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 ‘snear’ 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, Niirvi, 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.
Nyksuomen 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 way: Juslenius (1745) vihi 'laqueus auctipis / fågelsnara', Renvall (1823) vihi 'saepes virgea, max. circa decipules aucupum / reiserner Zaan', Heleinus (1838) vihi 'risgård, risgård', Lönnrot (1880) vihi 'hemligt tecken, aning, förebud', vihi, vihe 'riskojaa, risgård, dålig gårdesgård'.

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 Ëurén'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-

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

Vih 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 : viheen. 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 valevihjakks laiton siitten rajalle aitoo (Muuuruvesi) ‘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 valevihjaksi (translative), valevihjaak (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 vežä ‘holy, baptismal’ and vežös ‘Brettenverschlag, fence’ from the fenc ing 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, vos ‘Stadt, alte Festung’ and Vogul uş, uos ‘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 ‘snares, 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 laitetan 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 vēžti (< PIE *wegh-) ‘fahrene, 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 vėžė ‘Wagen-, Schlittengeleise, -spur’, with its variants vėžà, pravėža, and Latvian veža, vēžes ‘Geleise, Spur’, vāža ‘Spur’ [Fraenkel, 1965]. In many cases the Baltic ū-stems have been contracted from an older sequence *-ijā-[Statg, 1966, 203–204], and hence *vēžijā- 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 [Otrebski, 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 vühi ‘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 vālī < vāljā, 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 vāhi (gen. vāhja). Kalima [1936, 183] derives this through a Late Baltic Finnic change *vāši > vāhi (cf. Lith. vėžys), but this seems to base on too recent forms (both in Baltic Finnic and in Baltic). The genitive vāhja should in fact reveal the more original shape as in pōhi : pōhja < *pōhja ‘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 -ūs go back to *-ijas, reflected e.g. in Estonian takijas ‘bur(dock)’ (Fi. takiainen) (cf. Lith. dagūs ‘thistle’, contracted from an earlier *dagijas) [Stang, 1966, 190]. The loan retained in Estonian, or borrowed only into it, seems to have been *vāhja, from the Baltic source *vėžijas. The same substitution should also come out in Fi. tyhjä ‘empty’, cf. Lith. iūščias < *tuščia-. All these forms are parallels to *vihi 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. pavyžeti ‘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 ė (Lith. ė) with i (= i) [Stang, 45]. Otrębski [1958, 187–188] draws attention to an alternation between e and ė in verbal forms and derivatives, e.g. tekėti : tėka tėkmė, vėžti : vėža vėžė. Such facts make it rather natural that the vowels in first syllables could go different ways in the borrowing language. Baltic ē has been substituted with i in such central all-Baltic Finnic loans as Fi. sisar ‘sister’ (cf. Lith. sesuotė : sesešės). Fi. virka, which like vihi ended up as a trapping term, is another parallel, as its closest Baltic point of comparison, Latvian verde (*verge) ‘eine lange Reihe, eine verworrene Reihe, ein grosser Haufen’, shows. The same cluster carries also i and a variants, Latvian virgele and værga [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 ē.

The opposite development is also interesting: in herne (cf. Lith. žirmis) and herhiläinen ‘hornet’ (cf. Lith. širšalas) the Baltic i has given e, and ė 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 deverbal 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 vihi 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 *a-g- ‘drive/act’, *wégh- ‘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. *Wegh- 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 velmaro ‘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 vihi from the same word family, supported by the longer retention of the practices involved. Germanic channels filter through vaamu ‘wagon’, and vaaka ‘scales’, and Russian provides vossikka ‘horse cab’. Habent sua fata verba.

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SMULKMENA LXII

Rytų Lietuvoje per slavus atėję skoliniai dažnai turi balsį o vietoj įprastinio a, pvz., kovą '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 įdomų 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. dāx, 1. dach), kanovą 'griovys' (kanās), kvōsas 'gira' (kwas, kwas), morką 'pašto ženklas' (märka, marka), mornavotė 'veltui gaišti' (marnaváť), mozā 'tepalas' (mazě, maž), poną 'pana, panelė' (pāna, panna), porą 'garas' (nāpā, para), pūrabkas 'samdinys' (nūrabak), roman 'rēmai' (pāma, ramā), ronyčią 'skiriamoji