

## Finno-Saamic (?) \*ćć – revisiting the evidence of loanwords and inherited words

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It has traditionally been assumed that a geminate affricate \*ćć can be reconstructed for Proto-Finno-Saamic (Sammallahti 1998), but the plausibility of this protolanguage has been frequently debated during the last decades (see, e.g., Itkonen 1997; Aikio 2012; Kuokkala 2018). According to traditional accounts, Finno-Saamic \*ćć is reflected by \*ćć in Proto-Saami and \*cc in (Late) Proto-Finnic (Kallio 2007: 230; Lehtiranta 1989; Sammallahti 1998). As Finno-Saamic \*ćć does not seem to have a secure Uralic background (as noted by Häkkinen 1992), and as \*ćć appears in relatively few common etymologies of Finnic and Saami, many of which are known loanwords, it is reasonable to ask whether there are any reasons to consider the emergence of \*ćć a shared Finno-Saamic innovation. In this presentation, the etymological evidence for the reconstruction of \*ćć to a common predecessor of the two branches is analyzed critically. This is relevant for both historical phonology of the two branches and for the stratification of their loanword layers.

Only a small number of putative common Finno-Saamic lexemes displaying \*ćć can be reconstructed, and some of these are probable loanwords from known sources, such as Germanic or Baltic (e.g., Finno-Saamic (?) \*meććä ‘forest’ ← Baltic \*medja-), which can be borrowed separately or diffused between early forms of Finnic and Saami (cf. Aikio 2012). The few possibly Finno-Saamic words with uncertain etymology also lack good Uralic cognates, and many display such irregularity that it is doubtful whether they can be reconstructed to a common protolanguage of the two branches (for example Finno-Saamic (?) \*rī(ć)ću- > Finnish *riisua* ‘take off clothes’ ~ Lule Saami *rihttjot* ‘struggle’ (Kuokkala 2018: 30)).

Earlier, the sequence \*ćć was also reconstructed for Proto-Uralic, but the lexical evidence for this is mostly unconvincing, as noted by Häkkinen (1992). Zhivlov (2023: 119) mentions Proto-Uralic geminate \*ćć but does give only \*VććV ‘self’ (> Fi *itse*) as a possible example. If the geminate \*ćć occurs mostly in loanwords or words with obscure etymologies and in no (or only in very few) Uralic words, it is a priori doubtful to try to assume that this is a common innovation of Finnic and Saami. This is especially true as the evidence for Proto-Finno-Saamic in general is very weak, and other possible phonological innovations have been criticized (see

Kuokkala 2018 on the alleged common developments involving the labial vowels in non-initial syllables).

The putative Uralic examples of \*ćć as well as other Proto-Uralic sequences that might have yielded Proto-Finnic \*cc or Proto-Saami \*ćć (cf. Jakob 2023: 120 footnote 3) will also be analyzed critically in this presentation to shed more light on the history of geminate affricates in Saami and Finnic.

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