

Possible Traces of *1 Enoch* in the Finnish Language

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In the Kalevala, the Sampo is interpreted to be a quern or mill of some sort that made flour, salt, and gold. However, there are other interpretations. Julius Krohn (Krohn 1883: 420, 483; Setälä 1932: 199) maintained that the the Sampo originally was the sun and could have been associated with the Mordovian sun-god *tšimpas*.

In *1 (Ethiopian) Enoch* chapter 6 verse 7 we read (Translated by Charles, 1906):

Asael, Armaros, Batarel, Ananel, Zaqiel, **Samsapeel**, Satarel, Turel, Jomjael, Sariel. These are their chiefs of tens. (Emphasis added)

In the Hebrew translation the name *Samsapeel* appears as *Sampespel* and the translator (Kahana 1978: 32) suggested that the name possibly originated from *shamshiel*, the patron of the sun. In Hebrew the word for *sun* is *shemesh*. The fact that there is some kind of similarity between the various names does not necessarily mean that they are related, however, one of the cornerstone of Finnish ethnography is that a great deal of the material collected through the last centuries originated from traditions, tales, and lore that had circulated in the ancient world that have migrated north via oral tradition.

Traces of *1 Enoch*, chapter 82 may appear in the Finnish language. In verse 15 the name of the first month is *Tam'ayen*. The name of the first month in the Finnish calendar is *Tammikuu* (*kuu* 'moon'). In different manuscripts of *Enoch* the name appears also as *Tam'na*, *Tam'ayeni*. In Aramaic *teyomin* means 'twins'. I suggest that the Finnish name has originated from the Aramaic term.¹

February is in Finnish *helmikuu*. The sign following Gemini is *cancer*. According to the Finnish Etymological Dictionary (1955) *helmi* has a sense of 'scale of a fish' (*kalan suomus*).

The name of the leader of the summer is *Hela'emmemelek* (verse 18):

The next leader after him is **Hela'emmemelek**, whose name they call the bright

sun; and all the days of his light are ninety-one days. And these are the days of signs upon signs upon the earth: **scorching heat** and drought; ...(Emphasis added)

In Finnish *helle* means 'heat, sultry (unbearable) heat.'

The names of the subordinate of *Hela'emmelek* are (verse 20): *Ged'iyal*, *Helya'el* and *Ki'el*. I suggest the possibility that these words are the etymons of the corresponding Finnish months: *Gedaiyal*>kesäkuu 'June'; *Helyael*>heinäkuu 'July', *Kiel*>kylvökuu - the former name of August. As for the transformation of *Gedaiyal*>kesäkuu, there is no native 'g' in Finnish, so this foreign sound often appears as 'k', for example Greece is in Finnish *Kreikka*. The exchange of 's' and 'd' appears in the language. For example *vousi* 'year' is in genitive mode *vuoden*.

In the older Finnish calendar *December* was *talvikuu*. In Aramaic *talya* is 'lamb', another sign in the zodiac. In Estonian *talvekuu* is 'November', in older Estonian *talvestekuu* meant 'January' (Y.A. Toivonen 1955: 10).

In *1 Enoch* 82, 14 we read:

The names of those who lead them are 'Adnr'ul, 'Iyasus- 'el, 'Elum'el - these three follow the leaders of the orders, as well as the four which follow after the three leaders of the order, which follow after those leaders of the stations that divide the four seasons of the year.

I suggest that the "three leaders of the orders" are turtledove, swift, and crane (tor, sis, agur) following Jeremiah 8: 7:

Even the stork in the sky knows her seasons
And the turtledove, swift and crane
keep the time of their coming; (*Tanakh*)

The name of the 9th Finnish month *syyskuu* /sy:s/ resembles the second name in *1 Enoch* 82: 15 and the second fowl in Jer. 8,7 (sis). In *Even Shoshan Dictionary* it is suggested that the name of the bird is associated with the sound it makes. That may explain why

the name has survived in the different translations.

Other somewhat similar name is *Elumel* (*Elomeel*)>elokuu 'August'.²

Milik (1976: 295) suggested that in *1 Enoch* chapter 82, the name of the months of the calendar follow the zodiac. The association of the Finnish calendar with the zodiac is, in my opinion, plausible since the word *Tammi*, the first part of the name of the Finnish first month, means in one dialect 'akseli' ('axle, shaft'). According to Kustaa Vilkuna (1981: 200) one sign of the zodiac has traces in Finnish folklore, that of Dog month (*mätäkuu*<rodendage). This sign does not belong to the Jewish zodiac. Toivonen (1955: 156-160) raised the possibility that the Mesopotamian zodiac had served as a source of Finnish folk tales. One of the examples he gave was the poem of the 'Bull of Pohjola' (*Pohjolan härkä*) and in connection with it he even mentioned the Hebrew equivalent *shor* (p.156). There are separate explanations for the meaning of most names of the Finnish months but no general explanation for the origin of the Finnish calendar.

The English translation of *1 Enoch* was done from Ge'ez, the only language in which it is extant. The book was originally written in Aramaic and there was a Greek translation. It is not certain what the source of the Ethiopian version was, or more accurately, the different Ethiopian versions. If *1 Enoch* is, indeed, the source of some Finnish words, the original terms had traversed to Finland in different paths than the Ethiopian counterparts and therefore acquired different forms. One should also take into consideration the fact that the calendar of the book of *1 Enoch* is incomplete and some months are missing.

In order to make my claims plausible, I should demonstrate that such a calendar with such names appeared somewhere else and from there migrated to Finland. Another alternative is to come up with other reasonable explanations how such a calendar has come to be used in this part of the world. One place to look for such supporting material is the vast archive of the Finnish Literature Society, *Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura* (SKS) founded in 1831, with its millions of entries. For example, there are around 120000 cards concerning Finnish holidays and other significant days, which have all to

be checked, as well as other material diligently collected for the last two hundred years.



The drawers of cards related to Finnish holidays and other significant days at the archive of the Finnish Literature Society in Helsinki³

Notes

1. In Finnish: http://www.modeemi.fi/~david/tammi/Jedidut_1_2013.pdf (s. 12-13),
In English: http://www.modeemi.fi/~david/tammi/tammi_en.pdf

2. The name of the 5th Finnish month is *Toukokuu* and in Western Finnish dialect it meant 'spring.' In the first Finnish Bible translation, from 1642, the word was associated with the biblical turtledove (*tor*):

...kevät on tullut ja toucomettinen cuulu meidän maasam.

[The blossom have appeared in the land The time of pruning has come The song of the turtledove is heard in our land. (The Song of Songs 2:12)]

In Swedish *turtle-dove* is *turtledufva*, in Dutch *torelduyf*, in MLG *torteldûve* and in MHG *türteltûbe* (*OED*). I suggest that the etymon for these lexemes, as well as the Finnish *tuoko* is the Biblical Hebrew *tor*. However, I cannot associate the name with

chapter 82 of *1 Enoch*.

3. The photo is displayed with the permission of SKS.

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