

## Estonian *kelp* 'hip side of a roof' as compared to Finnish *keula* 'prow'

### Resümee

Eesti *kelp* 'maja kolmnurkne otsakatus' ja soome *keula* 'vöör, käil'

Artiklis esitatakse uus etümoloogia eesti sõnale *kelp* 'maja kolmnurkne otsakatus', ka 'säangi, vankri, ree vms otslaud'. Sõna ainuke seni teadaolev etümoloogiline vaste läänemeresoome keeltes on liivi *kielpa* 'ein Dachteil, die Stütze auf dem Lubbendach'. Sõna kaugem päritolu on seni ebaselge, kuigi mõned seletused on välja pakutud (Becke 1890: 219–220, Mäkeläinen 1979: 204–206).

Murdeaines ja vanemad leksikograafilised allikad osutavad, et sõnal on olnud nii ees- kui ka tagavokaalne variant. Peamiselt lõunaeesti murretes on registreeritud obliikvakäänete tüvevariant *kelbä-*, 17.–19. saj sõnaraamatutes aga tüvevariant *kõlp* (kirjapilt vanemates sõnaraamatutes *kõlp*). Niisugune esisilbis *e*-lise eesvokaalse ja *õ*-lise tagavokaalse variandi vaheldus osutab, et tegemist võib olla vanema laensõnaga.

Metateesi eeldusel sobiks laenualuseks algermaani *\*gebila(n)-* ~ *\*gabla-* 'tipp' (< indoeuroopa *\*ǵ<sup>h</sup>eb<sup>h</sup>h<sub>2</sub>-l-o-* < *\*ǵ<sup>h</sup>eb<sup>h</sup>h<sub>2</sub>-l-* 'katuseviil, pea'), mille vasted on gooti *gibla*, vanaülemsaksa *gebal* ja keskülemsaksa *gebel* '(ehis)tornike (nt katuseviilul, uksepealisena)'. Sama tüvega on seotud ka algermaani *\*gebila-* > vanaülemsaksa *gibil*, saksa *Giebel* 'katuseviil'. Algermaani *\*gebila(n)-* oleks hilisläänemeresoome algkeelde tõenäoliselt laenatud kujul *\*kepla* / *\*keplä*, millest metateetiliselt võinuks kujuneda *\*kelppa* / *\*kelppä*. Läänemeresoome algkeeles esinesid küll nii häälikuühend *\*-pl-* kui ka *\*-lpp-*, nt *\*kupla* > soome *kupla*, *kuula* 'mull jne', eesti *kubel* : *kubla-* – *\*helppo* > soome *helppo* 'kerge, lihtne', eesti *hõlp* : *hõlbu-*, kuid Eesti murretes ei ole pärast lõpukao toimumist *-pl* enamasti sõna absoluutses lõpus

võimalik. Selle vältimiseks võib lisaks ootuspärasele arengule (\**kupla* > \**kupl* > *kubel*) täheldada reeglipäratuid muutusi (\**lipla* > *lible*, \**hapla* > *ablas*). Metatees võis olla veel üks reeglipäratu viis vältida *pl*-ühendit sattumist sõna absoluutsesse lõppu, kõnealusel juhul nt põhjusel, et lõpuosise *-as* lisamist oleks takistanud homonüümia sõnaga *kõblas*. Liivi keeles ei ole aga üldse läänemeresoome \**pl*-ühendit sisaldavaid sõnu säilinud.

Pakutud germaani laenualust toetab hilisläänemeresoome \**kepla*/\**keplä* võimalik vaste soome keeles: soome *keula*, mrd *kepla*, *kekla* 'vöör, käil; ree esiosa; varikatus, katusealune; mütsinokk; liivaaugu äär, kaljueend'. (Soome sõna seni teadaolevad vasted teistes läänemeresoome keeltes, isuri *kebla*, põhjakarjala ja vadja *keula* 'vöör, käil', Aunuse karjala *keblu* 'tugikaar paadi vööriosas', eesti *käil*, mrd *käilas*, *keul*, *keel*, on tõenäoliselt soome keelest laenatud.) Soome sõnale *keula* on esitatud kaks võimalikku germaani laenualust: 1) alggermaani \**keula-*, vrd vanaislandi *kjóll* 'suur laev' (Thomsen 1869: 124, Setälä 1906: 11), 2) alggermaani \**skeula-*, vrd vanaislandi *skjól* 'Schutz, Hülle, Schutzdach, Schuppen, Versteck, Zufluchtsort' (Koivulehto 1999 [1973]: 86–93). Kuid soome *keula* oleks ka hilisläänemeresoome \**kepla*/\**keplä* häälikuseaduslik vaste. Samuti on *keula* varasemaks peetud tähendus 'katusealune, varikatus' seostatav germaani tüve \**gebla(n)-* tähendusega 'tipp' ning on ühtlasi lähedane eesti sõna *kelp* ja liivi sõna *kīelpa* tähendusele.

Seega oletatakse, et alggermaani \**gebla(n)-* 'tipp' laenati hilisläänemeresoome algkeelde kujul \**kepla* / \**keplä*. Soome keeles kujunes sellest häälikuseaduslikult *keula*, eesti ja liivi keeles toimus aga metatees, mille tulemusel kujunesid eesti *kelp*, varem ka *kõlp*, ning liivi *kīelpa*. Ka laensõna tähendus muutus eri läänemeresoome keeltes erinevalt: soome keeles kujunes sellest peamiselt laevandustermin 'vöör, käil', eesti ja liivi keeles aga katuse osi märkiv ehitustermin.

The Estonian word *kelp* 'hip side of a roof' seems to belong to the Southern Finnic vocabulary only, because its only known Finnic equivalent is Livonian *kīelpa* 'ein Dachteil, die Stütze auf dem Lubendach' (Kettunen 1938: 124). The further origin of the word is unclear so far, although some attempts to etymologize it have been made. In the present paper, a new attempt to explain its origin will be made.

Let us first have a look at the semantic and phonetic background of the Estonian word, in dialects and in historical lexicographical sources. In addition to the meaning 'triangular hip side of a roof',

the word has been used also to denote 'end board of a bed, of a carriage, of a sledge etc.' (EKSS, EMS). In the dialect data, there are even examples in which *kelp* is used for the ends of a coffin or for the end wall of a room: *Kerstu kelbad läind otsast ära* 'the ends of the coffin fell off' (Insular dialect: Jämaja), *söömalaud oli tua `kelpas, `kambri seina `vastus* 'the dining table was at the end of the room, right against the wall of the small room' (Insular dialect: Kihelkonna) (EMS s.v. *kelp*).<sup>1</sup> The word is recorded across nearly the whole Estonian territory, occurring both in North and South Estonian dialects. In addition to the genitive form *kelba* (Insular, Western, and Mid dialects, and belonging also to Standard Estonian, *kelba* in the North-Eastern Coastal dialect), also genitive variants *kelbä, kelvä* have been recorded (mainly in South Estonian). The other dialectal nominative variants are *kelbas* (~ *kelbas*, gen. *`kelpa, kelbase, `kelba*), occurring sporadically in North Estonian dialects, *kelbäs*, gen. *`kelbä, kelvas, kelväs*, gen. *`kelva, `kelvä* (Vigala subdialect of the Western dialect), *kelpuss*, gen. *`kelpusõ, `kelpüss*, gen. *`kelpüse* (respectively Hargla and Põlva subdialects of the South Estonian Võru dialect); cf. also *kemp*, recorded in two North Estonian subdialects: gen. *kemba* (Kadrina subdialect of the Mid dialect), and gen. *`kemba, `kempa* (Haljala subdialect of the North-Eastern Coastal dialect).<sup>2</sup> In addition to the meanings already mentioned, there are also the meanings 'junction of the side and hipped end of a roof; rafter of the hip side of a roof; end of the stack of wood where the firewood is placed crossways [to keep the stack steady]' recorded in dialects. The variant *kelbas* means also 'shore, bank, slope' (EMS s.v. *kelp, kelbas, kelpus, kemp*).

In written sources, the word has been recorded since the seventeenth century. The first notes are in the dictionary part of Johannes Gutsclaff's South Estonian grammar and in the dictionary part

1. The grave accent ( ` ) in Estonian dialect examples designates the third (over-long) quantity degree.

2. It is not clear how the variant *kemp* has arisen. It could be a result of a sporadic variation of consonants, characteristic to the Finnic languages (see a thorough overview of the phenomenon in Nikkilä 1999). The variation *l ~ m* is not described by Nikkilä but there are many examples about the variation *l ~ n*. Before the consonants, this variation has phonetic restrictions, it occurs only before the dentals *t* (*d*) and *s* (Nikkilä 1999: 144). One could speculate that *kemp* is a result of a similar kind of variation *l ~ nasal*, but depending on the following labial stop *p*, the nasal is labial, too.

of Heinrich Göseken's North Estonian grammar: *Giebel Kõlp / e* (Gutslaff 1998 [1648]: 216), *Giebel / Kelp, das Tach am Ende / kelp* (Göseken 1660: 214, 407).<sup>3</sup> It also occurs in the dictionary manuscript from the first decades of the eighteenth century, by Salomo Heinrich Vestring, that was later used by Anton Thor Helle for the dictionary part of his grammar: *Kõlp Kelp Sarrikas, die kurtze Sparre* (Vestring 1998 [1710–30]), *kõlp-sarrikas die kurze Sparre* (Helle 1732: 116). These historical recordings show that earlier the word had a variant with the vowel *ɛ* in the first syllable.<sup>4</sup> The parallel variants with *ɛ* and *e* are recorded also in August Wilhelm Hupel's dictionary (1st ed. 1780, 2nd ed. 1818) and in Ferdinand Johann Wiedemann's dictionary (1st ed. 1869, 2nd ed. 1893): *kelp, a, Giebel. d. Kelpa kiwwi Forststein* (Hupel 1818: 79), *kõlp, gen. kõlba, Giebel, Forst, Dachende. r. kõlp sarrikas kurze Dachsparre* (90), *kelp G. kelba (kelbas, kemp, kilp, kõlp, kõlbas) der schräge Theil des Daches an der Giebelseite, ahju k., sadula k. Hintertheil des Ofens .., des Sattels* (Wiedemann 1973 [1893]: 261–262).

Thus, the stem has had both a back- and a front-vocalic variant, while the stem variant *kelba-*, belonging to the standard language, seems to represent originally the front-vocalic variant (vowel harmony has been lost in most North Estonian dialects), cf. *kelbä-*, recorded in the twentieth-century (mainly) South Estonian dialect data.<sup>5</sup> The parallel occurrence of a back-vocalic variant with *ɛ* and a front-vocalic variant with *e* in the first syllable points to the possibility that this is an old loanword, cf. e.g. (North, Standard) Estonian *mets* : *metsa-* < \*PF *metsä* and South Estonian *mets* : *metsa-* < PF \**metsa* 'forest' (a Baltic loanword).

The first attempt to etymologize the Estonian word was made by Mihkel Veske. He suggested Ru. *склеп* 'свод, баня; мурованный подвал, погреб' ['vault, sauna; cellar'], dial. 'печной свод' ['oven

3. Slash (/) is a punctuation mark in the seventeenth-century texts. The letter *e*, following the slash in Gutslaff's example, designates the stem-final vowel, occurring in the oblique case forms of the Estonian word.

4. The letter *õ* for [ɛ] was used in literary Estonian for the first time in 1819. Earlier, the letter *ö* designated both [ɔ] and [ɛ].

5. Although Hupel states that the variant with *e* in the first syllable is South Estonian (d. = der dörptsche Dialekt) but the variant with *ɛ* is North Estonian (r. = der revalsche Dialekt), the earlier as well as the later recordings cited above do not confirm such a strict distribution.

hood'] as a loan source (Becke 1890: 219–220). Due to the phonetic as well as the semantic shortcomings, this suggestion is interesting only from a research-history perspective.

Next, Osmo Mäkeläinen proposed a Proto-Germanic loan source for Est *kelp*, Liv *kīelpa*, namely PGmc *\*skel-ǵa-* from the root *\*skel-* 'to cut', cf. OHG *scelb*, *scelp* 'kaarikatto(inen rakennus)' ['(building with an) arch roof'], OE *scelf* 'jokin suurehko rakennus' ['some larger building'], MLG *schelff* 'telttamaja' ['tent, pavilion'], OE *ǵā scylfas* (pl.) 'katokset' ['penthouses, shelters'], OE *scylf* 'Jerusalem in tempel in katon (päädyn) korkein kohta' ['the highest point of the roof (gable) of the temple in Jerusalem'], MDu *scelf* 'heinäparvi' ['hayloft'], EFri *schelv* '(auman) alusta ja katos' ['base and shelter (of a shock)']. Thus, like Mäkeläinen writes, the descendants of PGmc *\*skel-ǵa-* in Germanic languages have designated a hipped roof or its end, or metonymically a shelter, a penthouse (also its base), or a building. The weakness of this etymology is the irregular substitution of the consonants, a matter that Mäkeläinen himself has mentioned (Mäkeläinen 1979: 204–206). The PF reconstruction of the Estonian and Livonian words should have geminate *\*pp* (*\*kelppä*/*\*kelppa* [*\*kelppa*]), but this is not a usual substitute for PGmc *\*ǵ*. For this reason, the lexicon of the Germanic loanwords considers this etymology hardly possible (LägLoS 79).

In the historical dictionaries of Estonian, Gm *Giebel*, the usual translation of Est *kelp*, strikes one's eye. On the one hand, the relative phonetic closeness of the Estonian and German words can naturally represent chance resemblance, but on the another hand, it allows one to speculate whether an etymological connection might be possible with some Germanic source. In Proto-Germanic, a stem *\*gebla(n)-* ~ *\*gabla-* 'top' has been reconstructed, the equivalents of which are Gothic *gibla*, OHG *gebal*, and MHG *gebel* 'pinnacle' (Kroonen 2013: 173). The Germanic stem is a descendant of PIE *\*ǵ<sup>h</sup>eb<sup>h</sup>h<sub>2</sub>-l-o-* < *\*ǵ<sup>h</sup>eb<sup>h</sup>h<sub>2</sub>-l-* 'gable, head', cf. Ancient Greek *κεφαλή* 'head, the uppermost or top part'. Also OHG *gibil*, Gm *Giebel* 'gable' < PGmc *\*gebila-* are etymologically related to this stem (ibid.; see also IEW 423, Lehmann 1986: 155). If PGmc *\*gebla(n)-* would have been borrowed into Proto-Finnic, it would have got the shape *\*kepla*/*\*keplä*, and if metathesis would have taken place in the Finnic word for some

reason, the expected result would have been probably *\*kēlppa*/*\*kēlppä* rather than *\*kēlpa*/*\*kēlpä*.

Of course, it is necessary to admit that there is no obvious reason for such metathesis. The clusters *\*pl* as well as *\*lpp* were possible in Proto-Finnic, e.g. *\*-pl-*: PF *\*kupla* > Fi *kupla*, *kuula* ‘bubble’ etc., Est *kubel* (: *kubla-*) ‘wheal, blister; bubble’, PF *\*lipla* > Fi *liula*, Est *lible* ‘flake, crumb’, PF *\*hapla* > Fi dial. *hapla* ‘intense lust, hurry’, Est *ablas* (: *apla-*) ‘greedy’; *\*-lpp-*: PF *\*helppo* > Fi *helppo* ‘easy’, Est *hõlp* (: *hõlbu-*) ‘ease, comfort’, PF *\*kulppi* > Fi dial. *kulppi*, Est *kulp* (: *kulbi-*) ‘ladle’, PF *\*tülppä* ~ *\*tölppä* > Fi *tylppä*, *tölppä* ‘blunt, dull’, Est *tülp* (: *tülbi-*) ‘tired, bored’, *tõlp* (: *tõlbi*) ‘blunt, cut off; stupid’, dial. *tülp* : *tülba-* ‘blunt, snub’. Note, however, that after the apocope had taken place, usually a singular nominative form cannot end in *-pl*, at least in most Estonian dialects. To avoid this, the epenthesis of a vowel, like in *kubel* (< *\*kupl* < *\*kupla*) is predictable, cf. also the development of *\*-pr* or *\*-tr*, e.g. *sõber* ‘friend’ (< *\*sepr* < *\*sepra*), *põder* ‘elk’ (< *\*pētr* < *\*pētra*). However, the remaining two examples of the PF *\*-pl-* presented above, the words *lible* and *ablas*, show irregular developments in Estonian. Both are secondary nominative forms: *lible* is actually the genitive singular form of the word *lipl* ~ *libl* : *lible-* (? < diminutive *\*lipl-ēi* (EEW: 1289)) that is used instead of the nominative singular, while *ablas* has been transformed into a contracted-type noun by the addition of the element *-(a)s* to the stem.<sup>6</sup> Although there seem to be no other examples, the metathesis could have been one more irregular way to avoid the word-final *\*-pl*. A possible reason could have been that the homonymy with the word *kõblas* ‘hoe; mattock; hollowing ax’ (a Baltic loanword) would have blocked, for instance, the option of the addition the ending *-as*.<sup>7</sup> Regarding Livonian, it seems that no words with PF *\*-pl-* have been preserved: none of the

6. Both the use of the singular genitive form instead of the singular nominative and the addition of the secondary element *-(V)s* to nouns are quite productive ways to form new word variants in Estonian dialects, cf., e.g. *kaasa* ‘spouse’ < *kaas*, gen. *kaasa*, *kahju* ‘damage, loss’ < *kahi*, gen. *kahju*; *koobas* : *koopa-* ‘cave’ < *koop* : *kooba-* < PF *\*kooppa*.

7. However, cf. some other examples of the metathesis in Estonian that are not easy to explain. The most curious case is probably the word *ting* ‘nit’ (← Latv *gnīda* or Ru. *гнида* id., e.g. Vaba 1997: 218–219) in which the donor word is actually turned around. Also *kabu-* < *\*pagu-* in the compound *kabuhirm* ‘panic’ (cf. Fi *pakokahu*) illustrates a chance change of the sound order (Uibo 2013: 531).

PF words *\*kupla*, *\*lipla*, *\*hapla* have Livonian cognates.<sup>8</sup> Perhaps the metathesis could help to preserve the supposed PF *\*kepla*/*\*keplä*.

Perhaps there would be more arguments for the proposed Proto-Germanic loan source, if one could find a possible cognate of the supposed PF *\*kepla*/*\*keplä* in the Northern Finnic languages. A suitable cognate is Fi *keula*, dial. *kepla*, *kekla* 'prow; front part of a sledge; penthouse, shelter; peak of a cap; edge of a sandpit, ledge'. According to the SSA, the cognates of this word in the other Finnic languages are Ingrian *kebla* 'prow', North Karelian *keula* id., Olonets Karelian *keblu* 'curved support in the prow of a boat', South Karelian *keplakko* 'narrow piece of land', and Estonian *käil*, *käilas*, *keul*, *keel* 'prow of a ship', while the Ingrian word, Karelian *keula*, *keblu*, and partly possibly the Estonian words represent borrowings from Finnish (SSA 1: 352). Also Votic *keula* 'prow' (VKS), not mentioned in the SSA, should probably be considered a loanword from Finnish. The phonological match between the Estonian and Finnish words is irregular. If Fi *keula* is a descendant of PF *\*keula*, the expected Estonian cognate would be *\*kõul*, and even if PF *\*keula* had a front-vocalic variant *\*keülä*, its Estonian descendant should have been *\*keil*, not *käil*, cf. e.g. PF *\*leütä-*, Est *leida-* 'to find'. Thus the most adequate explanation for the irregularity of the Estonian variants seems to be that they, too, have been borrowed from Finnish (see also Koivulehto 1999 (1973): 92). Let it be noted that the available data about the spread of the Estonian words in the dialects do not contradict this supposition. According to Wiedemann's dictionary, the variants *käil*, *käilas* are recorded on the North-Western coast (Wiedemann 1973 [1893]: 241); the only variant attested in the dictionary of Estonian dialects, *keul(a)*, is recorded in the North-Eastern Coastal dialect (EMS).

Two Germanic etymologies have been proposed for Finnish *keula*. Since the mid nineteenth century, Fi *keula* has been connected with PGmc *\*keula-*, cf. ON *kjóll* 'big ship' (e.g. Thomsen 1869: 124, Setälä 1906: 11). Jorma Koivulehto has proposed PGmc *\*skeula-* as

8. Also Lauri Posti's (1942: 182–183) observation "Von dem angeblichen Wechsel *pl* ~ *\*βl* kenne ich keine Beispiele aus dem Livischen" should be interpreted in the present paradigm of research as that there are no words with PF *\*-pl-* in Livonian. Liv *kappil* 'hoe, mattock; hollowing ax' is not a cognate of the Baltic loanword Est *kõblas* but a Latvian loanword, thus belonging to younger lexis (Kettunen 1938: 106, Suhonen 1973: 125).

the loan source, cf. ON *skjól* ‘Schutz, Hülle, Schutzdach, Schuppen, Versteck, Zufluchtsort’. He has presented thorough argumentation with parallel examples to explain the semantic development ‘shelter, penthouse’ > ‘prow; front part of a sledge, etc.’ (Koivulehto 1999 [1973]: 86–93). In SSA, both Germanic etymologies are presented with hesitation (SSA 1: 352). LägLoS (87) considers Koivulehto’s etymology semantically better, but as the phonological side is not flawless, the Germanic origin remains questionable.

Both Germanic etymologies described above presuppose that *keula* is the primary phonological variant, while *kepla* and *kekla* are secondary variants that have arisen due to analogy. However, at least formally Fi *keula* and *kepla* are quite regular equivalents of the supposed PF *\*kepla*. Even if *kepla* and *kekla*, recorded in single Eastern Finnish subdialects (SMS s.v. *keula*), are really secondary developments of *keula* that supposedly wandered from west to east (Koivulehto 1999 [1973]: 92), it still does not exclude the development PF *\*kepla* > (Western) Finnish *keula*. Semantically, it is possible to connect the meanings of Finnish *keula* with the suggested meaning ‘top’ of the PGmc *\*gebla(n)-* ~ *\*gabra-*. Note also that the Finnish meaning ‘shelter, penthouse’, considered primary in Koivulehto’s semantic argumentation, is not far from the meanings of the Estonian and Livonian words as terms for parts of a roof. Especially remarkable is Koivulehto’s note “Auch über der Giebelwand kann ein *keula* gebaut werden” (1999 [1973]: 86). Also, some secondary meanings of Fi *keula* and Est *kelp*, *kelbas* are very close, cf. Fi ‘front part of a sledge’, Est ‘end (board) of a sledge’, Fi ‘edge of a sandpit, ledge’, Est ‘shore, bank, slope’. Thus it seems possible to connect etymologically the Northern Finnic (Finnish) and the Southern Finnic (Estonian and Livonian) words.

To sum up, it was proposed in this article that PGmc *\*gebla(n)-* ‘top’ has been borrowed into Proto-Finnic as PF *\*kepla*/*\*keplä*. Phonologically, the stem developed predictably in the Northern Finnic languages (Fi *keula*, possibly also *kepla*), while metathesis took place in the Southern Finnic languages (Est *kelp*, earlier also *kõlp*, Liv *kīelpa*). Also semantically, it developed in different ways in Northern and Southern Finnic languages: it is mainly a ship term (‘prow’) in Finnish but a term designating parts of a roof in Estonian and Livonian.



## Abbreviations

EFri = East Frisian	MLG = Middle Low German
Est = Estonian	PGmc = Proto-Germanic
Fi = Finnish	OE = Old English
gen. = genitive singular	OHG = Old High German
Gm = German	ON = Old Norse
Latv = Latvian	PF = Proto-Finnic
Liv = Livonian	PIE = Proto-Indo-European
MDu = Middle Dutch	Ru. = Russian
MHG = Middle High German	

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