

ABOUT THE FASHION-RELATED ESTONIAN-SWEDISH LOANWORD *KRUNN*

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Abstract. The word *krunn* in the meaning of a certain hairdo first occurs in lexicographic sources as late as 1960. It had no etymology proposed until now. A source for this word is proposed – the Estonian-Swedish *krún* ‘a crown; a cockscomb’. Although the short vowel and long consonant in the end is not strictly regular development, the etymology is confirmed with the original geographical distribution of the word in Estonian subdialects and parallel developments in other stems with a similarly affective meaning.

Keywords: etymology, Estonian-Swedish loanwords, Swedish loanwords, Estonian language

A large number of loan stems in Estonian are Swedish loans, among which a much smaller number of loans from Swedish dialects once spoken in the coastal villages of western Estonia are distinguished. The number of Estonian-Swedish loans in literary Estonian is estimated to be between 22 and 29 (Metsmägi et al. 2012: 16), although they are much more numerous in western and islands dialects of Estonian. A classical disquisition of Estonian-Swedish loans in Estonian dialects comes from Paul Ariste (1933), and a brief review of Swedish loans has been written by Raimo Raag (1988). This article adds the still not etymologized Estonian stem *krunn* ‘plaited bun’ to Estonian-Swedish loanwords.

The word *krunn* in the meaning of a certain hairdo does not occur in Wiedemann’s Estonian-German dictionary (Wiedemann 1893) or in the Estonian orthographic dictionary published in 1925 (EÕS 1925). It first occurs in lexicographic sources as late as 1960 in the newer version of the Estonian orthographic dictionary (ÕS1960). It is first attested in a play “Potilill ja karusammal” ‘Pot plant and Polytrichum’, published in 1936 by Enn

Vaigur, who was born in Harju-Madise parish, which belongs to former Estonian-Swedish settlement area.

The word is in Mägiste's etymological dictionary, but it lacks an etymology and, in addition to the meaning "die auf dem Scheite[!] zusammengedrehte Haarflechte 'a plait interlaced on the top of the head', there is a comment that it belongs to the folk vocabulary and it occurs in ÕS (Mägiste 1982: 999). The word does not occur in Alo Raun's etymological reference book (Raun 1982).

The Explanatory Dictionary of Estonian gives the word *krunn* "a type of hairdo in which a tress of hair is gathered on the top of the head or on the nape" and the words *krunni* and *krunnis* have the style marker "colloquial". (EKSS 2009: 2:514) In 1999 the word *krunn* was marked as colloquial, but in the ÕS of 2006 the word has no style marker.

According to the Estonian dialect dictionary, the word *krunn* was registered in Häädemeeste, Martna, Märjamaa, Juru, Harju-Jaani and Iisaku (R) parishes. For example, *Vaata missugune krunn tal peas* 'Look, what a bun she has on her head' Martna. *Krunnisi kinnitadi kuklasse või päälale juuse nõeltega* 'Buns were attached on the nape or the top of the head with hairpins' Häädemeeste. In Laiuse parish, there is the variant *runn* written: *mõnel olid runnid kuklas* 'some had buns in their nape' (EMS III: 878)

In Mustjala, Kaarma, Püha, Muhu and Põltsamaa parishes, there occurs a similar stem as an adverb, *nunnis* 'krunnis'. The words *antskuppel* in Nõo and *kukens* in Rannu have been ascribed the same meaning. The adverb *kränkis* 'krunnis' is from Pühalepa on Hiiumaa.

Some similar words can also be mentioned, e.g. *krunn-saba* or *kruss-saba*, which is a term of reproach (a pig) and, in the Seto dialect, *kruntsas* is 'a braid, a plait', but that probably has a different origin.

A possible source is the Estonian-Swedish *krún* 'a crown; a cockscomb' (Freudenthal, Vendell 1886: 115) and *krun*, *krön* (Danell 1951: 222). At first, it seems that the problem here is the long vowel, because usually a long vowel in Estonian is equiva-

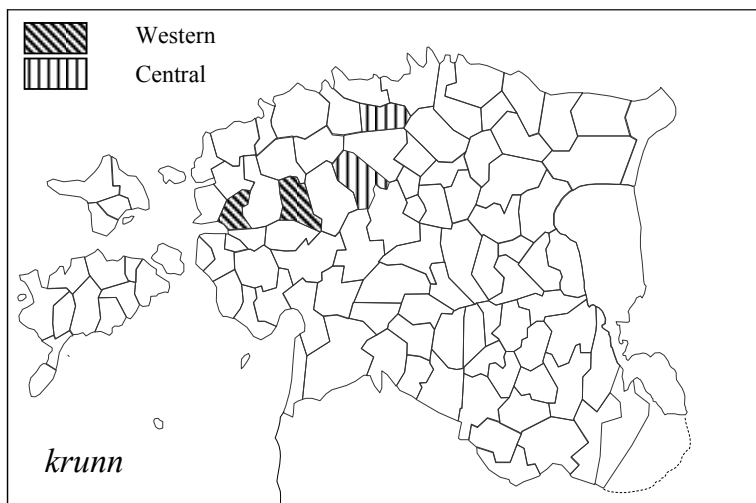


Figure 1. Distribution of *krunn* ‘plaited bun’ according to <http://www.eki.ee/dict/vms/>

lent to a long vowel in Swedish, as with *u*, and *o* (Ariste 1933: 19-20). Ariste says that more than half a dozen words do not fit his described phonetic law. Most of them are humorous names for fingers that children use and in which there occurs a folk etymological effect, e.g. *kikkilill* ‘the pinky finger’ (literally ‘pricked up flower’) < in Estonian-Swedish dialect *kitiling*. To this group also belong such humorous words as *aikkin* ‘a horse’ and *vikk* ‘a week’ (< *vikku*, “which is known only from a humorous affected speech and because of that it may have had a totally different origin” (Ariste 1933: 34)). *Krunn* could also belong to this group, assuming the peculiar hairdo was humorously called a crown. This has caused the word’s late appearance in dictionaries and its colloquial usage for a long time. The short vowel and long consonant may be an influence from another word *junn* ‘lump, stump’ which has been used also in the meaning ‘plaited bun’: *juused kuklas junnis* ‘hair in the bun on the nape’ (EMS II: 191).

The geographical distribution of the word in Estonian dialects is sometimes conclusive in ascertaining the source of Eastern Swedish loans (Raag 1997: 187). In this case, the geo-

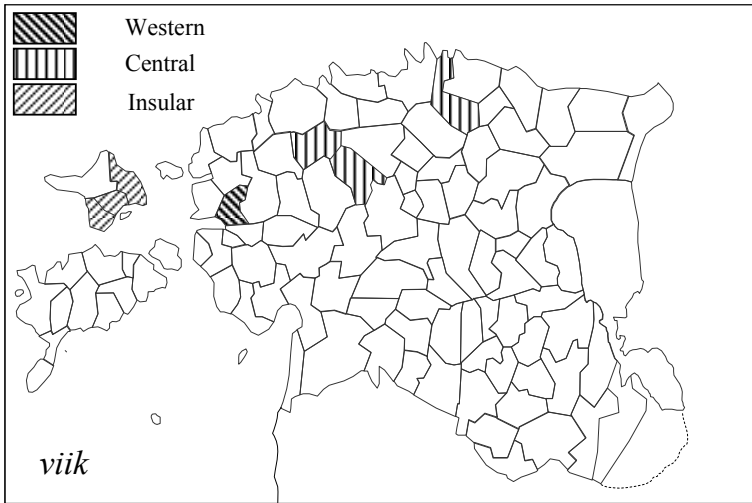


Figure 2. Distribution of *viik* ‘crease’ according to <http://www.eki.ee/dict/vms/>

graphical criterion speaks in favour of an Estonian-Swedish loan, since there are other Estonian-Swedish loanwords with a similar spread pattern, among them another fashion-related stem, *viik* ‘crease’ < ESw *vīk* (Ariste 1975: 15; 2010: 402-403, see Figure 2).

Phonetically the same is the dialect word *krunn* ‘a drift ice pile-up, a rock reef in the sea’. As a matter of fact, there are etymologically two stems that are both Estonian-Swedish loanwords. In the first case, the source of the loan is the Estonian-Swedish *grund* and in the second case the Estonian-Swedish *grunn*, *gronn*, *grōn* (Ariste 1933: 66). In the first case, there is a long vowel in the Estonian-Swedish word, but in the Estonian word there is a short vowel. It is true that the stem of the source of the word ends with a consonant cluster, which has assimilated into a long consonant. In Wiedemann’s dictionary, a form with a consonant cluster that has not assimilated is also noted: *ruhd*: *jäärunnid*, *jäärunded*, meaning ‘a rock of ice washed ashore’ (Wiedemann 1893: 987). The same stem has also been borrowed

in Finnish: *krunni* ‘a reef’, and probably through Finnish into Izhorian: *rünnid, jäärünnid* ‘piles of ice’ and *runni* ‘a heap, a pile’. In Izhorian, there are also verbs formed from this stem: *runnata* and *runniissa* ‘bank up, pile up (about ice)’ (Nirvi 1971: 492, 294).

Sometimes a shortening of the vowel occurs in one-syllable words, with a concurrent lengthening of the final consonant. A similar sound alternation, where in one-syllable stems a long vowel alternates with a long consonant, can also be found among the stems of literary language. For example, the stem *jonn* ‘wilfulness, caprice, obstinacy’ is probably a variant of the stem *joon* ‘a line, a trait’.

There is a similar alternation in loan stems in the card game term *jänn* ‘a score less than half the full number of points’ (the Lower Saxon name Jan ~ Jän, which could have been borrowed through Swedish, like a lot of other card game terms in Estonian).

There is also a similar alternation in old native stems, for example the Finno-Ugric stem *õõs* ‘hollow, cavity’ (< **omte*) (UEW: 338), whose variant is probably the stem *õnn* ‘(good) luck, happiness’. The development of the meaning is “a vacant place” > “a situation” > “fate, fortune” (Metsmägi et al. 2012: 626-627).¹

In Finnish, there are the words *hiussykerö* and *nuttura* for describing this hairdo. In Lönnrot’s Swedish-Finnish dictionary, published in 1886, the meaning of the word *nuttura* is explained as: “knottrighet; uppbundet hår i form af **k r o n a**²; martofva; flockull” (Lönnrot 1886: 2:45). The Finnish word is probably a Scandinavian loan from a source the equivalent of which is Old Norse *knútr*, Norwegian *knut* and Icelandic *knútur* (Nikkilä 1988: 15; SSA 2: 243), and the description of the meaning by Lönnrot confirms that a plaited bun was indeed compared with a crown. This is further confirmed by the Finnish Savo dialect Hirvensalmi subdialect word (*k*)*ruunuletti* ‘a braid laid around

1 For this stem, there is another etymology suggested by Jorma Koivulehto, who derives it from the pre-Germanic stem **wŋ(H)*-.

2 “hair fastened up in the form of a crown”. Spacing by the author.

the head' (SMS:VIII). This is a compound of the words *kruunu* 'crown' and *letti* 'braid'.

I will mention another³ etymology for *krunn* besides what I have proposed above and in my opinion it is more unlikely. Namely, the source of the loan could be the Estonian-Swedish adjective *rundar*, *runnan*, *runn*, *runna*, *runt* 'round' (Freudenthal, Vendell 1886:176). In this case, the consonant cluster at the beginning of the word remains questionable. Thus a hypercorrection at the beginning of the word should be assumed. Also assumed should be a change in the part of speech (ADJ → ADV, SUBST). Such stem is attested from Saaremaa and Mulgi dialect, where *runn* means 'little round thing; a small potato'. I have not found a reference that the stem has ever been used in relation to hair or hairdos.

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3 For this I owe my gratitude to Meeli Sedrik.

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Kokkuvõte. Sven-Erik Soosaar: Eestirootsi moevaldkonna laensõnast *krunn*. Suhteliselt hilja, alles 1930-ndatel aastatel registreeritud ja 1960. aastal sõnaraamatusse jõudnud kõnekeelne sõna *krunn* oli siiani etümologiseerimata. Sõna allikaks võib olla eestirootsi *krún* ‘kroon; kukehari’. Sõna vokaali ebaharilikku lühenemist ja lõppkonsonandi kompensatoorset pikenemist saab seletada sõna afektiivse tähendusvarjundiga ja teiste afektiivsete sõnade analoogse arenguga.

Etümoloogiat toetab ka sõna piiratud levik murrakutes, mis on tüüpilised eestirootsi laenude levikualad.

Märksõnad: etümoloogia, eestirootsi laensõnad, rootsi laensõnad, eesti keel