

The oldest layers of the Estonian lexis in the light of the recent research

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In 2012, the Estonian etymological dictionary (EES) was published, that enabled to make a systematic overview about the origin of the Estonian stems (Metsmägi, Sedrik, Soosaar 2013). The overview is outdated in many points for now, as the dictionary reflects the state of research before the year 2000. In the recent decades, a huge new-quality research has been done in the fields of the Uralic historical phonology and lexicology, e.g. Aikio 2002, 2006, 2012, 2015, 2020, Zhivlov 2014, 2023. Also, there are new studies revising the earlier proposed loan etymologies: on the oldest, Indo-European and Indo-Iranian borrowings in the Uralic languages, e.g. Holopainen 2019, 2021, Simon 2020, Holopainen, Junttila 2022.

Since 2013, a new academic version of the Estonian etymological dictionary has been prepared at the Institute of the Estonian language. The results of the recent research have been systematically collected for the new dictionary. Although the chapter on the history of the Estonian stems (Soosaar 2020) in the most recent comprehensive treatment of the history of the Estonian language takes a part of the newest research results into account, a provisional comparison shows that some improvements can still be made. For instance, to the list of the Uralic stems (i.e., the Estonian stems having cognates in the Samoyed languages), the words *kesi* 'bran, chaff' (Aikio 2006: 17–19), *köis* 'rope' (Aikio 2006: 19–20), *pool* 'half' (Aikio 2012: 238), *sõda* 'war' (Aikio 2002: 27, 2006: 30) etc. can be added. Several Indo-European etymologies, listed as certain, have been questioned in the recent research, e.g. *mõskma* 'to wash' (Simon 2020: 248, Holopainen, Junttila 2022: 42–43), *müüma* 'to sell' (Simon 2020: 247–248), *nimi* 'name' (Simon 2020: 248–249), *vedama* 'to pull, to drag' (Holopainen, Junttila 2022: 40–42, 92–93). Thus it is even not sure, whether it is possible to talk about the group of the Indo-European borrowings with cognates in (almost) all branches of the Uralic languages at all.

The aim of the presentation is to reanalyse and summarize the composition of the oldest layers of Estonian lexis (i.e., the words having cognates in the other branches of the Uralic languages besides the Finnic), using the data drawn together into the Estonian etymological dictionary in progress. The question about how detailed grouping of the lexis is practical, i.e. which layers are necessary to educe, will be touched as well.

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