. While the *o*-stem could indeed be supported from an Indo-Europeanist viewpoint (cf. Vedic *yugám*, pl. *yugá* ‘yoke’, etc.), it is harder to understand why in this instance the less complicated declension would analogically have been replaced with the more complicated one, as in most instances the *s*-stems were absorbed by the *o*-stem type rather than vice versa. Besides, the *s*-stem can also be supported from an Indo-Europeanist

(cf. Derksen 2003: 98) had already occurred on the Slavic side,<sup>10</sup> although the probably earlier First Palatalization is not yet reflected at all. As suggested by Lauri Posti (1975: 169–171), however, the Finnic stem *\*ikese-* may have been borrowed after the First Palatalization as well: as Finnic had no affricates, Slavic *\*č* and *\*ž* could have been replaced by Finnic *\*k*, just as Saami *č* can still be replaced by Finnish *k* (cf. Saami *čearru* ‘roundish fell top’ ~ Finnish *kero* ‘id.’; Saami *čiekčá* ‘osprey’ ~ Finnish *kiekki* ‘id.’). For this reason, there is no need to consider the Finnic word for ‘yoke’ to be earlier than any of the Slavic loanwords discussed above. On the contrary, its initial vocalism strongly suggests that it cannot have been borrowed until the Late Middle Slavic stage.<sup>11</sup>

2. Old Russian *чмелъ* ‘bumblebee’ ~ Finnish *kimalainen* ‘id.’ (N.B. the diminutive suffix *-(i)nen* is added to nearly every Finnish insect name). – Like the previous etymology above, this loan etymology has similarly misled generations of scholars to think that the borrowing situation must already have taken place before the First Palatalization, although here we may once again have the substitution *\*č, \*ž* → *\*k* instead (cf. Koivulehto 2006). For this reason, the Finnic word for ‘bumblebee’ is not necessarily earlier than any other Middle Slavic loanword.<sup>12</sup>

viewpoint (cf. Greek *ζεῦγος*, pl. *ζεῦγεα* ‘yoke of bullocks’ where a full grade root was generalized, whereas a zero grade root was generalized in Old Church Slavonic *igo*, pl. *ižesa* ‘yoke’, both going back to the Proto-Indo-European proterodynamic *s*-stem *\*iug-os*, pl. *\*iug-és-h<sub>2</sub>*).

<sup>10</sup> As Kalima (1952: 86–89) already pointed out, however, it is unnecessary to consider Finnish *ies* posterior to the later Slavic development *\*ji-* > *\*jb-* > *\*i-* (see Derksen 2003 on further discussion). On the contrary, as Finnic had no initial *\*ji-*, Slavic *\*ji-* was simply replaced with Finnic *\*i-* (N.B. even today, Finnish initial *ji-* only occurs in very recent loanwords, such as *jiddiš* ‘Yiddish’).

<sup>11</sup> Even if one insisted on rejecting this Slavic loan etymology, there should still be no reasons to replace it with the semantically far-fetched inherited etymology (cf. Finnish *ien*, pl. *ikenet* ‘gum’; Mikkola 1938: 84–85) or the semantically even more far-fetched Baltic loan etymology (cf. Lithuanian *ingis* ‘idler’; Liukkonen 1999: 57–59), the latter of which also presupposes unconvincing sound substitutions like Baltic *\*ng* → Early Proto-Finnic *\*ŋ* and no less unconvincing sporadic changes like Early Proto-Finnic *\*ŋ* > Late Proto-Finnic *\*ɣ*.

<sup>12</sup> In any case, the Slavic loan etymology is not even mentioned by the recent Finnish etymological dictionaries (e.g. Itkonen & Kulonen 1992: 364; Häkkinen 2004: 428), which instead advocate that Finnish *kimalainen* ‘bumblebee’ would have something to do with Finnish *kimaltaa* ‘to sparkle’ and *kimeä* ‘shrill’, even though furry bumblebees are anything but sparkling, not to mention that their buzzing is indeed one of the least shrill among the northern European insects.

3. Old Russian *жърдь* ‘bar’ ~ Finnish *hirsi* ‘beam’. – While both of the previous examples have unnecessarily been considered anterior to the First Palatalization, here the case is the opposite. Namely, the borrowing situation should have been posterior to the First Palatalization but anterior to the most characteristic Common Finnic innovations, such as *\*š > \*h* and *\*ti > \*si* (i.e. Early Slavic *\*girdi-* > Early Middle Slavic *\*žirdi-* → Early Proto-Finnic *\*širti* > Late Proto-Finnic *\*hirsi*).<sup>13</sup> Contrary to the two examples above, therefore, here we would have a Slavic borrowing that is clearly earlier than Kiparsky’s so-called Proto-Russian loanword stratum. Thus, even open-minded Jalo Kalima (1952: 193) came to doubt this loan etymology just because at his time, no other Slavic loanwords of the same age were known.<sup>14</sup>

More recently, nevertheless, Viitso (1990: 143–144) and Koivulehto (1990: 151–153) have not only rehabilitated the Slavic loan etymology for Finnish *hirsi*, but especially Koivulehto has put forward more Slavic loanwords of the same age:

4. Russian *у́йка* ‘pike’ ~ Finnish *hauki* ‘id.’. – As in the case of Finnish *hirsi* above, the borrowing situation would have been posterior to the First Palatalization but anterior to the Common Finnic developments (i.e. Early Slavic *\*skjaukā* > Early Middle Slavic *\*ščaukā* → Early Proto-Finnic *\*šavki* > Late Proto-Finnic *\*hauki*). Moreover, the borrowing situation would have been anterior to the monophthongization of *\*au* to *\*ō* (which later raised to *\*ū*).<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> As a matter of fact, Finnish *hirsi* is necessarily anterior to *\*š > \*h* alone, whereas its *-si* may also be due to the substitution *\*-Ti-* → *\*-si-*, because Finnic of course had no *\*ti* after the development *\*ti > \*si*. Remarkably, while *\*ti > \*si* was probably one of the earliest Common Finnic developments, *\*š > \*h* was in turn one of the latest, most likely dating after the beginning of our era (cf. Kallio 2000: 82–83, whose dating must now be calibrated by Kallio 2006a). Thus, *\*š > \*h* was not necessarily earlier than the First Palatalization, which e.g. Kortlandt (1982: 182) dates to the beginning of our era. Note that the traditional datings of the First Palatalization to the mid-first millennium AD (Shevelov 1964: 250–252) are largely based on the misinterpretation of loanword evidence (see Koivulehto 2006).

<sup>14</sup> Still, Kalima did not mention the idea by Nieminen (1949) that Finnish *hirsi* would instead be a borrowing from Baltic *\*žirdis* (cf. Lithuanian *žirdas* ‘a frame for drying corn or flax’; *žaĩdis*, *žardỹs* ‘a kind of fence’), perhaps because the crucial zero grade is unattested from Baltic. Therefore, the Baltic loan etymology must indeed be considered inferior to the Slavic one.

<sup>15</sup> Once again, the Slavic loan etymology seems not to be convincing enough for Liukkonen (1999: 40–42), who would like to replace the Early Middle Slavic source *\*ščaukā* (< *\*skeukā*) with its Baltic pseudo-cognate *\*šaukē* (< *\*skoukē*), although no such word is attested from Baltic. At least I remain unconvinced as to what grounds we have to reject the phonologically

5. Russian *Двина* ‘Dvina’ ~ Finnish *Väinä* ‘Western Dvina’. – Just as Finnish *hauki* above looks anterior to the monophthongization of *\*au* to *\*ō*, Finnish *Väinä* looks anterior to the simultaneous monophthongization of *\*æi* to *\*ē* (i.e. Early Middle Slavic *\*dvæinā* → Proto-Finnic *\*väinä*). Interestingly, the Slavic source might later, after the monophthongization of *\*æi* to *\*ē*, have been borrowed as Finnish *Viena* ‘Northern Dvina’ (i.e. Early Middle Slavic *\*dvæinā* > *\*dvēnā* → Proto-Finnic *\*vēna*). Yet the latter idea admittedly looks less convincing from a historical viewpoint, as the Slavic speakers reached the Northern Dvina centuries after *\*ē*, due to the monophthongization of *\*æi*, had raised to merge with *\*ī*.<sup>16</sup>

As a matter of fact, it is not a recent idea that Slavic still had diphthongs when its speakers arrived among the Finnic speakers. As Mikkola (1906: 10) has pointed out, the Finnish name of the river *Luga* is *Laukaa(njoki)*, which would seem to have been borrowed as Early Middle Slavic *\*laugā* (> Russian *Луга*), as after the monophthongization of *\*au* to *\*ō* Finnic *au* would more likely have been replaced with Russian *оѡ* or *аѡ*. Moreover, Vermeer (1986; 2000) has more recently advocated from a Slavic dialectological viewpoint, that a Finnic (or Baltic?) substrate delayed the monophthongization of diphthongs in the Pskov/Novgorod dialects which therefore failed to take part in the Second (regressive) Palatalization.

Interestingly, Terent’ev (1990: 31–32) has already tried to postulate an early Slavic loanword stratum with diphthongs, in his view borrowed into Finnic from these Pskov/Novgorod dialects which he, however, calls ‘Krivičian’ (cf. Nikolaev 1988). Still, as all his proposed ‘Krivičian’ loan etymologies presuppose the borrowing situations anterior to the Common Finnic developments, they must be added to our Early Middle Slavic loan etymologies discussed above. In this connection, the following two out of his four ‘Krivičian’ loan etymologies are noteworthy here,<sup>17</sup> even though both of them also have good alternative loan etymologies:

and semantically faultless Slavic source in favour of his fabricated Baltic source, whose previous existence he circularly bases on Early Proto-Finnic *\*šavki* alone.

<sup>16</sup> As Saarikivi (2003: 73–77) has already pointed out, the Finnic toponymy in the Northern Dvina area was borrowed into Russian after relatively recent East Slavic developments, such as the pleophony and the loss of the jers *\*ь* and *\*ѣ* (cf. the Finnic toponymy in the Pskov/Novgorod area that was in turn borrowed into Russian before the same developments).

<sup>17</sup> The remaining two ‘Krivičian’ loan etymologies were proposed for Finnish *reisi* ‘thigh’ and *vehje* ‘thing, gadget’. In the former case, the ‘Krivičian’ loan etymology is evidently inferior to the earlier Baltic one. As Finnish *reisi* goes back to Proto-Finno-Saamic *\*rajti* (cf. South Estonian *rais*, North Saami *ruoi’dâ* ‘thigh’), the Baltic *o*-grade form *\*raitā-* (> Lithuan-

6. Russian *pyða* ‘ore’ ~ Finnish *rauta* ‘iron’. – Even though Finnish *rauta* has usually been regarded as a borrowing from Germanic *\*raudan-* (> Old Norse *rauði*) ‘iron ore’, I agree with Terent’ev that it could also be taken for a borrowing from Early Middle Slavic *\*raudā* (> Russian *pyða*) ‘ore’. In fact, the preceding Balto-Slavic source cannot be excluded either (cf. Liukkonen 1999: 119–121, who of course talks about „ein baltisches Lehnwort“ but who simultaneously considers „die Termini Baltisch und Balto-Slavisch praktisch synonym“).

7. Russian *pyumь* ‘to crush’ ~ Finnish *rouhia* ‘id.’. – Again, even though Finnish *rouhia* (< *\*rovše-j-tak*) has mostly been compared with Lithuanian *kraušyti* ‘to crush’, Terent’ev may here be no less right in comparing it instead with Russian *pyumь* (N.B. Finnish *ou* perhaps reflects the intermediate stage between Slavic *\*au* and *\*ō?*).

As these two examples show, it may sometimes be very hard to choose between two etymologies. Far too frequently such a choice is circularly based on nothing but a preconceived idea about which loanword strata are possible and which are not. For this reason, the Germanic and Baltic loan etymologies obviously have the unjust advantage over the Early (Middle) Slavic loan etymologies, no matter what their actual etymological quality is like. On the other hand, it is true that some of the recently suggested Early (Middle) Slavic loanwords (e.g. Finnish *rauta* above and *vilja* in Koivulehto 1990: 151; 1999: 287–288) could very well be regarded as Balto-Slavic. Particularly illuminating is the following example which I recently discovered (Kallio *apud* Koivulehto 1999: 160):

8. Polish *wart* ‘stream’ ~ Finnish *virta* ‘id.’. – The source of Finnish *virta* is obviously reflected in Polish *wart* (< *\*virta-*) (cf. also the Polish river name *Warta* < *\*virtā*; Gołąb 1992: 257–258). Thus, the only problem of this comparison is the fact that the word could in theory have been borrowed from any chronological stage from Balto-Slavic to Middle Slavic.

ian *rietas*) ‘thigh’ looks a much more plausible source than the Slavic *e*-grade form *\*ræiti-* (> Old Church Slavonic *ritь*) ‘buttock’ (N.B. the stem type does not really matter, because the heavier the initial syllable was, the more probably the non-initial syllable vowel was replaced with Early Proto-Finnic *\*i* > Late Proto-Finnic *\*-i*, *\*-e-*). In the latter case, even though the general idea that Finnish *vehje* (pl. *vehkeet*) ‘thing, gadget’ and Russian *вещь* ‘thing’ could have something to do with one another might look tempting, the precise idea that Finnish *vehje* (< *\*veškeš?*) is just a contamination of Russian *вещь* and ‘Krivičian’ *\*veke* is surely far-fetched, and not least because Russian *вещь* itself is a borrowing from Church Slavonic *veštь* (< Early Slavic *\*vækti-*, from which the expected Russian form should have been *\*вечь*).



As I have already discussed elsewhere (Kallio 2006b), the earliest Baltic loanwords in Finnic should similarly be regarded as Balto-Slavic. Indeed, the Balto-Slavic loanword stratum in Finnic could not be doubted without likewise doubting the Balto-Slavic proto-language. Still, as the Baltic and Balto-Slavic proto-languages are usually reconstructed almost identically with one another, we should rather doubt the Baltic proto-language. To be precise, it was already the Balto-Slavic proto-language that split up into three dialects: West Baltic (> Old Prussian), East Baltic (> Lithuanian and Latvian), and Early Slavic (cf. Kortlandt 1989: 46; 2003: 215).

According to the commonly held view, the Baltic dialectal continuum separated the Early Slavic dialect from the Early Proto-Finnic dialect. Hence, the fact that the Slavic speech area was not in contact with the Finnic speech area has led to the idea that „es im Ostseefinnischen keine urslavischen Lehnwörter gibt“ (Liukkonen 1999: 13). As a result, while all the Slavic loanwords going back to the Early Proto-Finnic stage have categorically been denied, all those going back to the Late Proto-Finnic stage have anachronistically been called Proto-Russian, irrespective of whether their vocalism in fact points to the much earlier Middle Slavic stage.<sup>18</sup>

Still, the idea in itself that Proto-Slavic became Proto-Russian as soon as its speakers had arrived in Russia is as silly as the idea that Latin became French as soon as Caesar's legions had conquered Gaul. On the contrary, our historical linguistic knowledge, to say nothing of our common sense, tells us that the Slavic linguistic expansion must have preceded the Slavic linguistic diversity. On the other hand, as some archaeologists (e.g. Sedov 1990) talk about at least two Slavic waves to the north, the former dating from the fifth century onwards could already be connected with Middle Slavic, whereas only the latter dating from the eighth century onwards could be connected with Proto-Slavic.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> As to the Proto-Slavic loanwords in Finnic, their opponent Liukkonen even makes an issue of the fact that their proponents, Koivulehto and Viitso, are „weder Slavisten noch Baltologen“ (Liukkonen 1999: 13). Firstly, if the Slavists themselves do not find anything wrong with the idea that Proto-Russian is more archaic than its ancestor Proto-Slavic, the non-Slavists have the right to lend a helping hand. Secondly, one may only wonder what Baltology has to do with the Slavic loanwords in Finnic except that Liukkonen himself happens to be a Baltologist.

<sup>19</sup> Here I still rely on Kortlandt (1989: 52–55; 2003: 221–224), who uses the concept of ‘Proto-Slavic’ in its traditional sense, namely that Proto-Slavic largely corresponds to Old Church Slavonic. Even so, he does acknowledge that although the latest Common Slavic innovations indeed took place during the Late Proto-Slavic period, the earliest isoglosses within the Slavic speech area already took place during the Early Middle Slavic period (cf.

Since Early Proto-Finnic cannot be dated to the mid-first millennium AD, these two archaeological waves to the north can only be connected with the loanwords borrowed into Late Proto-Finnic, whereas those borrowed into Early Proto-Finnic must be explained in another way. The eminent Estonian archaeologist Harri Moora (1958: 28–32) already suggested that the earliest Slavic loanwords could have been borrowed from the Slavs at the mouth of the river Vistula as early as the beginning of our era (cf. the maritime contacts between Finnic and Germanic). While this model could very well explain the above-mentioned Early (Middle) Slavic loanwords in Early Proto-Finnic, the idea that the Slavicization of coastal Poland had already taken place at that time is no longer maintained anywhere outside Poland.

All such archaeological correlations may even be too much to ask, as the total number of the suggested Early (Middle) Slavic loanwords in Early Proto-Finnic remains relatively limited and because many of them could rather be regarded as Balto-Slavic.<sup>20</sup> As loanwords are indeed borrowed from people instead of peoples, all we basically really need is only one Early (Middle) Slavic speaking trader, who just happened to wander far enough to the north. Note that Finnic similarly has a few isolated Indo-Iranian borrowings (e.g. Finnish *marras*, pl. *martaat* ‘dead’ from Indo-Iranian *\*mṛtas* > Sanskrit *\*mṛtáḥ* ‘id.’). Their etymologies have never been questioned, even though their existence is equally hard to explain from a prehistoric point of view. For this reason, we simply have to live with the fact that such *Wanderwörter* do exist.

Needless to say, what I stated above does not mean that we should accept any suggested Slavic loan etymologies that presuppose earlier borrowing situations. For instance, some scholars (e.g. Napol’skix 2002: 267–269; Katz 2003: 309) have now put forward several ‘Early’ Slavic loanwords which go back to the Proto-Finno-Volgaic, Proto-Finno-Permian or even Proto-Finno-Ugric stage (ca.

also Vermeer 1986; 2000). Thus, I cannot blame the Slavists (e.g. Holzer 2003; Nuorluoto 2003), whose Proto-Slavic largely corresponds to Kortlandt’s Early Middle Slavic.

<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, as Early (Middle) Slavic was still a Balto-Slavic dialect rather than a Balto-Slavic language, many of the loanwords traditionally regarded as Baltic could similarly be taken for Early (Middle) Slavic. In this way, we could considerably increase the total number of the Early (Middle) Slavic loanwords at the expense of the Baltic loanwords with the result that we could ultimately speak of the important Early (Middle) Slavic loanword stratum instead of only a few isolated Early (Middle) Slavic loanwords. Note that I am not at all advocating that we should do this task right now, but let this example serve as a reminder that in addition to the powers of deduction as well as observation, an ideal loanword researcher needs to have an open mind, too. In actual practice, however, the last quality is regrettably exceptional in this field where some scholars have even built a career out of the flat denial of any post-Thomsenian loanword strata in Finnic.

3000–1500 BC; Korhonen 1981: 27) but whose sources simultaneously point to the Proto-Slavic stage (ca. 600–900 AD; Kortlandt 1982: 182). It goes without saying that such proposals must be rejected as anachronistic.

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