Interdisciplinary and Comparative Methodologies

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Exploring Circum-Baltic Cultures and Beyond

Guest Editors:
Joonas Ahola and Kendra Willson

All articles in the main section of this journal have been subject to peer review.

Contents

INTERDISCIPLINARY AND COMPARATIVE METHODOLOGIES
EXPLORING CIRCUM-BALTIC CULTURES AND BEYOND

Frog, Joonas Ahola and Kendra Willson

Abstract: The core of this special issue engages with the constructedness of ideas and understandings rooted in the discourses of scholarship. This introductory article explores perspectives on discourses and practices of interdisciplinarity. The discussion of topics related to these issues develops in dialogue with individual contributions to the collection in ways that make their interconnections and complementarity apparent.

Alexandra Sanmark

Abstract: This article presents a new interdisciplinary methodology successfully developed for the identification and detailed analysis of Viking-Age outdoor assembly sites. This methodology draws on archaeological evidence, topographic information and a wide range of written sources, from laws to eddic poetry. It is hoped this approach will inspire a new way of thinking, leading to the identification of outdoor assembly-sites in areas of the world where they are not yet known.

Denis Sukhino-Khomenko

Abstract: The article addresses the possibilities for a methodological reassessment of the phenomenon of the thegns in England and Scandinavia in the late Viking Age (ca. 900–1066). The historiographical overview reveals that the thegns have never been examined for their own sake, and that the recent developments in source studies open new methodological prospects in anthropological research. The case study of the thegns hopes to outline some of them.

Joonas Ahola and Karina Lukin

Abstract: M.A. Castrén's Föreläsningar i finsk mytologi [*'Lectures on Finnish mythology'*] represents an important phase in the study of mythology and religion. It is the first comparative study on Finnish and related mythologies that draws on contemporary international scholarship. The Lectures are here reviewed critically both as an emblem in the history of the discipline and as a case study on challenges in combining methodologies from different disciplines and approaches.

Joseph S. Hopkins

Abstract: The present article discusses a historical tendency among scholars to focus on male-gendered deities in the Germanic corpus, a boom period of goddess studies in the 1990s under the influence of Marija Gimbutas, and the place of Great Goddess theory in the field of ancient Germanic studies today. Great Goddess theory is proposed to remain an influence in ancient Germanic studies, particularly in the field's tendency to identify goddesses as extensions of a single entity.

Kendra Willson

Abstract: The Finnish and Karelian word runo [*'poem'*] has been viewed as reflecting a loan from Proto-Germanic *rūnō, the ancestor of Old Norse rún [*'rune'*]. However, given its limited distribution in Finnic and the meanings attested in Germanic and Finnic languages, the word was more likely borrowed at a later stage, from Early Norse

near the start of the Viking Age, probably in the meaning of 'incantation, verbal charm' and in connection with incantational magic.

Eila Stepanova and Frog

Abstract: This paper confronts the research tendency to treat a performance tradition as a semiotic phenomenon in isolation from its performance environment. Karelian funeral lament offers an example of a tradition with a customary soundscape that contextualizes and reinforces the performance arena, while performance participates in the soundscapes of additional ritual activities. The case's analogical value is illustrated through comparison with Old Norse examples.

COMMENTS, PERSPECTIVES AND REPORTS

Abstract: This paper explores the periodisation of pre-documentary Scandinavian language and its synchronisation with that of Finnic, the era in focus being the first millennium CE. Stratification of loanwords is discussed both as a means to refine periodisation and as an aim in itself. The problems as concerns the latter half of the first millennium are highlighted. The account is built on dissertation research defended in September 2018.

Abstract: This paper complements my model for combining archaeological and lexical material with relevant indicators, a discipline-neutral tool that provides information on cultural processes enabling comparison of research results of different disciplines. It shows how the model is applied to South Sámi material, and how relevant indicators should be used in the data. I suggest that a degree of probability be added to the concept, distinguishing strong and weak relevant indicators.

Abstract: Since 2012, an archaeological excavation has continued on a Late Iron Age (AD 800–1050) settlement site and a medieval and early modern village plot of Tursiannotko in Pirkkala (near Tampere). The very well-preserved materials found at the site give a lot of information regarding the modes of subsistence, building techniques, material culture, ritual practices and trade contacts of a relatively wealthy farmer and hunter community.

Abstract: This report offers an overview of recent research being conducted on Jómsvíkinga saga.

Abstract: This article introduces Russian laments of the Vologda region in relation to other lament traditions of the Baltic Sea region. The tradition of this region and lament collection there are briefly introduced as well as the Russian Lament database developed and used in connection with the current research. The language and poetics of the laments are outlined followed by a rhythmical analysis and comments on parallelism, alliteration and practices.

Abstract: This report briefly presents on evidence of a lament tradition among the Skolt Saami. The lament tradition was recognized when documented by earlier scholars but has never entered discussion of lament traditions and has remained generally unrecognized in discussions of lament traditions in the Baltic Sea region.

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

PHD DISSERTATION PROJECTS

MASTER'S THESES

CALLS FOR PAPERS

Editor's Column

The Retrospective Methods Network is going strong and, as has become the norm, its daughter networks are especially visible. A collection of selected articles from the Old Norse Folklorists' meeting in 2015 (Tartu) has appeared as the beautiful volume *Supernatural Encounters in Old Norse Literature and Tradition*, edited by Daniel Sävborg and Karen Bek-Pedersen (Brepols, 2018). The Austmarr Network held Austmarr VIII: The Viking-Age Baltic Sea Region and the Islamic World in Stockholm (31st May – 1st June 2018) and Austmarr IX: *Genius loci* in the Prehistory of the Baltic Sea Region is planned to be held in Klaipėda (29th–31st May 2019). The volume *Contacts and Networks in the Circum-Baltic Region:* Austmarr *as a Northern* Mare nostrum*, ca. 500–1500 AD*, edited by Maths Bertell, Frog and Kendra Willson (Amsterdam University Press, 2019) will soon be available. The present special issue, *Interdisciplinary and Comparative Methodologies: Exploring Circum-Baltic Cultures and Beyond*, has been developed as a collaboration between the Austmarr Network and the Academy of Finland project Mythology, Verbal Art and Authority in Social Impact (2016–2021) of Folklore Studies, University of Helsinki.

Methodology has been a primary interest of this journal since its inception, particularly in connection with cultures of the past. The idea for this special issue is rooted in discussions connected to the multidisciplinary workshop of Austmarr VI: Religion, Language, Practice, organized in Helsinki at the end of 2016 (see the report by Willson in this issue), but it was not planned as conference proceedings *per se*. Austmarr Network meetings offer a venue for presenting work in progress rather than more or less ready papers, and the lectures connected with this meeting's workshop were oriented towards discussion rather than publication. The idea behind the collection was instead built on working not simply with the concept of 'interdisciplinarity', but with a broader phenomenon of which interdisciplinarity is a part, a phenomenon which has no label of its own and thus becomes simultaneously obscured in the shadow of interdisciplinarity. This aspect of the thematic issue's focus is linked to comparativism, in the broad sense of bringing things together and looking for patterns of sameness and difference or how one thing may help shed light on another, a methodological tool that intersects with interdisciplinarity and the broader phenomenon with which it is connected. The contributions gathered here include introductions to, and discussions of, methodologies that truly unite distinct disciplines or that triangulate analyses of different types of data emblematic of different fields. They also include perspectives on how disciplinary discourses structure our thinking and consider ways of overcoming the limitations that this creates. The Austmarr Network looks at the Baltic Sea as an arena of contacts and networks and this emphasis has shaped the content of the collection. Rather than focusing only on Circum-Baltic cultures' connections to one another, these are viewed as connecting outwards, for example to cultures of the British Isles or the Vologda region of Russia. The result is a core group of six papers accompanied by a variety of complementary articles and reports that we hope you will both enjoy and benefit from.

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INTERDISCIPLINARY AND COMPARATIVE METHODOLOGIES
EXPLORING CIRCUM-BALTIC CULTURES AND BEYOND

Interdisciplinary and Comparative Methodologies: An Introduction

Frog, University of Helsinki, Joonas Ahola, University of Helsinki,
and Kendra Willson, Polish Institute of Advanced Studies / University of Turku

Abstract: The core of this special issue engages with the constructedness of ideas and understandings rooted in the discourses of scholarship. This introductory article explores perspectives on discourses and practices of interdisciplinarity. The discussion of topics related to these issues develops in dialogue with individual contributions to the collection in ways that make their interconnections and complementarity apparent.

When scholars of one background look at research from another, it is not uncommon to observe issues, sources or questions of which that other research appears unaware. Whether the particular background is discussed in terms of disciplines, fields of study, subjects, schools or national scholarships, the discussions in which we are first trained and later engage, as well as the mass of published and unpublished scholarship that is built into a discourse heritage, all shape our backgrounds, our interests, ideologies and whole field of vision. On the one hand, this pragmatic reality structures our thinking and perspectives in ways that are difficult to see beyond, and, on the other hand, it creates disjunctions in discussion and knowledge of different disciplines, national scholarships or other groups of scholars. *Interdisciplinary and Comparative Methodologies: Exploring Circum-Baltic Cultures and Beyond* brings precisely these issues into focus.

The challenges posed by the diversity of frames of reference, paradigms and ideologies emergent across different discourses are not simply issues of communication and shared understanding. Researchers' frameworks structure the factors and types of evidence under consideration, as well as the questions considered interesting or relevant to ask and trajectories along which to explore. The ideology of the resulting perspective may leave whole fields of evidence invisible or subject to erasure, as though they did not exist (Lotman 1990: 58; Irvine & Gal 2000: 38–39). Put another way, our socialization in particular discourses builds the 'box' in which we 'think'. The challenges of advancing beyond those limits are at the basis of the present collection. The six articles that form the core of this special issue engage with the constructedness of ideas and understandings rooted in these backgrounds, and discuss, develop and apply multidisciplinary and comparative methodologies. This core is complemented by presentations of current findings and methodologies in overviews, reports and discussions of additional research relevant to understanding cultures and their histories of relations in the Circum-Baltic arena.

The Challenge of Diversified Knowledge

The interest in humanities in general is focused on the complexities of human societies and cultures as a whole. This scope of interest is extremely wide and arguably even inexhaustible, whereas the capabilities of any individual scholar or even a group of scholars remain extremely limited by comparison, and thus the scope of the humanities has naturally split into divisions of interest. The scholarship as a whole is shaped by the history of discourses in different disciplines and on different subjects or phenomena, which is a basic issue linked to

specialized knowledge and associated discussion networks. Any network of people who engage, across protracted periods, in ongoing discussion oriented to one another gradually evolves frames of reference for shared knowledge, vocabulary and even evaluations of ideas, practices and so forth (cf. Lemke 2002; Agha 2007).

Although scientific research aims at objective understanding of reality, the knowledge produced is always a construct that emerges in dialectic with the ever-accumulating history of scientific discourse, as "items have been added, singly and in combination, to [its] ever growing stockpile" (Kuhn 1970: 1–2). It is popular to talk about 'knowledge' as an objective thing, collective, unified and integrated, to which individuals both contribute and have uniform access. However, the pragmatics of research and communication lead knowledge to develop in channels within which discussions become focused and specialized, often discussed as 'disciplines', 'fields' or 'areas of research'. Specialization allows discussion to advance to higher levels by building on a higher base competence and shared frame of reference, but it also makes the particular channel of discussion more difficult for outsiders to engage with if they lack the relevant learning. These shared frames of reference may vary considerably between national or language-centered scholarships: the same nominal discipline may be understood and practiced very differently in Germany, the United States, the Russian Federation, China, India and so on.

The term *discipline ecology* describes how disciplines, their relative statuses and distributions of labour are organized relative to one another. National discipline ecologies may vary considerably, which increases the divergence between discussions of a particular topic or phenomenon. In the present volume, Denis Sukhino-Khomenko describes differences between Anglophone and Scandinavian scholarship on the Old English *thegn* and Old Norse *þegn* ['thane']. Through his critical deconstruction of views in earlier scholarship and reanalysis of primary evidence, Sukhino-Khomenko's study clearly illustrates how an object of study and its relations to particular sources are constructed through analysis, from which it can enter into a disciplinary, national or language-centered academic discourse,

where that object's image evolves as it is discussed and debated. In this case, the potential for significant variation between scholarship in different languages is salient because the discussions of Old English and Old Norse are not integrated; the configuration of disciplines concerned with *thegn* and *þegn* also differs; and the difference in language has affected ease of access to related work being done in parallel.

A Perspective on Diversification

The evolution of specialist discussions today is rooted in the history of development of higher centers of learning and study. Especially the medieval *Universitas magistrorum et scholarium* ['Corporate Body of Teachers and Students'], which began emerging in the 11th and 12th centuries under the Church, became a nesting-ground of development during the Enlightenment and evolved rapidly in the wake of Romanticism. Already during the Middle Ages, study was organized into different subjects; there was specialization and discussion and debate on particular topics; but knowledge developed across subjects quite fluidly. Of course, as Harvey J. Graff (2015: 245n.37) reminds us: "Only in theory was knowledge never undivided; to think otherwise was always an act of faith." Nevertheless, the threshold of knowledge to engage in different academic discussions was, from today's perspective, comparatively low: a university education was organized so as to enable a student to develop competence across subjects. Contributions to discussion were also built on different ideas of source criticism and methodological rigour, and did not necessarily differentiate between empirically grounded theory and intuitive, untested hypotheses that might now seem like unbridled speculation (which is not to suggest that speculation is no longer found in the humanities today).

This situation was transformed in the course of the 19th century. Comparativism rapidly came to dominate research, leading to remarkably rapid advances in a variety of subjects (see further Griffiths 2017). At the same time, the print publication economy facilitated increasingly rapid and widespread circulation of scholars' works. Individual specialization was nothing new, but the accumulation of advances

and the quantity of widely circulating scholarship formed a trajectory toward specialization as a social phenomenon. Specialization took shape as part of researcher identity and the level of base knowledge presumed for particular discussion networks rose. These processes were complemented by the organization of universities and educational programs into departments during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Rather than being an autonomous, organic process, the formation of institutional structures and disciplines involved agents, networks and institutional politics, ranging from Max Müller in comparative philology at Oxford (Fynes 2007) to Kaarle Krohn's championing of folklore studies' distinct identity (Frog 2013). Institutional status was important for the historical sustainability of research fields across generations (cf. Dorson 1961). Institutional departments and positions emerged in relation to one another (e.g. Siikala 2006), evolving national disciplinary ecologies, which could also be actively structured by the individuals who held prominent positions within those ecologies (e.g. Klein 2006). The late 19th and early 20th centuries were thus a formative time that established the foundations of disciplines and fields of study that enhance (and perhaps even govern) how the organization of academic discourse operates, is discussed and evolves today.

A Problem of Interdisciplinarity

The combination of specialization and institutional structuring produced concerns that knowledge would become compartmentalized and fragmented rather than being unified. Present-day discussions on the need for interdisciplinarity in research can be viewed as an inevitable counter-effect to the prolonged segmentation and specialization in research that has distanced scholarly discourses throughout the humanities and especially distianced the humanities from fields such as the natural sciences. The issue, however, is extremely complex and becomes idealized through discussion. Interdisciplinarity's implicit frame of reference is 'disciplinarity', a stigmatized yet undefined ghost. A crux of interdisciplinarity is that it has become treated in discussion as an ideal and necessary solution to all scientific inquiry, itself becoming an

instrument in discourse and debate, often without clear ideas about what it is or why it is important (e.g. Graff 2015). The discourse on interdisciplinarity remains at a remove from research 'on the ground' and the different sorts of potential that interdisciplinary work has. At the same time, a dichotomy arises in institutional settings. Interdisciplinarity is valorized and even demanded among individual researchers, but what becomes a draw to institutions is departments and disciplines as structures of teaching and research that are more visible than the endeavours of any one researcher. Reciprocally, researchers who become more interdisciplinary may face the challenge that hiring for faculty positions still seems to remain centered on customary disciplinary categories. The circulating ideas about interdisciplinarity thus not only appear disconnected from research being done, but even at odds with what happens at the level of institutions advocating it.

Interdisciplinarity does not necessarily entail unification of knowledge. As Peter Weingart (2000: 26) has written, "interdisciplinarity [...] is proclaimed, demanded, hailed, and written into funding programs, but at the same time specialization in science goes on unhampered, reflected in the continuous complaint about it." On a descriptive level, interdisciplinarity refers to a synthesis or combination of disciplines. In practice, such synthesis and combination occurs at the level of individual works and projects or the work of individual researchers more generally. For example, the main disciplines represented in this volume are historical linguistics and philology, folklore and archaeology – all concerned with tracing and reconstructing the human past. Overlap among these is substantial, and there has been an increasing awareness that these disciplines work better in dialogue. For certain investigations, it may be that no one discipline can yield dependable results on its own. In this volume, Alexandra Sanmark demonstrates that the identification of Norse assembly sites cannot be done solely on the basis of archaeological data. She presents a methodology for combining archaeological data with multifaceted and multidisciplinary topographic data as well as eclectic textual evidence. Triangulating these not only allows the identification of such sites, but also produces perspectives on assembly

sites as a type of place with predictable features and organized in certain ways. Interdisciplinary methodologies may produce innovations and new perspectives, but they develop around particular questions or concerns. The approaches can feed back into discussions identified with different disciplines and sometimes open new directions of investigation or reconcile perspectives on a common problem approached through different types of data. Nevertheless, they do not produce a synthesis of the respective disciplines *per se*.

The discourse on interdisciplinarity often seems to target a full integration of disciplines, dissolving boundaries between them in order to achieve a unified if not holistic knowledge. This type of development requires inter-disciplinarity at a social level of networks of scholars; it is possible to observe examples of this in the present collection. Several of the contributions to this volume take on the challenge of relating language or words and their etymologies to different disciplinary frameworks. Whereas Sukhino-Khomenko brings into focus a social institution researched in close connection with particular words, Kendra Willson illustrates that etymologies must take into account fuller cultural contexts than has customarily been done, including changing genres and technologies of traditional performance. Riddles surrounding a loan word can be addressed by considering its connections with social and historical processes, to which etymology contributes a complementary perspective, as in her case study on the relationship between Finno-Karelian *runo* ['traditional poem; performer of traditional poetry'] and the family of Germanic words related to Old Norse *rún* ['charm; unit of mythic knowledge; message carved in runes; runic letter; confidante']. Similarly, Minerva Piha sets out a methodology to bring etymologies of South Sámi vocabulary into full dialogue with archaeology. Johan Schalin seeks to develop a balanced model of language history that reconciles linguistic and archaeological evidence rather than simply treating language as iconic of culture and projecting historical language phases onto archaeological cultures (cf. Saarikivi & Lavento 2012). Joonas Ahola and Karina Lukin draw attention to how similarly holistic

views produced through multidisciplinary perspectives were being developed already from the first half of the 19th century, even if disciplinary infrastructures for approaching phonological and semantic change had not yet been developed. These contributions connect with a widespread research interest in social dimensions of language connected to the remote past, which has been feeding back into historical linguistic research but also could, in principle, advance socially to a critical mass of scholarship integrating etymology, language history, archaeology, social linguistics and linguistic anthropology.

When this sort of synthesis occurs at a social level, however, it tends not to result in a unification of disciplines but rather in disciplinary diversification (Weingart 2000: 36). Instead of being a means of unifying knowledge, interdisciplinarity is often used to achieve new, innovative ways of investigating and discussing whatever is brought into research focus. If the use of interdisciplinarity advances to a social phenomenon in a broader academic community, it becomes a call for its own specialized approaches (Weingart 2000: 39–41). This may produce a new, hybrid field that receives institutional recognition, like biochemistry or linguistic anthropology, or the innovative field may remain under an established disciplinary or departmental label, viewed as diversification in local or national scholarship or as a new 'school'. In either case, there is still specialization; it is simply changed. Such a field may intuitively sound like multiple, integrated specializations. In practice, the process of integrating disciplines carves out relevant areas of the fields being integrated, so that it does not result in a comprehensive synthesis of two fields as wholes but rather links them by building something new from parts of each. Of course, this is quite natural, as new knowledge tends to evoke new questions that require new methods and approaches to answer. Even synthesis of previous knowledge may be more than an end unto itself and may uncover ground for trending new paths. Some of the trends observable in the current volume could potentially come to be viewed as opening an emerging field as a social trajectory of interdisciplinarity becomes the new

disciplinary, whether under a new label or as new wine in an old bottle.

Diversified Knowledge, Diversified Data

Differences in academic discourses, with their respective research paradigms and ideologies, also produce differences in the formation of research data. This can be an issue when addressing data of different types (combining which is itself often called 'interdisciplinary'), but the issue is actually more widespread because it equally relates to addressing data generated within the same field when a different paradigm was dominant. The situation gets more complicated because archived or published data becomes historically enduring. Researchers from other frameworks can then treat it as raw source material, recontextualizing it and transforming it into new data.

Research paradigms and ideologies structure the formation of research data, and researchers even within the same discipline may have very different backgrounds from those of, say, ten years or a century ago. The frameworks of thinking and working behind data production interface with, and may also exclude, methodologies, theories, questions conceived as relevant to ask and the relative value of different types of information (e.g. Kuhn 1970; Lakatos 1980 [1978]). They reciprocally shape what is distinguished as relevant information and the ways in which documentation and compilation are done, whether the focus is on 20th-century philology, 19th-century ethnography or Snorri Sturluson's 13th-century compendium of verse exemplars and their representation in the *Skáldskaparmál* section of his *Edda* (Frog 2019).

Data construction always entails perspective-based sorting of what is identified as relevant from what is not, a process in which a researcher's framework may leave certain types of information devalued, invisible or erased from consideration (Lotman 1990: 58, 219; Irvine & Gal 2000: 38–39). Identification itself is a process that entails interpretation, categorization and definition. The outcome is that data produced at one time in a particular scholarship may appear highly problematic from another, filled with biases and gaps, as in the materials gathered by M.A. Castrén, whose research is discussed by Ahola and Lukin.

Alternately, it may just seem largely irrelevant to the questions that appear current and interesting from another perspective (e.g. Gabbert 1999). Rather than a simple question of discipline, such issues are tied up with both understanding what data represents, and thus how to relate to or interpret it. This issue may be exaggerated by the language and techniques of representation that have developed in a particular discourse that are confusing or hard to follow for an outsider. This may take the form of mysterious tables of statistical data, archaeological field reports or just a lot of terminology that just seems like jargon because the significance or distinctions of specialized vocabulary is unrecognized. Working across the differences between one's own frameworks and that – or those – within which data was constructed can present considerable challenges.

A central concern throughout the present collection is the increasingly common question of how to relate, in a way that is methodologically sound and systematic, different datasets that, on the surface, appear incommensurate. Integrating datasets from different language families or cultures, from different times, different genres or generated by different techniques and disciplinary traditions has a potential to create a fuller picture than any one type of data alone. This is particularly salient in the opening articles of the collection, both centered on administrative institutions and roles. Sanmark's argument that assembly sites tend to retain their importance over protracted periods despite changes in religious and social structures is built on linking evidence in the archaeological record to different types of later written sources, each type of which must be used on its own terms. Sukhino-Khomenko discusses corresponding methods for studying the role of the *thegn*, outlining the complementary uses of different dimensions of analysis for corpus-based attestations of words that span across a variety of written genres spread across several centuries and across different older Germanic languages. The triangulation of a historically remote phenomenon behind different types of data takes a different form in the methodology introduced by Piha, who triangulates relations between loanword strata and evidence of cultural contacts in archaeology through 'relevant indicators', illustrated through South

Sámi terms for domestic animals and osteological evidence. Such triangulation across varieties of evidence is a rapidly developing area of research.

The principle behind such methodologies is that particular phenomena within a certain time period stem from a common cultural frame. Such phenomena are therefore connected, whether directly or indirectly, through a complex web of relations. The frames just mentioned are each identified with a single culture but the cultural frame may also be a broader sphere of interaction, such as the Circum-Baltic region. Johan Schalin shifts attention to this broader frame when he confronts the problem of collating strata in Finnic and Germanic language history, a history that spans the Baltic Sea. The broader comparative frame also comes into focus with the several studies of laments. Lament traditions of the Circum-Baltic region have come to be recognized as having a long history of interaction through which they have shaped one another and evolved shared features across languages (Stepanova 2011). Karelian and Lithuanian laments therefore provide significant points of reference for a more nuanced understanding of the lament tradition of the Vologda region in Russia researched by Elena Jugai. In these discussions, the existence of a lament tradition has not previously been recognized for any Sámi groups, which Marko Jouste reveals is a misrepresentation. Much as Karelians in the north have yoiks (Kallberg 2004), internationally assumed to be a Sámi genre, Skolt Sámi have laments. Jouste stresses that traditions of the Skolt Sámi are shaped by "the fact that [they] have always lived in a multi-cultural environment and their musical tradition is inherently multilayered" (this volume, p. 151). By identifying and exploring connections between these phenomena, research may illuminate deeper perspectives on historical cultural realities than what would be possible from the point of view of a single field.

Such research builds on comparativism, working at the nexuses between potentially quite diverse and wide-ranging sets of data. Whereas the nexus of research may be an abstract cultural category like 'assembly site', '*thegn*' or 'lamenter', it may also be a quite concrete object of research, as in Sami

Raninen's discussion of recent finds at an important archaeological site in Finland, Tursiannotko. Raninen's overview brings perspectives from a wide range of disciplines into discussion of particular finds and aspects of the particular site in order to build a synthetic picture beyond what any one perspective could offer. Similarly, Sirpa Aalto brings into focus a particular Icelandic saga, *Jómsvíkinga saga* ['Saga of the Jómsvíkings'], which involves discussions of medieval saga genres, historical sources of other types, etymologies of place names and so forth. The interdisciplinary nature of such discussions is so integrated into much research today that it is easily taken for granted.

One significant utility of comparison is use of a rich dataset to shed light on another, poorer one. This type of comparative method often creates a hierarchical relation between them, making one a frame through which, or in relation to which, to view and interpret the other. Such asymmetry can be observed in many combinations of datasets, such as corpus data of different textual genres and older Germanic languages used by Sukhino-Khomenko, who brings this issue into focus. One set of data may be much more robust than the other, or one may simply be better suited to qualitative methods while the other is mainly approachable through quantitative methods. These types of conditions often involve performing research on one set of data and placing it in dialogue with research on the other. For example, individual etymologies, like that of *runo* examined by Willson, get positioned in relation to reconstructions of an overall language system, like that argued by Schalin, which has been developed especially from broad, quantitative overviews. The model of a language system in turn is based on the aggregate of individual etymologies. In these types of comparison, the sets of data are in dialogue. For example, the etymology of *runo* is not fully determined by the reconstruction of the language system and, although one etymology may have no observable impact on that reconstruction, it feeds back into the quantitative data.

A corpus of thick data may also be used to develop a theoretical model that can become a frame of reference for understanding a commensurate phenomenon concerning which

the data leaves considerable gaps. The classic example of this is research on South Slavic epic traditions for perspectives on Homeric epic, which evolved into Oral-Formulaic Theory as an internationally used model (e.g. Foley 1988 and the journal *Oral Tradition*). In this collection, Eila Stepanova and Frog use the richly attested Karelian lament tradition to fill in the spotty picture of Norse lamenting practices painted by Old Norse sources. They frame those sources in a broader theoretical model of the operational dynamics of lament in a performance situation. Models like these involve an extreme asymmetry between the sets of data analyzed, interpreting one through the other. In this case, the predominantly literary evidence for lamenting in Old Norse has been discussed mainly in literary terms with widely divergent interpretations, and it is contested whether such a tradition existed in Old Norse at all. Stepanova and Frog's analogical use of the model thus depends on an argument for its relevance, and they are also careful to distinguish between features that are of direct comparative relevance and those that are more probably culture- or language-dependent. Whether comparison is between loanword etymologies and Iron-Age fragments of animal bones in a settlement site, or between the robust evidence of Karelian lament and scattered references in Old Norse literature, questions concerning the commensurability of different types of data may constitute major methodological challenges.

The History of Ideas
The diversity of academic discourses is bound up with the history of ideas, a prominent topic that links several contributions to this collection. Many of the articles draw attention to blind spots or gaps in the scholarship, ranging from Jouste pointing out the lack of acknowledgement of Skolt Sámi laments in Circum-Baltic contexts to Sanmark's and Piha's development of systematic methodologies to make use of neglected complementary data. Other articles reveal the constructedness of ideas in scholarship that may have momentum of long endurance yet appear problematic under scrutiny, as Sukhino-Khomenko does for the interpretations of *thegn*. Although the theme unites the

majority of contributions to this volume, a few contributions bring it into particular focus.

Ahola and Lukin present a case study of the Finnish scholar M.A. Castrén (1813–1852) and his wide-ranging comparative study *Föreläsningar i finsk mytologi* (1853) ['Lectures in Finnish Mythology'], largely neglected today. Castrén did pioneering work in comparative mythology as well as in the study of Uralic languages and the ethnography of people who spoke them. His methodological orientation was generally consistent with the current drive toward interdisciplinarity, seeking to develop a holistic picture by triangulating a full spectrum of diverse data. Ahola and Lukin argue that Castrén's *Föreläsningar i finsk mytologi* is a landmark work both for the data it contains and, methodologically, because of its incorporation of comparative data. They situate Castrén's work in relation to that of the Grimms and to a model of human development that was prevalent in Europe in the early 19th century. They elucidate how interpretations he presents that seem problematic today are rooted in the very different frames of reference of his day, such as not taking into account the factor of semantic change in discussions of etymology. By taking contemporary discourses and ideologies into consideration, the significance of this early scholar's contributions to the history of research theory and methodology can be fully appreciated. The case concerns a particular scholar's now-neglected work, yet it offers a valuable frame of reference for considering the work of other early scholarship, which may be easy to criticize from the perspective of current knowledge and methodologies without recognizing or appreciating its significance.

Ideas in the history of scholarship are of central interest to Joseph S. Hopkins, who explores Great Goddess Theory in research on early Germanic religion. Research on Germanic deities has tended historically to emphasize masculine figures, while the study of goddesses in recent decades has been dominated by a search for a 'Great Goddess' figure. Hopkins traces the history of this concept from its early origins through its transformation and advocation by Marija Gimbutas (e.g. 1982), which carried it into discussions of Germanic religion. His study

illustrates ways in which individual scholars such as Gimbutas can have a lasting impact on the shape of a field. In Hopkins' view, the textual record suggests "that a great plurality of female deities played an important role among the early Germanic peoples" and "the incomplete and often mysterious nature of the corpus may in fact attest to its accuracy" (this volume, p. 75). Nevertheless, he shows that a combination of influential scholars and resonance with changing trends in contemporary society established a theory about a Great Goddess, through which the diversity of names of Germanic female goddesses came to be interpreted in a way that diverse masculine names have not. Hopkins' study illustrates how concepts and frames of interpretation can become established in particular academic discourses, connecting better with the present of the researchers than with the sources of the past that they seek to analyze, making them a filter and a lens that may obscure more than it reveals.

Part of the history of ideas is how these determine what is perceivable in the first place. In Castrén's time, the documentation of traditional culture was commonly construed in terms of linguistic text, reflected in the materials he himself collected. Although paralinguistic features of performance and situational factors were experienced, they remained outside of documentation and the ideology of what constituted a text as the thing being documented. As documentation technologies advanced, along with the specialization within the scope of the previous, rather wide field of 'ethnography', more diverse types of source materials were preserved and could be studied, extending the factors that might be included in an investigation. This trajectory of development reached a critical mass in the performance-oriented turn, which reframed performance as a situational event rather than viewing a tradition in terms of a mechanically reproduced transcript, a turn that also transformed the associated text ideology (on this concept, see Frog 2019: §1) . Stepanova and Frog observe that the performance-oriented perspective that has become normative today is no less bounded in its thinking than was that of Castrén. They introduce the concept of a customary 'performance environment' of a tradition and explore how this can reciprocally impact performance and how people engage with it, illustrated through the feature of soundscape in connection with Karelian funerary laments. Their study highlights the constructedness not only of concepts circulated in academic discourse but also the constructedness of researchers' field of vision, what they see as relevant to consideration and what, for them, remains invisible.

Communication between fields and how they interact is often discussed abstractly, as though fields or disciplines are 'things' that can 'talk' to one another. In practice, however, this occurs at the level of individual scholars. This level can then develop a social aspect through education, training and participation in broader discourses. Lively, ongoing dialogues lead different fields to be more or less in step, keeping developments visible. Conversely, the lack of such dialogues can produce disjunctions, so that concepts may only enter discussion in one field as the other is already moving on. The history of ideas springs from individual scholarly works, not the other way around, and it is through such works that ideas cross between discussions in different fields, allowing the same concept to seem to belong to different phases in different disciplines. This issue of discussions falling out of step may also create an impediment for the flow of other concepts, theories or methodologies where these are in a hierarchy of dependence. In other words, where certain understandings must be accepted for others appear relevant or valid, they may impede communication of certain ideas across disciplines where they are out of sync. More-over, what is visible from the perspective of one discourse but nor another may also produce asymmetries in the types of comparative and interdisciplinary work being done and engage-ments with it by researchers at a social level.

Discourses primarily linked to different categories of data in comparative work may not be equally aware of the other, resulting in asymmetrical communication between them. For example, work in Germanic historical linguistics has often been out of step with Uralic (i.e. Finnic and Sámi). On one level, this asymmetry seems to be maintained in part because speakers of Uralic languages more often read Germanic languages than vice-versa.

Nevertheless, Uralic language history remains largely invisible for many if not most linguists working with Germanic historical linguistics: the relevance of looking to Uralic languages never obtained an integrated position in the discourse and thus tends to remain outside of researchers' field of vision. Germanic loans are significant for Finnic and Sámi languages, so a connection of Germanic historical linguistics to interests of researchers of Uralic languages is unsurprising. Researchers of Germanic languages, on the other hand, do not generally take interest in these loans; the exceptions tend to be particular examples that have obtained an established position in a particular discussion, such as Finno-Karelian *runo*, addressed by Willson, North Sámi *sieidi* in discussions of Old Norse *seiðr* (e.g. Parpola 2004), or South Sámi *Hovrengaellies* for containing a borrowing of the theonym *Þórr* (e.g. Olrik & Ellekilde 1926–1951: 110, 122). In this case, asymmetrical communication also means that research on Uralic languages that relates to Germanic does not necessarily feed into discussions in those other discourses. Such situations are, however, in flux, and may be impacted by, for example, trends in wanting to situate historical linguistics in relation to other areas of culture, promoting greater attention to research in relevant fields and potentially stimulating reciprocal interest.

The history of ideas is of crucial importance for understanding any discourse that is identified with a discipline, field or national scholarship. That history structures understandings of categories within it, constructs models and lenses through which source evidence becomes filtered, and also established the limits to what those naturalized to it will perceive as relevant to an investigation. Even if the drive to inter-disciplinarity in academic discourse sometimes seems to be mainly shibboleth and rhetoric, it has a consequence that more researchers are prompted to try to link their work to other perspectives, and those perspectives may enable us to adjust the lenses through which we observe our research materials and the world.

Exploring Circum-Baltic Cultures and Beyond

The diverse contributions to *Interdisciplinary and Comparative Methodologies* are woven together by a variety interconnecting interests and concerns. In keeping with the spirit of retrospective methods, most of the contributions address a *longue durée* of culture, concepts and practices under investigation. However, they reciprocally address the endurance of concepts that circulate in academic discourses. Geographically, the discussions span longitudes from Iceland to western Russia; linguistic data are taken mainly from the Germanic and Slavic branches of Indo-European and Finnic and Sámi branches of the Uralic language family. This range of cultures and languages is also intimately linked to disparities across disciplinary scholarships in their various national ecologies, which makes some of the issues of this volume more salient.

The articles gathered here are related through tight networks of thematic interconnections. Sanmark and Sukhino-Khomenko focus on social institutions, as do Stepanova and Frog in the case of lamenters, connecting further with the contributions on lament traditions by Jouste and Jugai. Whereas the lament traditions are linked to cross-cultural comparisons based on historical contacts, Germanic–Uralic language contacts are brought into focus by Schalin and Willson for Scandinavian and Finnic and by Piha for Scandinavian and South Sámi. Piha, Raninen and Sanmark all explore cultures, contacts and practices behind sites in the archaeological record. Ahola and Lukin and Hopkins discuss mythology, while Stepanova and Frog and Willson address ritual specialists who engage with unseen worlds. Several articles have a particular concern with the constructedness of categories and ways of thinking circulating in academic discourses, and a number of contributions are especially interested not just in discussing interdisciplinary methodology but also in introducing a relevant methodology and associated theories.

Interdisciplinarity and comparativism were already familiar in 19th-century scholarship: there is nothing profoundly new about them in themselves. What the present collection brings to discussion is developing new, systematic ways that these can be applied, reflexive perspectives on how academic discourse constructs our ways of looking at things, and the articles highlight the role of interdisciplinarity in

developing such reflexivity by the varieties of perspectives it may offer. The diverse contributions underscore that comparative and interdisciplinary methodologies predominantly connect with particular questions and concerns, and they remain conditioned by the particular source materials with which they engage. At the same time, the perspectives offered by individual methodologies may be abstracted to a more general framework that might be adapted to other questions and types of sources, much as the perspectives offered in individual case studies may provide a lens of analogy to reflect on other materials, categories constructed through discourse or the confines of the box, within which our thinking has become naturalized.

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Theory and Methodology for Assembly Site Identification and Analysis

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Abstract: This article presents a new interdisciplinary methodology successfully developed for the identification and detailed analysis of Viking-Age outdoor assembly sites. This methodology draws on archaeological evidence, topographic information and a wide range of written sources, from laws to eddic poetry. It is hoped this approach will inspire a new way of thinking, leading to the identification of outdoor assembly-sites in areas of the world where they are not yet known.

This article describes and examines the interdisciplinary methodology developed for the identification and detailed analysis of Viking-Age assembly (*þing* or *thing*) sites and assembly meetings. *Thing*s were the outdoor Norse assemblies, which functioned as both parliaments and courts (Modéer 1974). The methodology discussed in this article was developed in order to carry out an in-depth study of assembly sites in northwest Europe, particularly, but not exclusively, Scandinavia and the areas of Norse settlement in the west. It has proven successful for the identification of *thing* sites as well as detailed analyses of site features and landscape setting. This article focuses on the development of this methodology and its application within the specified geographical area. It is hoped, however, that researchers working with other areas, either within or outside the Scandinavian cultural sphere, such as east and south of the Baltic Sea, will consider the potential of this methodology. If applied, it could enable the study of the political and administrative organisation of these areas, detailed examination of assembly-site traits and features, and also create new inroads into the wider examination of these societies.

In a mainly oral culture, such as Viking-Age Scandinavia, there is naturally little direct evidence of law. This does not mean that law and legal practices did not exist. It is clear that such institutions were in place, only in a different form. Indeed, law and conflict resolution are key elements to a functioning society and therefore form part of all societies. This is not surprising as the significance of law – whether oral or written – for working societies has been highlighted by anthropologists since the late 19th century (e.g. Malinowski 1926). Although some of the methods used by these early anthropologists have been questioned, their research shaped the future discourse of the field. It is now recognised that the concept of law is wider than that of modern, western legal systems and also includes societal norms,

breaches of which are punished by sanctions (Fenger 1999: 52). As indicated above, Viking-Age society clearly had a well-developed legal system, which was largely enacted through a range of outdoor *thing* sites (Sanmark 2017; Brink 2004a–b).

Until the early 2000s, the study of Norse assembly sites was rather limited and very few in-depth investigations of *thing* sites had been carried out. Existing overview publications of the Viking Age contained some discussion of the major assembly sites, such as Þingvellir in Iceland or the Gulathing in Norway (Campbell 1980; Campbell & Kidd 1980: 69; Foote & Wilson 1980: 91–92; Roesdahl 1998: 268). However, these were exceptions and local *thing* sites had rarely been investigated (but see Brink 2004a–b). Some research based on the written sources was carried out in the first half of the 20th century, when scholars produced lists of *thing* sites for the local assembly districts, using late medieval court records (e.g. Bugge 1920; Taranger 1924; Wildte 1931; Nordén 1938; Turén 1939; Ahlberg 1946a–b). At this time, a few scholars discussed the traits and features of a small number of assembly sites, such as the existence of benches and other seating arrangements (Nordén 1938), but they were the exceptions rather than the norm (Sanmark 2017a: ch. 1).

A breakthrough in assembly research occurred in Sweden in the late 1990s when a new approach to assembly sites, inspired by landscape archaeology, emerged. This research was interdisciplinary in nature, using place names, written sources and archaeological evidence, and it resulted in two, rather similar, *thing* site models presented by Mats G. Larsson (1998) and Stefan Brink (2004a–b). These scholars concluded that assembly sites often had a number of typical features, such as mounds, rune stones and a location on crossings between land and water routes. Their very important work formed the starting point for the research methodology presented in this

article, which began around 2004 with the aim of exploring the significance of assembly sites in Norse society, their traits and features, as well as the activities that took place there. Together with Sarah Semple, a new integrated approach was developed, and has been continually developed as the research has progressed (see e.g. Sanmark & Semple 2008; 2010; Semple & Sanmark 2013). The main results of this work have been presented in the recent book, *Viking Law and Order: Places and Rituals of Assembly in the Medieval North* (Sanmark 2017a), as well as the forthcoming multi-authored volume, one of the main outputs of The Assembly Project, entitled *Negotiating the North: Meeting Places in the Middle Ages* (Semple et al. forthcoming). In the following sections, the details of this methodology, as well as some of the main shortcomings and complications will be examined.

Previous Assembly Research

In 2004, an overriding problem with the existing research was that it mainly focused on a very small number of sites, most of them located around Lake Mälaren in Sweden. These were also the sites with the most visible features, such as mounds and rune stones (Larsson 1997; 1998; Brink 2004a–b). Another major obstacle was that very few sites had been investigated archaeologically, and it was therefore not known what, if any, particular features were related to assembly sites. It was for this reason that a program of excavation of select assembly sites was started and some of the most securely identified *thing* sites were selected for archaeological investigation. The first of these sites was Aspa Löt in Södermanland (Sweden), where there is a rune stone with an inscription, parts of which read: 'This stone stands in memory of Œpir *on the* thing *site* in memory of Þóra's husband' (*Steinn þessi stendr at Œpi á þingstaði at Þóru ver*) (Sö 137; SRD, emphasis added; Sanmark & Semple 2004; 2008; 2010). Two other Swedish assembly sites were investigated over the next few years; first 'Arkel's *thing* site' at Bällsta in Uppland and, in 2006 and 2008 and again in 2017, Anundshög in Västmanland (Sanmark & Semple 2008; 2010; 2011; Semple & Sanmark 2012; Bäck et al. 2018).[1] In addition, assembly

sites in England, Scotland (Shetland) and Iceland have also been excavated (Sanmark & Semple 2008; Coolen & Mehler 2014; 2015)

Previous investigations of assembly sites had focused on specific features, such as '*thing* mounds', for example in Fornsigtuna (Uppland, Sweden), Gamla Uppsala (Uppland, Sweden) and Anundshög (Allerstav et al. 1991; Bratt 1999; Persson & Olofsson 2004). As part of the new research strategy, a much wider approach was developed, investigating large areas of land through topographical and geophysical surveys, followed by targeted excavation (Sanmark & Semple 2004; 2008; 2010; Semple et al. forthcoming). This approach was necessary as it was not known what features could be present at an assembly site, or the size of the areas the assembly sites covered. The approach proved to be highly successful and has revealed a range of different types of archaeological remains and, in extension, some very different types of assembly sites (for details, see e.g. Sanmark & Semple 2010; Sanmark 2017a). A few examples of these remains will be examined below.

New Methodology

One of the overriding questions prior to 2004 was how to identify a *thing* site in the landscape. This was seen as so problematic that assembly site research was almost non-existent. Using the new methodology where all documentary sources were reviewed together with archaeological evidence and topographical information, this problem was overcome and, therefore, a large number of new *thing* sites could be identified and pinpointed in the landscape (Sanmark 2009; Sanmark & Semple 2008; 2010). The written sources used include medieval documents, above all court records and the earliest surviving laws. Supplementary material was retrieved from antiquarian accounts, aerial photography, LiDAR data,[2] historical maps dating from the 17th century onwards and oral traditions. In addition – and this turned out to be a key factor – visits were carried out to as many potential *thing* sites as possible. These sites were recorded through a high-resolution digital photographic documentation, including a 360˚ view-shed, and GPS co-ordinates taken at significant features. Another key element of the research and

Figure 1. 'Kälslöt' in Hölebo hundred, Sweden. The thing *site is likely to have been located close to a farm and prehistoric burial ground within a wide flat-bottomed valley. The base of the valley is an unlikely location for* thing *meetings as it is below the 5m level and would therefore have been too marshy in the Viking Age. The thing site location is further indicated by the communication routes, such as a road that led to an 11ᵗʰ-century bridge, which is evidenced by a rune stone with the inscription: 'Ingimarr and Arnvé had this stone raised and the bridge made…' (*Ingimarr ok Arnvé(?) létu reisa stein þenna ok brú gera*) (Sö 30). Three other rune-stones come from the area, some or all of which may have served as markers for the bridge/road or the assembly site (Sanmark 2009: 219–221). (Photo: Fredrik Sundman.)*

detailed site analysis was the use of digital mapping. All collected data has been entered in a Geographic Information System (ArcGIS), together with data from National Sites and Monuments Records, and data on administrative divisions, such as provinces and hundreds (Old Norse *herað*), where old boundaries have been reconstructed as much as possible using late medieval documentary sources (such as Styffe 1911). In addition, topographic information, resources and communication routes such as water courses, rivers and roads have been included and used in the analysis. In this way, large datasets transform into visual represent-ations on maps, which can expose spatial patterns and relationships. Such detailed landscape analysis of large areas was not available to scholars of the past and has therefore opened up a new type of research. Consistent use of this method across all the diverse

geographical areas spanning Scandinavia, Scotland and the wider North Atlantic has moreover provided an invaluable tool for comparative analysis (for detailed discussion, see Sanmark 2017a; Semple at al. forthcoming).

This research has shown that a striking pattern of archaeological features and landscape settings can be attributed to *thing* sites. For the creation, or redesign, of an assembly site, it seems that a pool of features was available, from which a selection was added and presented in varying combinations. Which particular features were selected depended on a variety of factors, such as geographical area, time period and power-political circumstances (Sanmark 2017a). With this assembly site data, it has been possible to identify and, at times pinpoint, sites, although they have very few obvious features, as can be illustrated through the example of 'Kälslöt' in Hölebo hundred,

Sweden, which on first sight looks like nothing more than a large open field (Figure 1) (Sanmark 2009). Knowledge of the assembly features and characteristics has become particularly useful for the identification of *thing* sites in Scandinavian Scotland, above all on the western seaboard. This area was settled by the Norse probably from the 9th century onwards and at least in parts remained Norse-speaking for a few hundred years (Clancy 2008: 29–33, 45–46; Jennings & Kruse 2009). In this area, the written sources are virtually silent on the topic of *thing* sites and because of major political shifts over time, the administrative systems were subject to so much change that late medieval court records can rarely be used to identify Norse assembly sites. Instead, the identification of *thing* sites has been heavily reliant on Norse place names, which have often gone through a transition into Gaelic (Gordon 1963: 90–91). Through the knowledge of Norse *thing* site features and the use of GIS, potential *thing* sites proposed by place name scholars can be evaluated, and sometimes dismissed. On a few occasions, locations of lost assembly sites have been proposed in this way, although further evidence is needed to confirm these suggestions (Sanmark 2017a–b).

The identification of a large number of *thing* site features in Scandinavia and in the western Norse settlement areas led to the question of what these different features meant to the Norse people and how they were used at assembly meetings. In order to investigate this further, two main ideas were introduced. In the first instance, inspiration was taken from the approach of prehistorians, above all those researching Neolithic monumental sites. For this time period, archaeologists have no written evidence to take into account and therefore solely rely on excavated archaeology and archaeological theory (e.g. Richards 1996; Edmonds 2003). Taking a leaf from their book enabled bolder interpretations of the sites and, interestingly, these new results resonated well with my earlier work on law and assembly (see e.g. Sanmark 2010; Sanmark & Semple 2008).

The second important step in order to examine the function of the different assembly site features was to include a wider range of written sources than before. Widening the stance from court documents and early laws to include saga material describing *thing* meetings and, above all, eddic poetry, led to some very useful insights. Scholars such as Anne Irene Riisøy and Nanna Løkka have shown that the mythological eddic poetry contains significant and substantial material on law and assembly (Løkka 2013; Riisøy 2013; 2016). By applying this material to the identified sites, it has been shown that *thing* sites were sites where intricate rituals were performed. These rituals involved, for example, use of movement, such as processions, as well as props and gestures (Sanmark 2015; 2017a: ch. 4).

Potential Problems

Although clearly rewarding, the analytical approach examined in this article is naturally not without problems. Some of the main issues will be set out below together with a discussion of how these issues can be counteracted.

The first problem encountered during the research for *Viking Law and Order* was that not all types of evidence are available for every geographical area. Readers will soon become aware that the different chapters rely, to varying degrees, on different types of evidence. In some sections, conclusions are drawn from a large variety of sources, while others rely on fewer types of evidence. The varied evidence used can be perceived as a problem, but can also be viewed as a strength, since having access to a wide range of source material types has meant that at least one or two types of source material is available for a specific area. As stated above, this is seen particularly clearly in the differences between the examination of Scandinavia and western Scotland. In the absence of useful written sources from western Scotland, *thing*-site identifications have been made on the basis of archaeological evidence and place names (Sanmark 2017a: ch. 8).

A second potential problem for this methodology is the long periods of time involved in the study of *thing* sites, covering up to 1,000 years or more. The written evidence is preserved above all in documents from the 13th century onwards. In the 13th century, the traditional outdoor *thing* sites were still in use, but the nature of the meetings seems to have changed. Christianity was firmly established, and sites were gradually being moved from

thing sites with roots in the Iron Age to medieval parish churches (Sanmark 2009; 2017a). An important outcome of my work is that the various types of sources discussed here, from written to archaeological evidence, provide a striking picture with some very important shared themes, although they are not always in direct agreement. It must be made clear that the intention behind this methodology is not to explain and interpret prehistoric archaeology through late written sources, rather the different types of source materials can point to practices that, in some form, have been present for a very long time, although with ever-changing content and meaning (Sanmark 2015). It is clear that the societies under scrutiny were highly conservative and many traits of the Norse assembly system fit into a wider framework. It has been shown, for example, that traits and elements found in the much-discussed work *Germania* written by the Roman historian Tacitus in the 1st century AD strike a chord with early medieval continental laws, as well as with the later Norse laws. (Sanmark 2017a: ch. 2). This is not to say that systems were identical across time and place, or that the Scandinavian laws were fully derived from earlier continental sources. It does, however, suggest that certain traditions relating to law were very long-lived for the simple reason that they were useful, or indeed that similar traditions developed in different geographical areas. The timing of assemblies is one such example. In all areas examined, assemblies were regular gatherings held in accordance with the lunar and/or solar calendars. This is not surprising as, in the absence of mass communications, gatherings at set points of the year represented the only way of coordinating meetings of large groups of people. A range of other examples, highlighting shared traits found in sources deriving from different time periods and areas, further illustrate this point (Sanmark 2017a: ch. 2).

Assembly Sites: Changes over Time
The usefulness of the approach discussed in this article naturally depends on what aspects researchers want to focus on. It may not be particularly useful for a scholar wishing to write a political history, as the aim of the research presented here is not to try to fit the

sites into a historical framework, for example linking figures known from Icelandic sagas to particular assembly sites, as site creators or participants in *thing* meetings. Indeed, as the sites can rarely be dated in terms of their use (Sanmark 2017a: ch. 1), such an approach would be fraught with problems. What this approach and use of source materials can be used for, however, is to examine how sites change over time. Indeed, this is one the most important research results: *thing* sites were not static, but constantly changing in terms of features and therefore also patterns of use and meaning (Sanmark 2017a: ch. 1). This can be most usefully demonstrated by the assembly site of Anundshög. According to late medieval written sources, Anundshög was the *thing* site for Siende hundred (*härad*). The oldest surviving document dates from 1392 (Emmelin 1943: 110) and the last time this *thing* site is mentioned is in 1467 (Emmelin 1943: 110). The 17th-century source *Rannsakningar efter antikviteter* mentions six documents that refer to Anundshög as a *thing* site, dating from 1355 (x2), 1358, 1391, 1393 and 1437 (Ståhle 1960: 114).

The earliest archaeological evidence at Anundshög consists of the large number of hearths and cooking pits, dating from the first few centuries AD. These have been interpreted as settlement remains, but no buildings have been found so far, and these are therefore more likely the remains of gatherings (Semple & Sanmark 2013; Sanmark 2017a: ch. 5). The next datable phase is seen in the burials dating from the 6th century onwards, as well as a nearly 200-meter-long monument consisting of wooden posts, perhaps erected in the early Vendel Period (Semple & Sanmark 2013; Bäck et al. 2018). There is also a large mound and five ship settings, all presumably dating from the Iron Age (Figure 2) (Bratt 1999), as well as a rune stone from the first half of the 11th century. There is further evidence, both written and archaeological, that assembly meetings occurred at this site.

According to *Rannsakningarna*, brick fragments from the fireplace of a '*thing* cottage' were visible, ca. 18 meters north of the largest stone in the ship setting situated north of the site's large burial mound (Ståhle 1960: 114, 129). This spot was easily identified as a

Figure 2. Anundshög in Västmanland, Sweden. Aerial photograph inspected and approved for publication by the Swedish Armed Forces, October 2015, FM2015-18792:2. (Photo: Daniel Löwenborg.)

slight elevation, with large stones and occasional brick fragments protruding from the top. The excavations in 2017 confirmed that this elevation indeed contained the remains of a building with a fireplace. The building has been dated by various pieces of evidence. A charcoal sample from the floor in front of the fireplace has been radiocarbon dated to the 14th century, with a slight possibility of an earlier date in the late 13th century (1280–1330 or 1340–1400, calibrated 2σ) (Bäck et al. 2018). This date range fits in well with a ring found inside the building which dates from the Late Middle Ages, possibly the 15th century (Bäck et al. 2018; Sanmark et al. 2019). Altogether, the different types of evidence from Anundshög show that this site has been used for gatherings for more than a thousand years, even if not continuously, which illustrates the usefulness of the interdisciplinary approach examined in this article.

The long periods of time involved in this study lead to the question of the interpretation and application of the available pieces of evidence. The archaeological evidence at Anundshög suggests meetings from the beginning of the 1st millennium AD. This site is also a well-documented *thing* site in the late Middle Ages. The Old Norse noun *þing* has cognates in all recorded Germanic languages, yielding a Proto-Germanic reconstruction: the word has been argued to date from the beginning of the 1st millennium AD (Hellquist 1980: 1187; Bjorvand & Lindemann 2000: 940).[3] These pieces of evidence are not, however, sufficient to label these gatherings '*thing*s', and not doing so does not remove the importance of the archaeological evidence.

Potential complications of the long time periods at play in this methodology can moreover be illustrated by the wooden monument at Anundshög. This monument has been interpreted as an enclosure around the assembly site, reminiscent of the *vébǫnd* [Old Norse 'holy bands'] mentioned in several 13th century sources, such as *Egils saga* and the Norwegian *Frostathing Law*. The word seems to have referred to ropes attached to the rods of an enclosure demarcating an area of sacred space. Such enclosures are also traced in early

medieval sources from the European continent (Green 1893: chs. 57, 63; F I: 2; Brink 2002: 89–91; 2004a: 205; Sanmark 2017a). In view of the seemingly striking similarities between these features, the wooden monument is indeed likely to demarcate an area of sacred space, but bearing in mind the huge gap in time between the monument and the written evidence, there is no need to apply the term *vébǫnd* to this.

Concluding Remarks

The new methodology has taken a long time to develop, but the gains are enormous, and without it, this large assembly study could not have been carried out. It has enabled comparisons across large geographical areas and long periods of time, from prehistory into the historic period. In this way, attention has been drawn to the fact that assemblies are not a feature that is exclusive to literate societies. This notion is not new, but law and assembly represent a rather underexplored area of research in many geographical areas across a wide range of time periods.

So far, the methodology has solely been applied to areas in Scandinavia and of the Norse westward diaspora. However, Scandinavians also mobilized to the east and had tremendous impacts on cultures and societies across the Baltic Sea throughout the Iron Age. To my knowledge, there has been no study of, or indeed search for, Norse *thing* sites in these areas. One reason for this must be differing research traditions – and in terms of Russia, the political situation in the Soviet Union – rather than the assembly system never having been introduced into the Norse settlements in the areas east and south of the Baltic Sea. Medieval written sources, and the odd runic inscription, do indeed point to the practice of law and assembly here (Sanmark 2017: 15–16). Applying this methodology in these areas offers a potential means for considering whether (or not) Scandinavian-type assembly sites became established, for example, in connection with places like Staraya Ladoga or Timerëvo during the Viking Age, or already in the 6th-century spread of Scandinavian culture to the Åland Islands or Luistari in Finland. More generally, the methodology is a multidisciplinary framework that, at a more abstract level, is organised to identify constellations of culture-specific features in diverse types of data that will collectively point to a politically central site of a local society. The culture-specific features discussed here specifically target Scandinavian-type assembly and gathering sites. Nevertheless, the framework of the methodology can also be viewed flexibly: the features brought into focus can be adjusted to the culture under investigation and the types of source materials and research infrastructures available. This was seen above in adaptations of the methodology for investigating sites in Sweden in contrast to in Scotland, where relevant early medieval written sources are lacking. Such adaptations can also be extended to a broader range of features to enable the identification of significant sites of non-Scandinavian background. Such sites found in different cultural contexts could of course then be compared and contrasted with Scandinavian *thing* sites, but still more interesting would be comparison and contrast of the predictive constellations of features for identifying such sites with the methodology, their variation, and what these might tell us about the societies in question. It is therefore hoped that this article can inspire a new way of thinking, leading to the identification and study of assembly sites in areas where they are not yet known.

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Notes
1. The excavations at Anundshög continued in late 2018.
2. LiDAR is a remote-sensing technique used to survey the surface of the earth and is commonly used to produce high-resolution maps.
3. E.g. Old Saxon *thing*, Lombardic *thingx* and maybe also Gothic *þeihs*.

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*Thegn*s in the Social Order of Anglo-Saxon England and Viking-Age Scandinavia: Outlines of a Methodological Reassessment

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Abstract: The article addresses the possibilities for a methodological reassessment of the phenomenon of the thegn*s in England and Scandinavia in the late Viking Age (ca. 900–1066). The historiographical overview reveals that the* thegn*s have never been examined for their own sake, and that the recent developments in source studies open new methodological prospects in anthropological research. The case study of the* thegn*s hopes to outline some of them.*

If the period from ca. 1800 to the 1950s could be described as the 'age of grand narratives', to a certain extent promoted through European National Romanticism and the search for 'origins', then recent decades might be termed 'a period of revision of received wisdom'. Calling it, in Thomas Kuhn's terminology, a 'scientific revolution' or 'paradigm shift' is, perhaps, going too far, but earlier frameworks are undoubtedly being constantly revised. At the close of the 20th century, there appeared important *ad fontes* works, many of which sought to re-evaluate established terminology in order to challenge and clarify existing concepts of the medieval social order (e.g. on the much-debated problem of feudalism, see Abels 2009). Closely intertwined Nordic, 'Germanic', and Viking Studies followed suit. The present article is positioned on the trajectory of such re-evaluations. It concentrates on a particular empirical case that arguably deserves a reassessment, the case being the phenomenon of the *thegn*s (also spelled 'thane' in Modern English) in late Anglo-Saxon England and Viking-Age Scandinavia (cognates of the Old English/Old Norse *þegn* are also recorded in continental Germanic languages). When the available evidence is pieced together, it is impossible to deny the *thegn*s their historical role: both in England and Scandinavia, literate people considered this role important enough to give it space in their limited media (be it parchment, stone or an oral skaldic stanza).

Understanding categories behind medieval vernacular terminology and associated texts is a fundamental research problem for a number of disciplines. The concept of a *comitatus* as a social institution characteristic of the early medieval pre-state tribes, variously termed in the Germanic languages (Lindow 1976: 10–84), reached a virtual research stalemate until recently reassessed by Petr Stefanovich, who in his 2012 book applied it to the Old Russian lexeme дроужина (*družina*) ['(military) retinue'] (Stefanovich 2012), proving its terminological potential (at least in Slavonic studies). Doubts about the often-postulated prevalence of blood feud and hence the meaningfulness of the term *wergild* [lit. 'man price'] in early Germanic and later Scandinavian societies have been expressed (Sawyer 1987). Even before then, Alexander Murray, it seems, overthrew the hitherto prevailing notions of an agnatic kinship among the early Germanic peoples (Murray 1983). The very pages of this journal saw a dispute between Rudolf Simek (2010), questioning the concept of *vanir* as a family of Nordic gods, and Clive Tolley (2011), and Frog and Jonathan Roper (2011), who critiqued Simek's scepticism. Many further examples of such debates and reassessments could be enumerated – *holmgangr* and *óðal* in the Nordic studies, *hall*

and *bretwalda* in the Anglo-Saxon spring to mind, to name but a few. Yet despite the variety of philological, theoretical, and analytical tools brought to bear on these questions, a current, coherent methodology for addressing issues of this type remains wanting.

It seems that academic discourse currently displays a tendency to inadvertently turn certain historical lexemes, such as *družina*, *barbari*, *barones*, *víkingar*, *væringjar*, or indeed *þegnas*/*þegnar*, into somewhat ideal, self-sufficient concepts, often as analytical constructs, that are then retrospectively projected back onto the culture in question. As a result, such constructs may converge with the actual usage in the sources and receive a status of a 'common knowledge'. With those problems in sight, the global goal of this paper is, by bringing a particular case study to the fore, to suggest a possible methodology with which those may be overcome, or at least compensated for. Readers are kindly asked to bear in mind, though, that before them is only an illustration of this methodology in ongoing research, rather than final historical conclusions about the *thegn*s.

Sketching **Thegn***s' Presence in the Sources*

*Thegn*s' importance in both England and Scandinavia is difficult to overestimate and is highlighted by an abundance of sources referring to them, and the role *thegn*s play therein. Thus, reporting the nadir of the Old English monarchy, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* complains:

> ⁊ com Æþelmær ealdorman þyder ⁊ þa westernan þegenas mid him, ⁊ bugon ealle to Swegene ⁊ hi gisludon. Þa he ðus gefaren hæfde, wende þa norðweard to his scipum ⁊ eal þeodscype hine hæfde þa for fulne cyng [...] (*ASE*, manuscripts C, D, E: *s.a.* 1013 AD; Whitelock 1979: 246.)

> *Ealdorman* Æthelmær came there, and with him the western *thegn*s, and all submitted to Swein, and they gave him hostages. When he had fared thus, he then turned northward to his ships, and all the nation regarded him as full king [...] (Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own.)

Few doubts exist concerning the position of a late Anglo-Saxon *ealdorman*, a provincial civil governor and military leader, appointed by a king (see e.g. Molyneaux, 2015: 66–67; 111–112). But who were those 'western *thegn*s' who also played an essential role at one of Northern Europe's crucial points in history by unanimously changing their allegiance and paving the way for a new, albeit short, English dynasty that in the closing years before the Norman Conquest arguably reoriented the Anglo-Saxon culture and politics towards the North, imparting them with a 'Nordic' flavour?

When answering this question, most anglophone authors rely on a contemporary text, traditionally called *Geþyncðu* ['Ranks' or 'Dignities'], which maintains:

> And gif ceorl geþeah, þæt he hæfde V hida fullice agenes landes, [kycenan], bellan ⁊ burhgeat, setl ⁊ sundornote on cynges healle, þonne wæs he þanon for þegenrihtes wyrðe. And se þegen þe geþeah, þæt he þenode cynge ⁊ his radstæfne rad on his hirede, gif se þonne hæfde þegn, þe him filigde, þe to cynges [utware] V hida hæfde ⁊ on cyninges sele his hlaforde þenode ⁊ þriwa mid his ærendan gefore to cynge, se moste siððan mid his foraðe his hlaford aspelian ⁊ his onspæce geræcan mid rihte, swa hwar swa he þorfte. (*Geþyncðu*, §2–3: Liebermann 1903: 456; Rabin 2015: 68–69.)

> [...] if a layman prospered so that he had fully five *hides*[1] of his own property with a church and kitchen, a bell-house and fortified gate, a seat and an appointed role in the king's hall, then he was worthy of a *thegn*'s rights ever after. And if a *thegn* prospered so that he waited upon the king and rode on his business among his retinue; then, if he had a *thegn* who followed him, who had five *hides* for the king's service, and had waited upon his lord in the king's hall, and had gone three times on his business to the king, then [his *thegn*] afterwards might represent his lord in various obligations with his initial oath and handle his litigation, wherever he must.

Such a clear-cut explanation is rather appealing to those modern encyclopaedic views that favour monosemantic definitions. However, it poses a great many problems: no instance of such upward social mobility is known for sure; this is but one unique source's testimony, and *unus testis non testis est* ['one witness is not a witness']; the author of this text was established in 1950 to be Wulfstan, archbishop of York (d. 1023), a famous homilist and political figure with a markedly strong interest in the moral 'deterioration' of his age; *Geþyncðu*'s genre is hardly legislative but

rather polemic (see a further elaboration below) – to name but a few concerns. Moreover, Wulfstan's statement contradicts other sources that either undermine *thegn*s' connections with the monarchy or directly oppose them to it (such as in the quote from the *ASE*, where the *thegn*s abandon their supposed lord). At first glance, Wulfstan's vivid description finds good support in at least 188 diplomas from the years 900–1066 that attest land grants to the *thegn*s (see below):[2] faithful servants to kings, who sit on their councils, get rewarded with estates, where they surely take over existing manor complexes or build new ones. But if one looks beyond the West Saxon perspective, a different picture emerges. It has not escaped scholars' attention that the *Domesday Book* records hundreds of *taini* (a Latin rendering of *thegn*) – according to Michael Costen's (2007) calculations, about 820 (*sic*!) of them in Somerset, Wiltshire, Devonshire, and Dorset alone – whose positions seem hardly distinguishable from those of top-tier peasants – something bizarre for the accepted monosemantic understanding of the term. Thanks in large part to the multicultural background, local differences might equally worry an aspiring student: thus, the so-called *Regulation of Thegns' Guild in Cambridge* (Whitelock 1979: 603–605) meticulously describes the circumstances in which blood feud should ensue, something strictly prohibited by the royal legislation of the period.[3]

Compared to England, far fewer individual *thegn*s are known east of the North Sea, yet their regional prominence, reflected in 46 known 10th–11th-century Danish and Swedish commemorative runic inscriptions, is still clear in the landscape today. In Södermanland, for instance, one reads:

> **styrlaugʀ : auk : hulmbʀ : staina : raistu : at : bryþr : sina : brau(t)u : nesta : þaiʀ : entaþus : i : austruiki : þurkil : auk sturbiarn þiaknaʀ : kuþiʀ** (Sö 34.)

> Styrlaugr and Holmr raised the stones next to the path in memory of their brothers. They met their end on the eastern route (*Austrvegr*, i.e. in Russia), Thorkell and Styrbjörn, good *thegn*s.

Perhaps, because a *Geþyncðu*-like text is absent from the Old Norse corpus and due to the vagueness of the relevant runic material

and skaldic verse, for almost a century, while agreeing on the *thegn*s' local prominence, scholars have been arguing about whether Scandinavian *thegn*s bore any similarity to their Anglo-Saxon counterparts and served in kings' military retinues or assumed the status of provincial aristocrats / petty chiefs / clan leaders. To this must be added the much weightier arguments archaeologists wield in Scandinavian academia when it comes to the pre-medieval period. The most recent examination of the matter was undertaken within an archaeological survey (see below) and aimed at reconciling the conflicting views: Danish and West Swedish late 10th-century magnates voluntarily chose to join Kings Sweyn and Cnut's raids in England, where they adopted the titles of *thegn*s (though not the lexeme itself) and brought them back to Scandinavia. This was done in line with a long-standing tradition of outlining the process of early medieval state building in Scandinavia, in which *thegn*s have frequently played one of the pivotal roles, being interpreted as the agents and officers of the new political units that were forming.

The attention in the sources as well as the supposed level of influence *thegn*s' probably exerted within Anglo-Scandinavian society/-ies warrant us to apply to these people a modern sociological concept of a [lay] *elite* (< Fr. *élite* [lit. 'chosen person']) or an echelon thereof. For the purpose of the present discussion, I engage the definition of an elite adopted by the French historians Laurent Feller and Régine Le Jan:

> tous ceux qui jouissent d'une position sociale élevée [...] [ce qui signifie] la détention de la fortune, du pouvoir et du savoir ainsi que la reconnaissance par autrui (Feller 2006: 6).

> all those who enjoy a high social position [...] [which means] the possession of wealth, power, and knowledge as well as recognition by others.

Unlike original native terms like *nobilitas*, *proceres*, *optimates*, *æþelboren* or *góðir menn*, which could at times demonstrate a judgemental character, this word *elite*'s emotional and moral neutrality gives it flexibility and scientific applicability.

Interpreting the *thegn*s' position within the social environment has always been regarded as a tool to paint an intricate portrait of early

medieval communities in England and across the North Sea. Among the many questions, understanding the *thegn*s' standing in the socio-political orders allows us to broach the subject of power distribution in Anglo-Scandinavian polities. The debate in the Scandinavian historical community, briefly alluded to above, serves as a prime example. If one agrees with proponents (mostly historians and archaeologists) of Svend Aakjær's idea that, in the runic inscriptions' *thegn*s, we see kings' retainers, then one advocates a top-down power structure in which rulers establish their control by asserting their presence through dependent agents. Should one take the side of his critics (mainly runologists and philologists), a bottom-up hierarchy emerges, where the power resides with the wealthy local 'clan' leaders. This is just as relevant for the Anglo-Saxon situation. On the one hand, historians working on the development of kingship normally treat the *thegn*s from the charters as a certain extension of the court in the provinces (e.g. Larson 1904: 103); on the other, *Domesday* scholars emphasise the *thegn*ly class' territorialisation and embeddedness in the social fabric (e.g. Hollister 1962: 64–65). But the important role of the *thegn*s and their place in society were studied in the aforementioned 'age of grand narratives', and the subsequent progress in source criticism, methodology, and overall discourse calls for revisiting the received wisdom, as well as bringing the national and disciplinary foci of research into a dialogue.

In the narrow sense, this paper aims at outlining a feasible methodological solution to this case study, as well as its historiographical background and state of current research. Besides casting new light on the social and political arrangements of the Viking Age and their interconnectedness, the suggested approach may contribute to scholarly knowledge by finding a wider application in (pre-)medieval studies and, possibly, beyond. However, on a larger scale, the suggested solution might also, where sufficiently large corpora exist, provide an applicable tool for investigating socially constructed categories linked to historical terminology in other languages and periods. This application of the methodology can be extended to not only the stock of an indigenous

lexis in a given language or a group of related languages (see e.g. Lindow 1976), but also linguistic loans, which in turn can help to form a dynamic view on contact patterns or mechanisms, social systems and their variation throughout recorded history.

The State of Research
Before proceeding to the methodological case study, I will briefly review the extant scholarship on the topic, highlighting some of its inner controversies that, I believe, advocate a reassessment. Furthermore, since *thegn*s have, as far as I have been able to explore the relevant works, not been researched for their own sake, there currently is no similar comprehensive historiographical overview. Naturally, it is hardly possible to cover all relevant monographs, book chapters and articles in just one paper, so only the most important 'milestone' works shall be mentioned below. Because of the methodological character of the current article, multiple related texts had to be left out for the sake of brevity. Paralleling the geographical distribution of the source material, the following historiographical sketch is organized through the developments of discussions in scholarships of different languages.

Anglophone Historiography
The first British 'scientific' examination of the *thegn*ly phenomenon perhaps began with the opening volume of the *Constitutional History of England* by William Stubbs (1874), where the word *thegn* appears a minimum of 160 times. Stubbs' description largely stems from Wulfstan's treatises. In a nutshell, his view is that *thegn*s used to be warrior members of the royal *comitatus*, but that this group split by about the 930s: some of its members absorbed the upper crust of the free population, while others consumed the former aristocracy by blood and became the new 'vassal' nobility:

> On the one hand the name is given to all who possess the proper quantity of land whether or no [*sic*] they stand in the old relation to the king; on the other the remains of the older nobility place themselves in the king's service. (Stubbs 1874: 156.)

For a commoner to become '*thegn*-worthy', he needed to "acquire five hides of land, and a

special appointment in the king's hall, with other judicial rights" (Stubbs 1874: 155). The idea of social mobility is of prime importance to Stubbs: "[...] there is no impassable barrier between the classes: the *ceorl*[4] may become *thegn*-worthy, and the *thegn*, *eorl*-worthy" (*ibid*.: 81), and he briefly mentions that a *thegn*'s *wergild* was 1,200 shillings (*ibid*.: 157).

Stubbs' condensed overview has probably served as the primary point of departure for generations of English-speaking historians.[5] For example, whereas Stubbs was content to mention *thegn*'s 1,200-shilling *wergild* in just one sentence, when Henry Chadwick wrote his *Studies on Anglo-Saxon Institutions* (1905), he dedicated almost 40 pages to proving this statement arithmetically (Chadwick 1905: 76–114), and ever since then this idea has acquired the status of a common knowledge. In order to prove these claims, Chadwick came up with "one of the most insightful and influential essays on the Anglo-Saxon monetary system" (Naismith 2015: 143) that served as a "prelude to the main business, which was using the data in law codes to shed light on aspects of Anglo-Saxon society" (*ibid*: 146). At the same time, Chadwick also laid the foundation for the tradition of studying kings' *thegn*s from the charter evidence, and was echoed by his American contemporary Laurence Larson (1904).

Medievalist Rachel Reid (1920) joined the discussion and offered an original view on the problem at a time when the ongoing debate had been developing for a few dacades surrounding the continuity/discontinuity between the Anglo-Saxon and Norman periods. In a 38-page article, she brought extensive Anglo-Saxon, Norman, and Scottish sources from over a millennium and postulated that kings' *thegn*s were officials endowed with the judicial rights of *sake* and *soke*, *toll* and *team*, and *infangenetheof*[6] "and duties akin to a sheriff's" (Reid 1920: 172). After 1066 (the Norman Conquest), these privileges were appropriated by Norman barons, but the institution's essence remained the same, so "the Norman clerks who identified the king's thane with the baron must have had regard chiefly for the one thing that they had in common" (Reid 1920: 173). By the end of the 20th century, this idea of institutional continuity, it seems, had not received universal acceptance. It was, nevertheless, adopted by one of the leading *Domesday* scholars, David Roffe, who, contrary to Reid's focus on the judicial privileges, spotlights the *bocland*-type of land tenure (Roffe 1989; 2000: 28–46). Roffe's ideas have seen some support (Reynolds 1992), but his and Reid's rather dogmatic assertions have been sharply criticised both by students of the law (Hudson 2012: 58–62) and by specialists in lordship (Baxter 2001; Baxter & Blair 2006).

Sir Frank Merry Stenton developed his predecessor's connection of the post-Conquest feudal gentry to the *Domesday taini* (an idea was much later promoted by John Gillingham, esp. 1995) and Norman barons – with the royal *ministri*, though both strata enjoyed a 1,200-shilling *wergild* "irrespective of the duties which he might happen to owe to his lord" (Stenton 1932: 130):

> It is more than probable that many thegns of the eleventh century were country gentlemen, with no special aptitude for war. In most cases, the estates of a thegn of 1066 must have come to him by inheritance, and not by the gift of a king or any other lord. But his obligation to military service represented the ancient duty of attending a lord in battle. (Stenton 1932: 119.)

Following Stubbs, Stenton further explained the differences between a *thegn* and a *ceorl* also through their relations to military service: *thegn*s served in the army due to their rank, whereas *ceorl*s reported to the army due to alleged old Germanic custom (Stenton 1932: 116–118).

Three decades after Stenton's monograph, Charles Hollister, working with the Wulfstanian texts and the *Domesday Book*, opposed part of his interpretation that concerned marshal duties (Hollister 1962). He claimed that, in late pre-Norman England, military obligation stemmed not from one's rank but depended upon the so-called 'five-*hide* principle', which predicated army service for one man from every five *hides* of land, regardless of one's status. Characteristic of many works, Hollister uses the word *thegn* at least 216 times in his 170-page book (an impressive number, given that it is not his main focus), but not once does he actually explain what a *thegn* is. And the

notion of a Germanic 'nation in arms', inherited from Stenton[7] and his Victorian precursors,[8] was later largely debunked by Richard Abels, who, elaborating on the preceding work of Eric John (1960), conclusively argued that Anglo-Saxon military institutions had always been rooted in lordship and land tenure (Abels 1988).

A major breakthrough came in an article by Henry Loyn, who applied philological methods to the Latin–Old English translations of the late 800s and tackled the semantic evolution of the term *thegn* in Old English:

> [...] as late as the end of the ninth century, a *thegn* was still, customarily, one who served a lord in a personal capacity. By the time of the Norman Conquest *eorls* and *thegns* were the two recognized social divisions between freeman and king. (Loyn 1955: 543.)

In Britain, the most recent assessing of the *thegn*ly phenomenon was undertaken by Ann Williams (2008). Unlike many, she dedicates the whole of her nine-page introductory chapter to setting the scene and establishing the position of a *thegn*. Her study may be seen as emblematic of the British historiographical empirical tradition of dealing with the subject. For one thing, Williams would rather describe a *thegn* than suggest a definition, and, for another, she would restate some of the established views: the division of the free populace into *ceorlas* and *þegnas*, and upward mobility by virtue of land ownership and possession of military ammunition (Williams 2008: 2, 4).

Despite this well-developed scholarship, there persist some contradictions that, it may be argued, are difficult to eliminate within the prevailing paradigm. The historiographic 'elephant in the room' is the apparent lack of synthesis. Preceding paragraphs exemplify only some of the various terms employed to describe the phenomenon of *thegn*s (aristocracy, retinue/*comitatus*, vassal, class, nobility, official, et al.), as well as the multitude of approaches (through *comitatus*, military history, land tenure, legal status, *Domesday* social patterns, etc.). Such variance clearly stems from discrepancy between the sources, but it seems that no coherent mechanism of explaining such dissimilarity has been suggested, save the oft-repeated claim for *wergild* as the 'missing

link'. That at least some kings' *thegn*s, as attested by the charters, were members of the social elite cannot be denied. Neither can the *Domesday* evidence of the numerous petty *thegn*s be discarded. But how does one bridge the gap between these enormously different groups? Viewing them as strata of one and the same social group requires a further explanation. Hollister's generous equation of the *Domesday taini* with the peasantry, in contrast to Senton's identification of the former with the gentry, also inadvertently reaches a theoretical deadlock: if *thegn*s and *ceorls* alike performed military duties on the same principle, why did the former allegedly enjoy a more advantageous social position?

The 'whiggish' notion of upward *ceorl*-to-*thegn* social mobility hinges on a somewhat problematic source. As already mentioned, its oft-reiterated form stems from but one authority: Archbishop Wulfstan of York. Sadly, in assessing *Geþyncðu*, its first modern publisher, Felix Liebermann, might have done a great disservice to subsequent research by putting *Geþyncðu* in his edition of the Anglo-Saxon laws, presumably on the basis of its opening phrase (Liebermann 1903: 456–458). More and more, it has been realised, to quote Andrew Rabin, that "many of the practices it describes are unsupported by contemporary evidence" (Rabin 2015: 67). It might be argued that a very similar passage can be found in an actual legal code, *Norðleoda laga* ['The Laws of the Northern People (presumably the Northumbrians)']. The problem is that this legal code was also edited by Wulfstan and therefore cannot be treated as wholly independent evidence. Wulfstan's relation to these documents is also why it took Chadwick almost 40 pages to prove the prevalence of a 1,200-shilling *thegn*ly *wergild*: though such rate is attested in the laws on multiple occasions, only one legislative piece actually connects it with the *thegn*s – the so-called *Mircna laga* ['The Law of the Mercians'], which is also attributed to Wulfstan (Rabin 2015: 71). Even after Wulfstan's authorship has been established, these texts are normally the 'go-to' reference material in general works (e.g. Molyneaux 2011: 266–267; O'Brien 2011: 86). The problem with such a point of departure is twofold: *a*) even within the Viking

Age proper, these are somewhat late texts; *b*) one author's testimony should not be uncritically taken as historically accurate, especially in view of Wulfstan's strong personal interest in orderly societal organisation and the turbulent epoch in which he was writing. To polemise: Wulfstan's assertions might well not be as representative as one would wish, and potentially a politically-driven construct. As Ryan Lavelle said of Wulfstan, "social mobility was a long-standing concern for conservative churchmen" (Lavelle 2010: 63). Naturally, nothing of this was known at the time of Stubbs and Liebermann, and so these developments in source criticism call all the more for a comprehensive revision of the common interpretations of Anglo-Saxon social practice, especially given the scepticism on the function of *wergild* some scholars have expressed (Sawyer 1987).

In sum, very seldom have the Anglo-Saxon *thegn*s been the direct interest of academic inquiries, often being reduced to a subsidiary role in one theoretical argument or another. This shortcoming sometimes reads a bit like a Picasso – the same object has been addressed in fragmented pieces which occasionally contradict each other to the point that they become incompatible. Surprisingly, Anglophone scholarship sometimes reveals little knowledge of the occurrence of the lexeme *þegn* in Old Norse in the same period, and this may be characteristic of its prevalent "interests in England's particularities", in the words of Ryan Lavelle (2010: 64).

Scandinavian Historiography
In Scandinavian academia, the discourse has been very different but no less intricate. For a while, scholars showed little interest in the lexeme *þegn* in Old Norse, and treated it just like any other entry in a dictionary. For example, when analysing Norwegian laws in 1890, legal historian Ebbe Hertzberg understood it as "[...] fri og uafhængig udøver af alle en fuldtberettiget persons rettigheder" (Hertzberg 1890: 266) ['a free and independent practitioner of all rights of a person, fully vested with liberties'], deriving this meaning from the oldest Norwegian law codes (*Gulaþingslǫg* and *Frostaþingslǫg*).

Everything changed when, in 1927, Danish historian and archivist Svend Aakjær published his ground-breaking article. He drew attention to the frequent appearance of the Old Norse *þegn* and *drengr* in runic commemorative inscriptions throughout the "old Danish kingdom", and concluded that, "though the meaning of these various expressions shows through but vaguely, there seems nevertheless little reason to believe that they should only stand for 'man' pure and simple" (Aakjær 1927: 9). Aakjær postulated that *thegn*s and *dreng*s were members of the kings' *comitatus*, known in Scandinavia as *hirð*. Noticing that Old English also featured words *thegn* and *dreng* (the latter being a loanword from Old Norse), he extended their meanings, borrowing them from Stubbs' and Chadwick's interpretations. Curiously, though Aakjær never mentions Reid's article, his comparative methodology is very similar; another parallel between the two authors is that neither was a specialist in the early medieval period, and both specialised in the High Middle Ages.

Not everyone has agreed with Aakjær's interpretation. His greatest opponent on this matter, the Danish runologist Karl Martin Nielsen, pointed out that, looking at the runic material as it is while not having *comitatus* in mind, it is impossible to render the terms in question as the kings' retainers. Moreover, Nielsen and his German colleague Hans Kuhn argued forcefully that the empirical observations on skaldic poetry (the earliest datable Old Norse coherent texts) do not support Aakjær's interpretation. Thus, Kuhn found that only six of the 72 examples he identified of the lexeme *þegn* in skaldic verse were used as a *Rangbezeichnung* ['designation of rank'], distinguished as a combination of a noun for 'man'/'warrior' (*maðr*, *rekkr*, *þegn* and *drengr*) with a possessive pronoun or *genetivus possesivus* of another noun rather than forming a kenning (Kuhn 1944: 105–106, 110–111). Nielsen conceded that *dreng*s could have become chieftains' followers, but this certainly was not the case by default, whereas the *þegnar* were the 'backbone' of the Viking-Age Danish society, the well-to-do *bœndir* (Nielsen 1945). Today, however, Martin Syrett characterises such "notions of a free independent class of farmer-chieftains" as "outdated", and calls the "speculation concerning the independent status

of the late Viking-Age freeman" romantic (Syrett 1998: 249, 252).

By and large, these two standpoints still hold in the Scandinavian historical narrative up till now. Scholars with a thorough philological background hold fast to the Norse literary sources that do not support Aakjær's claims. Such, for example, was the opinion of John Lindow (1976), who agreed with Kuhn that in the Viking Age the word *þegn* did not convey the sense of a social rank. Today, this view is supported by Judith Jesch (e.g. 2013) in her comparison of the runic inscriptions and the skaldic poetry. On the other hand, some historians have seen Aakjær's argument as conclusive and supported it from a theoretical perspective. Niels Lund, for instance, aimed at reconciling the two opinions, suggesting that "peasant leaders, such as Alle at Glavendrup [...] with an armed force of their own" had to acknowledge the growing power of the Danish monarch, thus becoming, "at least in theory, members of his *hird* and, thus, his *thegns*," even if they never were his retainers in the narrow sense (Lund & Hørby 1980: 62). It has also been pointed out that philologists generally tend to overlook place-name evidence: apart from two instances in south-eastern Norway, Sweden has preserved a minimum of 12 toponyms *Tegneby*/*Tängby*/ *Tägneby* (from Old Swedish *ÞægnabyR*) (Elgqvist 1947: 113), which can hardly mean 'settlement of men/people' (Strid 1986: 305). This dichotomy between the philological and historical approaches was first noticed already by Martin Syrett (1998: 249).

Some prominent runologists joined Aakjær's stance. Erik Moltke, a towering authority on the Danish runic material, wrote that since the earliest appearance of the word *þegn* in runic inscriptions was:

> associated with *lið*, host, warband or the like, we may reasonably assume it denoted a kind of military status. *Thegn* is then a title of rank [....] Private individuals do not seem to have had *thegns*, so it must have been the ruler's prerogative to appoint *thegns* (and certain *drengs*). We thus come to the same conclusion as Svend Aakjær – or not far off it. (Moltke 1985: 285–286 [1976: 235–236].)

Moltke's expertise has been keenly accepted by some archaeologists both in Denmark and Sweden. In a 1980 monograph, Klavs Randsborg interpreted runic *þegn*s as agents of the Jelling kings who granted 'fiefs' to their vassals in exchange for various services. Rune stones in his explanation in a way served as titles to land, since such land-tenure praxes were hitherto absent from the Scandinavian societal practice and required further support (Randsborg 1980: 29–44). To Randsborg, this is an important point in his argument for the state formation in Viking-Age Denmark: the elite position of the king's followers in the localities speaks for a strong central power.

In settling the opposing views, Carl Löfving, a Swedish archaeologist and lawyer, took Randsborg's views further. One of the main arguments of his doctoral thesis (2001), a product of nearly two decades of research, is that, at the turn of the millennium, Götaland was governed and influenced not by a ruler from Uppsala but by the Danish king, who from 1018 to 1035 was King Cnut. Bearing in mind that he was also the English monarch, and in England (including in Cnut's own laws) kings' followers were known as *thegn*s, Löfving maintains that this interpretation should also be accepted for the Scandinavian toponymical and runic material (Löfving 1984; 2001: 79–102). The rune stones' *þegn* inscriptions, in this explanation, therefore mark both the authority the Danish monarchy wielded and the social support it could recruit. One has to give Löfving credit as apparently the first to try to put those rune stones in their proper historical context. Peter Sawyer (1988: 34), describing politogenesis in Sweden, followed in Löfving's footsteps and also identified the runic *þegn*s as 'under lordship' of Cnut. The idea of borrowing the sense of a title for the pre-existing lexeme *þegn* from Old English was, however, briefly criticised as unlikely by Eric Christiansen, who pointed out that, "to Nordic intruders, they [*thegn*s] can only have appeared as local bosses, district defenders; which is how they appear in the skaldic verse of ca. 1030 onwards [...] not [as] officials or royal retainers, but sometimes of their opponents" (Christiansen 2002: 335).[9]

Closely resembling the situation in Britain, the debate between Aakjær's opponents and supporters has to a certain extent overlooked the source work. A few examples will suffice.

Aakjær, as one would expect, relied on secondary English works, but even his most dedicated challengers have not noticed that a weighty chunk of his argument was invalid already in 1927. To substantiate his point, Aakjær had to prove that *dreng*s were a subclass of the Anglo-Saxon *thegn*s, so he retreated to a text known as *Constitutiones de Foresta* ['Forest Regulations'], which he interpreted as the forest law of King Cnut and combined this with the evidence from 13th-century Northumbrian charters as retold by Frederic Maitland. However, *Constitutiones de Foresta* was written in the 12th century by an anonymous Norman clerk who probably did not even speak English and has nothing to do with Cnut (Harris 2014).[10] Even though Felix Liebermann pointed this out as early as 1894, Aakjær mentions *Constitutiones de Foresta* as a reliable source in his last published piece (Aakjær 1962) and thus was likely unaware of the argument. In another case, Aakjær's 1927 article takes an erroneous reference to an original source for granted: he defines *þegngildi* as the "fine paid to the prince for having killed his *thegn* (a free man in the king's service)," and refers to *Eiðsivaþingslǫg* 1, 28 ['The Law of *Eidsivathing*'] (1927: 11). However, the paragraph in the actual source runs as follows:

En ef þionn mannz etr kiot i langu fastu. þa er hann utlægr. oc skal uera i uallde skapdrottens hans er a. huart hann uill løysa hann undan þui giallde. halft þægngilldi kononge. oc kaupa honum sua larønzuist. eða hit ælligr. at hann fare af larønde brot. (*Eiðsivaþingslǫg* 1, 28; Halvorsen & Rindal 2008: 28.)

And if a man's slave/servant eats meat during the long fast, then he is an outlaw, and his lord, who owns him, should decide whether he wishes to release him from punishment [by paying] half a *þegngildi* to the king and [thereby] buying him the right to stay in the country, or lets him leave the country.

Though Aakjær's definition of *þegngildi* is generally correct, *Eiðsivaþingslǫg* 1, 28 reveals little about the nature of a *þegngildi* and certainly says nothing about murder exculpation. My initial suspicion of fact juggling proved incorrect: Aakjær, it turns out, copied this passage from Johan Fritzner's dictionary (Fritzner 1867: 774) without referring to or checking it, which, granted, was standard practice of scholarship at the time.[11] These faults, of course, do not undermine the historical importance of his article: after all, he was the first to raise the question of how Old English and Old Norse handle the same social term, and an allowance for the state of the methodology at the time must be made.

To recap, the heated discussion has, to a large extent, not revolved around the interpretation of the sources *per se* but around a retelling of an interpretation. Note that in various discourses (Lund, Löfving, Randsborg, Sawyer), mirroring the British counterparts, *þegn*s themselves were not the object of study but served as yet another methodological element in the general sketch of early medieval state building in the North. Martin Syrett was probably the first to subtly identify the likely stimulus for such a persistence:

That historical approaches have tended to link the thegns and drengs of the runic inscriptions with the growth of a royally sanctioned aristocracy derives largely from the necessity of positing some royal officers somewhere to account for the development of the Danish state in the tenth and eleventh centuries. As Peter Sawyer put it, 'kings must have had agents ... not only to lead local defences but also to gather royal resources'. (Syrett 1998: 268.)

Aakjær's explanation was simply too good for the "state-formation addicts", as Christiansen (2002: 335) pejoratively called the disciples of this school of thought, to subject it to a critical source-study test: theory prevailed, the cart was put before the horse.

All these circumstances once again call for a methodological return *ad fontes* and predicate the necessity for a reassessment.

Methodological and Source Overview
To break free from at least some of the constructions of the discourse described above, a wide range of options are available. In my opinion, the three cornerstones among them are as follows:

1. Context analysis and methods from Corpus Linguistics
2. A discriminant approach, chronological analysis, particular attention to inner features

3. Approaching the historical reality behind a fleshed-out concept

It is my belief that such methodological devices have a wider range of application in historical examination of actual social phenomena, and in fact elements of this triad have indeed been used in previous research in one way or another. For instance, context analysis was used by Lindow when he went through most of the relevant skaldic stanzas and then generalised his conclusions. An example of an approach through corpus linguistics is observable in an article by Jane Roberts (2000), in which she searched the *Thesaurus of Old English*, a massive project hosted by King's College London and the University of Glasgow, for Old English words for nobility, and she analysed their usage in the language. Similar methodology was employed by Petr Stefanovich in his reassessment of the Old Russian *družina*: instead of relying on the most telling evidence, he meticulously went through nearly all extant and available source evidence, organized by chronology, region and genre. The major but essential advancement proposed here lies in the 'triangulation' of these methods, i.e. bringing elements together in one investigation. Combining these techniques is aimed at a multidimensional presentation: we will probably be able to follow the evolution of both an actual social phenomenon and its reflection in a given language, thus abandoning the 'synthetic' picture. In doing so, I hope my undertaking can serve as a *sui generis* case study, and, should it prove to be successful, this methodology could receive a wider application in the broader anthropological studies. I do not propose that applying this methodology will realise the Rankian dictum about reconstructing 'how it really happened' (*wie es eigentlich gewesen*), much cherished in the positivistic school of thought. At best, the methodology enables us to approach the reflection of 'how it really happened' as preserved in the extant sources.

Context Analysis
The first cornerstone on the list above is *context analysis*, i.e. examination of the environment to which an object of study belongs, coupled with quantitative methods from Corpus Linguistics, introduced in the

following section. The linguistic presupposition for contextual analysis seems to reside with an enquiry into the etymology of the lexeme *thegn* in order to conceivably reconstruct its possible Proto-Germanic semantics. *Thegn* and its cognates are present not only in Old English and Old Norse, but also in Old High German and Old Saxon, as well as in Scots (though here it is almost certainly a borrowing).[12] Knowledge of a word's origin may help us understand the subsequent development of the term in the different societies in historical times, though it is worth bearing in mind that such reconstructions always remain hypothetical. Consequently, etymology *per se* should not be used as an absolute tool in historical research, as is warned by Hans Kuhn (1944: 120).

The general methodological premise of the subsequent study should manifest itself in a fundamental alteration of the hierarchy of the research procedures. Contrary to previous approaches, rather than taking for granted the definition of the lexeme *þegn* as used in current academic discourse, an investigation that seeks to bring a historical phenomenon behind this word into focus should first and foremost critically review the contexts of the lexeme's occurrence in the sources. Only then may definitions or concepts arrived at inductively be brought back into dialogue with conventional views in scholarship and the sources which have dominated those definitions.

With Old English, the need for such an approach has already been alluded to above: because Wulfstan's *Geþyncðu* and similar texts offer, at first sight, a very straight-forward definition of what an Anglo-Saxon *thegn* was, modern explanations follow that definition closely. Nevertheless, an assumption that all uses of a word by all users in all contexts will mean the same thing or refer to the same category contradicts both common sense and current sociolinguistic theory. It has not escaped historians' attention that the word *thegn* can describe different social realities with observable gaps between them:

> Among the thegns, at one end of the scale, were men who possessed estates in many shires acquired through generations of royal service, and, at the other, were men indistinguishable from land-holding freemen

except by their rank. (Barlow 1988: 6; cf. Reid 1920: 170.)

The reasons for such discrepancies are not hard to come by and include such factors as regional peculiarities in both language and social conditions, social progress through history, potential variations in register and/or type of discourse, etc.

What is proposed instead is that we turn to less loaded sources, using context analysis to deduce one or multiple definitions and to trace the changes these definitions had most likely undergone in relation to regional peculiarities and chronological evolution. Should the results more or less match Wulfstan's formula, proving its validity, the archbishop's description can be integrated into the case, though every unique detail therein should still be taken with a pinch of salt.[13]

Unlike in England, Old Norse authors did not leave us detailed definitions of who was considered a *þegn* in their society. The only definition-like stance is to be found in the early-13th-century *Skáldskaparmál* ['Language of Poetic Art'] section of *The Prose Edda*, attributed to Snorri Sturluson, where it is stated that *Þegnar ok hǫlðar, svá eru búendr kallaðir* (*Skáldskaparmál* 81; Faulkes 2005: 106) ['Freeholders are called Thanes and Yeomen' (Brodeur 1916: 234)]. This laconic and hardly illuminating phrase being the only relevant historical definition, scholars have often tended to take instead the interpretation of Old Norse dictionaries as the point of departure for subsequent investigations (e.g. see: Aakjær 1927: 4; 16; Nielsen 1945: 112; Strid 1986: 301–302; Syrett 1998: 247–249; et al.). The dictionaries' renditions could be summarised as follows (in order of frequency) (see also Fritzner 1867: 774; Cleasby & Vigfusson 1874: 732; Jónsson 1931: 637):

1. A free-born man, man in general
2. A monarch's subject
3. A husbandman, good man
4. A lord's servant

Unfortunately, two hidden dangers can easily delude a scholar. One is that none of these dictionaries actually use the much earlier runic material, which is probably why, in different editions of the runic inscriptions, *þegn* is rendered as 'man', 'warrior', 'yeoman' or left untranslated. The other is that it is not always clear which connotation is applicable in each particular case. Some instances are transparent, for example in the Norwegian alliterative legal formula *þegn ok þræll* ['*thegn* and *thrall*'] *þegn* stands in an opposition to a *þræll* ['slave'] and should be interpreted as 'free-born'.[14] For instance, *Gulaþingslǫg* ['The Law of *Gulaþing*'] asserts compensation for injuries for both the 'free' and 'slaves':

> Aller eigu sarbøtr iamnar þegn oc þræll. Nu ef maðr Særer þræl mannz. þa scal hann hallda upp føðzlo við hann meðan hann liggr í sarom. oc verclaunum ollum við drotten hans. oc lækníngar kaupi. (*Gulaþingslǫg* 215; Eithun & Rindal & Ulset 1994: 129.)

> All have equal right to compensation for wounds, a thrall, as well as a thegn. If a man wounds another man's thrall, he shall provide victuals for him as long as he lies wounded; he shall also [pay] leech money and compensation to the master for loss of labor. (Larson 1935: 149.)

On the other hand, however, in skaldic poetry, due to its metrical constraints and linguistic registers, the meaning can be rather elusive, since it is part of the poetic equivalence vocabulary rather than used to distinguish a social category *per se*. Granted, types of equivalence category and associated constructions (cf. Kuhn's concept of a *Rangbezechnung*) could potentially offer insights into aspects of a word's significance: patterns of verse use likely reflected the perception of the category, to which the lexeme *þegn* pertained (at least in the period of the genesis of the skaldic art). Finally, though it has been noted early on that, in Old Norse, *þegn* can denote both a male person in general and a monarch's subject in particular, few attempts have been undertaken to explain this development, especially since neither of these meanings are attested in other Germanic languages.

Corpus Methods

In order to avoid at least some of the theoretical perils and offer a possibly new reading, methods of Corpus Linguistics are proposed. Corpus Linguistics is an approach developed in the late 1960s and made ever more efficient today due to advances in computer software and mass digitalisation. The underlying premise of this

field is that large-scale analysis of a given language's collected corpus should (at least in theory) minimise a researcher's bias or interference.

Previously, scholars researching the early medieval period lacked such corpora for their respective ancient languages. To borrow the words of Judith Jesch:

> Most dictionary-makers, whether dealing with living or dead languages, have an enormous body of material on which to base their definitions, and have to be selective. [...] Historical dictionaries can further restrict the material through the sources they use [...] (Jesch 2013: 78.)

Research of primary sources made a great leap forward at the end of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st: devoted teams of linguists and philologists have compiled such corpora for both Old English and Old Norse that have been digitised and made them accessible to the general public:

- *Dictionary of Old English* (DOE) is an on-going project, first conceived back in 1968 and developed by the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto. As of 2017, the entries for letters *A–G* have been published (letter *H* is at present available online only). Though the dictionary itself is far from completion: as of 2009, the team released the DOE Web Corpus which is a database of "at least one copy of every surviving Old English text"; "as such, the DOE Web Corpus represents over three million words of Old English and fewer than a million words of Latin" (DOE). This allows researchers to conduct lexical surveys already now.
- *Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog – Dictionary of Old Norse Prose* (ONP) is a similar enterprise started by the the Arnamagnæan Commission in 1939 and taken over by the Department of Scandinavian Research at the University of Copenhagen in 2010. The first volume appeared in 1995, and in the years 2005–2008 "all of the unedited dictionary citations [were made] available on the Internet" (ONP), thus making possible searches in the entry index (though the creators warn that the current stage of the project is still preliminary).
- The Skaldic Project Database, developed by Tarrin Wills and Hannah Burrows at the University of Aberdeen, is an electronic database of all known (and currently edited) skaldic poetry that began as a digital workspace for editors of the *Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages* publication series (2009–present).

These databases enable research to reach a qualitatively new level, allowing an in-depth search and providing a catalogue of all mentions of a given word throughout the respective corpora.

The initial search of the DOE, ONP, and The Skaldic Database[17] has yielded the following numbers: in Old English before ca. 1150, the word *thegn* appears 1,793 times, with its related and compound lexemes including a further 314 entries (Table 1). The figures for Old West Norse before ca. 1550 are 237 and 137 respectively, to which are added the results for the Old East Norse languages (Old Danish[18] and Old Swedish), not indexed in the databases above: 4 and 9, 21 and 3 respectively (Table 2). Finally, supplementary data have been taken from the texts in continental Germanic languages, Old High German and Old Saxon, which feature at least 73 and 77 cognate words (*theg(a)n/deg(a)n* and their derivatives) respectively (Table 3), predominantly from the 9th century.[19] The relevance of continental lies, first of all, in a general linguistic comparison, and, secondly, it provides additional material for substantiating the etymology of the lexeme *þegn,* since these texts are fairly early yet seemingly independent of either Old Norse or Old English usage. However, despite their number, their value for the sheer historical analysis of the feasible social relationships is largely undermined by the religious and poetic nature of most of these texts. (N.B.: the figures do not reflect the actual number of unique occurrences, as many can be found in one and the same text but different manuscripts or fragments thereof).

To conclude, a final immense aid is the Scandinavian Runic-Text Database, created in 1993–1997 by Lennart Elmevik, Lena Peterson, Henrik Williams et al. of the Department of Scandinavian Languages at the University of Uppsala (Peterson 1994). According to their log, the first public version was launched online in 2001. Today, version 3.1 is available for download, with the latest

Table 1. The word thegn *in the Old English corpus.*

Spelling variant	*þegn* and its inflected forms, compounds and related lexemes	*þegn* and its inflected forms	Spelling variant	*þegn* and its inflected forms, compounds and related lexemes	*þegn* and its inflected forms
þegn	849	649	*ðegn*	646	596
þegen	216	188	*ðegen*	66	57
þægn	50	50	*ðægn*	14	9
þægen	6	5	*ðægen*	3	3
þeign	4	4	*ðeign*	22	21
þægign	1	–	*ðægign*	–	–
þein(g)	31	26	*ðein*	4	3
þen	169	161	*ðen*	26	21
TOTAL	**1326**	**1083**	**TOTAL**	**781**	**710**

Table 2. The word þegn *in the Old Norse corpus.*

	'Old Norse' (Old Icelandic + Old Norwegian)			Old Danish	Old Swedish	TOTAL
	Prose	Skaldic verse	Eddic poetry[15]	4 (*þæghn*; 1432–1511)	21 (*þäghn*; ca. 1220–1386)	
þegn	136 (ca. 1200–1543)	88[16] (ca. 900–1300)	13 (date uncertain)			**253**
þegn-compounds	136 (ca. 1225–1542)	1 (*þegnskapr?*)	–	9 (*thæghngjald*; 1241–1515)	3 (*þiængs gæld, *þäghns bani, brödhtäghn*; ca. 1220–1300)	**149**
TOTAL	**272**	**89**	**13**	**13**	**24**	**411**

Table 2. The word theg(a)n/deg(a)n *in continental Germanic languages.*

	Old High German: *Hildebrandslied* (ca. 840); Otfrid von Weissenburg (ca. 860s); *Ludwigslied* (881); Notker the German (ca. 950–1022)	Old Saxon: *Heliand* (ca. 800–850); glosses on Prudentius' *Psychomachia* (ca. 1000s)	TOTAL
'thegan'	46	30	**76**
'thegen'	4	–	**4**
'thegn'	–	43	**43**
'degen'	2	–	**2**
'degan'	4	–	**4**
'thegan'-compounds and related lexemes	17 (*theganheiti, thegankind, theganlicho, druttthegan*)	4 (*theganlîc, theganscepies, theganskepi, suerdthegan*)	**21**
TOTAL	**73**	**77**	**150**

update being from 19th January 2018. The database contains records of at least 46 mentions of *thegn*s on the Viking-Age Danish and Swedish rune stones ca. 970–1050 (Table 4). Three exceptions to this chronology exist. The famous Glavendrup stone's (DR 209) dating is extremely convoluted (Thrane & Nielsen 1998), but due to allegedly heathen references it is usually placed before the 960s, as is the Gunderup stone (DR 143), whereas Åker stone 3 (DR 372), in contrast, belongs to the years 1050–1150. Also, two inscriptions (DR 129 and DR 150) and one coin (DR M94) have been excluded from this list due to the corruption in their preserved condition. Finally, "there are two certain records of the personal name *Þægn* in Södermanland and 13 in Uppland" (Strid 1986: 302),[20] and this fact should be further researched in collaboration with the specialists in onomastics.

Table 4. The word thegn *in runic inscriptions.*

Country	Province	Number of inscriptions	TOTAL
Denmark	Jutland	10	**17**
	Skåne	4	
	Lolland	1	
	Fyn	1	
	Bornholm	1	
Sweden	Västergötland	18	**29**
	Södermanland	8	
	Småland	2	
	Östergötland	1	

Whereas highly specialised and poorly attested vocabulary (such as already-mentioned *vanir*) may allow detailed evaluation of each and every example of the word, examples of many such terms, *þegn* among them, are so numerous that reviewing them all in like manner would be impractical. The brief overview above reveals, first, that this would be too strenuous a task,[21] and, second, that it might not produce an expected pay-off. As with plenty of Old Norse and Old English linguistic units, prevalent mentions are found in: *a*) late saga literature that, unlike the theoretically archaising laws, might represent medieval usage; and *b*) Old English religious prose, to a certain extent dominated by Ælfric of Eynsham (d. ca. 1010), who "maintains his focus [...] assiduously on enduring and important spiritual matters" (Amodio 2014: 130). Since these sources, in spite of their abundance, are not as illustrative of social realities of the Viking Age, this limiting factor calls for a discriminant approach with a particular chronological emphasis.

Discriminant Approach
The sheer volume of the assortment above (2,668 hits in all corpora) calls for a discrete and balanced approach, and a separation of the primary sources from the secondary ones underlies the suggested study just as in any other anthropological undertaking. In this particular case, Old English laws and diplomas, prose secular texts, and the *Domesday Book*, and Old Norse place names, runic inscriptions, older skaldic verse and the oldest provincial laws are believed to belong to the former category and therefore should be examined in their entirety. In contrast, Old English religious texts, secular poetry, and Old Norse medieval royal legislation, sagas and eddic poetry fall into the latter category and may rather be subject to a more selective analysis. Nevertheless, though the proposed methodology advocates for a possibly maximal inclusion of *all* available Old English and Old Norse vernacular sources, due to the overwhelming volume of the material, secondary sources require a more nuanced treatment for the sake of manageability. It seems only logical that the most instructional of them ought to be treated in a similar way to the primary ones – i.e. assessed in full. Less telling attestations, especially should they be

found *en masse*, may undergo a randomised selection (for example, manual picking of every tenth occurrence, or similar) to create a representative yet manageable corpus. Here the study can also benefit from a collaboration with linguistic research of 'distant reading'. This is a relatively new method, pioneered by the Italian literary scholar Franco Moretti (2013), who suggested that understanding literature is possible not only through reading individual texts, but by aggregating and processing massive data thereof with the aid of computational methods. Alternatively, one could turn to the minimal context the databases provide for the search: the brief verbal surroundings that accompany each hit (e.g. the DOE Web Corpus provides the sentence in which a lexeme occurs and sometimes the preceding and following sentences). Conceivably then, the list of results could be briefly skimmed through during the initial analysis, and all examples where the usage appears to diverge from common patterns could be separated for a more in-depth review.

Having offered the solution to the challenge of the volume of the sources, we are still left with the problem of distinguishing the primary from the secondary sources. Traditionally, when conducting social inquires, early medieval historians show marked, somewhat 'positivistic' preference for the following texts as the most representative:

1. Whenever possible written in vernacular, if there are any, or employing vernacular terminology, for it is often believed that Latin lexis might obscure the actual social circumstances of the period[22]
2. Of secular, normative and/or documentary nature, that is to say customary law, royal 'doom books', capitularies, land titles, land property surveys, and the like

To a certain extent, this choice is not without justification, and, when identifying the *primary* sources for the current study, I suggest beginning with similar criteria but conjugated with a strictly chronological principle. For this reason, for example, *Gulaþingslǫg*, though recorded in the 13th century but hypothetically retaining some archaic layers (note, however, the debate between Elsa Sjöholm and her opponents[23]), seems more representative for the Viking Age than the Norwegian *Landslov*

['The Law of the Land'], issued at the instigation of King Magnus VI (r. 1263–1280) between 1274 and 1276 (Agishev 2015). This is also why Scandinavian Viking-Age rune stones, older skaldic poetry and place names have been categorised here due to their apparent contemporaneousness with the period under examination.

In this connection, as stated above, Latin narrative texts, even when meeting the criteria for the primary sources, pose something of a methodological dilemma. On the one hand, they are indeed abundant, and they frequently belonged, and were produced in, similar or even the same social environments – hence they should of course be taken aboard the study. On the other hand, in line with John Kemble's assertion, they resist the corpus approach presented above owing to their lexical variance. Though we can be relatively positive that the normal rendition of the Latin *minister* was the Old English *thegn* (see: Loyn 1955), the opposite is far from being universally the case: on the whole, Latin translations from Old English show a great deal of instability, rendering *thegn* as *tainus*, *minister*, *optimas*, *proceres*, *nobilis*, *comes* et al. (cf. Thacker 1981). Word choice might vary even within one individual text. For example, where other manuscripts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* unanimously mention *thegn*s, manuscript F (ca. 1100) has *quidam perdives* for *an þegen* in 465 (Baker 2000: 21), *nobiliores* for *godan ðegenas* in 1010 (*ibid.*: 102) and *primi Occidentalium Saxonum* for *ealle ða westernan ðegenas* in 1013 (*ibid.*: 106). In short, this variability requires a certain degree of caution in dealing with the Latin sources, especially those that are post-Conquest, due to an erosion of the object of study of sorts. When it is conceded that Old English *thegn* used to be an 'umbrella term' for any member of the lay elite (cf. Roberts 2000) and therefore enjoyed multiple Latin equivalents, then a thorough analysis of the vernacular sources is required before turning to those in Latin. The same holds true for the Scottish evidence, first pioneered by Reid (1920). There can hardly be much doubt that this material preserves some older traits from the society the lexeme *þegn* was borrowed from (either Norse or Anglo-Saxon), but it is often challenging to discern them from medieval usage and later influences, not to mention the local peculiarities and language of composition. All in all, Latin and Scottish sources should perhaps be treated in a similar way to Wulfstan's works: discreetly and continuously checked against the vernacular evidence.

Much of the criticism of the state of research laid out above has to do with the exclusion of the manifold additional sources, called here *secondary*. Numerous details and insightful pieces of evidence can be found therein. On the one hand, they are perhaps more informative of the ways the societal composition was actually perceived by its various members, from the high clergy, such as Ælfric, to the anonymous saga-writers. On the other, logically connected to the previous surmise, they might question the acceptance of the views on the social structures, imposed by legislators, should the actual sources present alternative pictures (see above). Hence, 'secondary' as they may be, they ought to be included in the study. At the same time, as elucidated by the case of the Wulfstanian texts, no information warrants being taken at face value, so when being processed, all sources must be checked against their provenance in spirit of the Weibull brothers, which in turn calls for breaking them into categories of one kind or another.

Many a study with large sets of data necessitates various groupings for its data. Organising principles may vary from region to region, period to period, field to field and depend on the type of records, scribal material, provenance, genre, notions of authorship, preservation, circulation in, and indigenousness to, a given culture, as well as numerous additional criteria. One of the arbitrary descriptive patterns for the Old English and Old Norse literary sources is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Possible categorisation of Old English and Old Norse sources.

Parameter	Value	
Language of composition	*Vernacular*	*Latin*
Discourse type	*Secular*	*Religious*
Type of composition	*Prose*	*Poetry*
Society the source describes	*'Germanic'*	*Mythical/foreign*

Applying this subjective scheme to the sources does not necessarily impose an evaluative hierarchy, it merely assists in the assessment of the clues they yield in relation to their types. One can expect that, for instance, the secular and prose *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, written in Old English and covering historical events in England, should be regarded as more suggestive of an actual society than, say, the eddic poem *Rígsþula* which, though also composed in a vernacular, retells the 'mythological' origins of a similar society. That being said, both sources present answers to scholarly questions, but the questions themselves must be essentially different, and this notion must be accounted for in the actual historical research. In this case, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is perhaps more illuminating of the everyday language used to describe the contemporary society, whereas *Rígsþula* apparently highlights the symbolic categories through which a community perceived itself.

Chronological Analysis

Of paramount importance is *relating the described sources to a timeline*, which for our purposes has been framed twofold. Due to the arbitrary nature of establishing dates for a period such as the Viking Age, and in order to treat the subject in its proper historical contexts, the study cannot avoid employing sources from earlier and later periods, though this ought to be done with great caution. This is especially true for the Old Norse laws: written down in the 13th–14th centuries, they purport to be a codification of the earlier legal tradition, but assessing how much of their material actually dates from before 1100 remains a dodgy problem (Brink 2013).

The methodological danger in this connection has been described above: a tempting prospect of projecting the later information onto the earlier epochs. Nowhere is it more evident than when dealing with the Anglo-Saxon sources. Figure 6 demonstrates the chronological distribution of the mentions of *thegn*s in the Old English legislative texts ca. 690–1066.

Easily observable is the prevalence of the younger pieces in this selection: 43% of all mentions are concentrated in the fifty years before the Norman Conquest. Most of our

Table 6. The word thegn *in the Old English laws ca. 690–1066.*[24]

Date	Royal codes	Non-royal codes (recorded ca. 1000–1025)	Private compilations	TOTAL
690–900	3	–	–	**3**
900–975	10	7	–	**17**
978–1012	11	2	–	**13**
1012–1066	10	6	9	**25**
TOTAL	34	15	9	58

knowledge about *thegn*s' legal status is therefore of late origin, a point which seems to have been underestimated by many historians. One could argue that this proportion correlates with the overall chronological preservation of the Old English corpus, hence such a distribution is to be expected. To this may be countered that, first, the Alfredian legislation (late 9th century), despite its extensive volume, bizarrely contains but a single explicit reference to the *thegn*s (Liebermann 1903: 126), and, second, that the later asymmetry is largely the effect of Wulfstan's legislative activity (be it his own unique texts or the remastering of supposedly older customs). Indications exist that elevation and spread of the *thegn*s as a socially elite group chronologically coincide with the elaboration of its features in the legal codes. For instance, King Æthelstan's (r. 924–939) legislation stipulates for the first time ever that king's *thegn*s act in the judicial capacity in the courts and also as 'officials' charged with the authority to provide shelter for persecuted criminals (Liebermann 1903: 168, 171) – at the same time, Æthelstan's diplomas are exceptionally well-witnessed by the royal *ministri*, their overall number known being 127, which is an absolute record (Keynes 2002: Table 39). It seems likely that Wulfstan's personal interests in the orderly society alone might not explain the aforementioned chronological disproportion, perhaps, his attention to the *thegn*s was a response to some actual social shifts (see also below). Whatever the cause for the numerical skew in Figure 7, the bottom line is that projecting the later evidence onto an earlier period needs meticulous argumentation.

Attention to Inner Features

Closely linked to the chronology of the sources is the problem of their provenance, genre and circulation in society. The Anglo-Saxon kings' law codes seem to be the easiest to tackle, as

we are usually aware of their promulgators and the circumstances of their appearance. It is much harder to establish the nature of the so-called 'private compilations' and non-royal legislation. As a matter of fact, they contain just as much relevant evidence, but a great many details for contextualizing the sources are wanting. We often know very little about who wrote them down, when and why.[25] The discriminant analysis referred to above suggests a careful examination of each source's credibility. Particular emphasis should be placed on recent developments in source criticism advanced by philologists and linguists.[26] The same holds true for the Old Norse sources: the formulaic and poetic nature of the skaldic verse must always be considered and given due weight when observing the Nordic *þegn*s' position. Two examples can illustrate the case in point:

> Þegi þú, Þórir!   Þegn est ógegn;
> heyrðak, at héti   Hvinngestr faðir þinn.
> (Hharð *Lv* 3.)

> Be quiet, Thorir! You're an unreliable man (*þegn*); I heard that your father was called Hvinngestr ('Thief-guest'). (Gade 2009: 45–46.)

In this stanza, King Harald *harðráði* uses the word *þegn* among the variety of poetically equivalent words for 'man' in order to meet alliteration with *þegi* and *Þórir* required by the meter, and simultaneously to rhyme with *ógegn*. Did Harald mean that Þórir was an unreliable 'man' in a general sense, or that he was unreliable in a more specific sense as a 'retainer/warrior'? The second instance is in the *Hǫfuðlausn* (ca. 1023) by Óttarr *svarti*, where *þegn* again rhymes with *gegn*:

> Gegn, eru þér at þegnum
> þjóðskjǫldunga góðra
> haldið hæft á veldi
> Hjaltlendingar kenndir. (Ótt *Hfl* 20.)

> Trustworthy one, you hold fittingly onto the power of good kings of the people; the Shetlanders are known to you as your thanes. (Townend 2012: 739.)

Unlike in the previous stanza, here the meaning seems more transparent: Martin Syrett (1998: 262) and Judith Jesch (1993: 168) comment that the sense conveyed here is that of a 'vassal' or 'subject' (Syrett prefers the former, Jesch the latter). However, Syrett also remarks that the lexical choice "may have been conditioned not simply by its semantic content but also by the necessity of finding a term to alliterate with *þér*," and that "had the verse been composed in either the first or third person rather than the second, then phrases such as **mér at mǫnnum* or **honum at hǫlðum* might have been equally acceptable with an equivalent semantic force" (Syrett 1998: 262). These observations, naturally, do not destroy the value of these strophes for the aims of the suggested study, but they nevertheless must be taken into account. On the other hand, just as with the case of the 'secondary' sources, the skaldic verse sheds light perhaps not on the hypothesised social structures *per se*, but on the shifting connotations a lexeme could acquire in its changing cultural environment. It is very possible that both King Harald *harðráði* and Óttarr *svarti* consciously chose *þegn* not only for the sake of meter, but for the overtones and morphing senses it conveyed.

Last but not least, the *local peculiarities* of the region under study need to be observed: neither England nor Scandinavia were anything like socially or culturally unified entities, especially the Nordic lands. Though England was indeed politically united by the West Saxon dynasty by 954, this never meant a societal levelling throughout the new country. For example, the *Domesday Book* attests that shires west of the Danelaw were almost totally devoid of *sokemen*, and the free peasantry (*liberi homines*) made up less than 10% of the western counties' populations; in the West Saxon territories proper and their dependencies annexed before the Great Heathen Army's invasion in 870s, only a few enclaves contain small percentages of such a free population (Darby 1977: 61–94). These differences, of course, have a direct bearing on the suggested research, as there are some records (e.g. the *Domesday Book* itself) from the Danelaw that speak of *thegn*s, and it is methodologically hardly warranted to explain them with the West Saxon texts' aid alone.

Scandinavian sources also need to be meticulously analysed against their regional background. The most obvious dissimilarity is associated with distinctions between the three Nordic kingdoms. Norwegian and Icelandic manuscripts contain the overwhelming majority

of the literary mentions of *þegn*s and provide the most enlightening context, although, they are all of a medieval origin. In contrast, Denmark and Sweden seem to have lost this term in their day-to-day language rather early on, but it is here that the late Viking-Age rune stones commemorating certain *þegn*s are to be found. Comparing their distribution with the Swedish *Tegneby/Tängby/Tägneby* poses further questions:

> Does the absence of *þægnaʀ* in the Upplandic runic inscriptions imply that these warriors were not *svear* by origin? What was the difference between a *þægn* and a *rinkr*?[27] Is it possible that the term *þægn* was originally used in the *Götarike*, believed to have been subdued by the *svear* sometime in the late Iron Age? (Strid 1986: 305).

After all this has been done, the final comparative stage – a search for probable parallels and influences between the two societies, separated (or, perhaps, united?) by the North Sea – can be commenced.

Approaching the Historical Reality behind a Fleshed-Out Concept

An often-recurring distress in historical research is trying to relate a social or cultural category, identified in the literary sources, with its actual existence and operation in the society of a particular time in terms of factual praxes. Not infrequently are scholars forced to "draw wide conclusions from detailed case studies" (Lavelle 2010: 63) for the lack of 'tangible' data – Lavelle's example from the quote being that of *la mutation feodale*.[28] At times this shortcoming can be remedied by adding essentially alternative material. Exemplary are archaeology as well as further ancillary historical disciplines (epigraphy, heraldry, numismatics, onomastics, prosopography, etc.) that can 'put flesh on the bones' of a literary phenomenon, thus offering case of a 'happy marriage' between 'theoretical' and 'empirical' approaches (cf. Chadwick 1905). Fortunately, *thegn*s are of this sort. After the conceptual framework for the term *thegn* and its evolution in time has been elucidated, the study may endeavour to augment one of the possible social realities behind the literary texts. This venture might be achieved by subjecting an inherently different type of source – the Anglo-Saxon charters and the *Domesday Book* – to a descriptive statistical analysis. Their distinction from all other sources lies in their documentary nature: the charters' (that is, royal diplomas') primary function was that of a land title[29] and whatever the purpose of the *Domesday Book* originally was (for discussion, see e.g. Roffe 2000: 1–16), the Great and Little *Domesday* and their 'satellites' do present a nation-wide land survey, even if their data omit a lot of complexities. As such, these sources are, at first glance, not particularly instructional, as their information is rather repetitive and seems conceptually mostly uniform. On the other hand, such information permits adding a practical dimension to the cultural phenomena; for example, we can inquire about the extent of royal land donations in favour of the kings' *thegn*s, or investigate the presence of the *Domesday taini* in the English localities, both West Saxon and Scandinavian.

Anglo-Saxon England has left us at least 1,875 Latin and vernacular documents, collectively referred to as charters. A full catalogue was put together in 1968 (Sawyer 1968), and later the Centre for Computing in the Humanities at King's College London used it to create an online version, which first appeared in 2007 as a beta version (Electronic Sawyer). It is by far the fullest and most fundamental annotated list of the extant Anglo-Saxon documents and an essential tool for any student of the Anglo-Saxon charters. The earliest specimens date from the late 7th century and these initially served as land titles: kings would record donating estates to the Church and (later) to laymen in their service, the majority of which were styled *thegn*s. As time progressed, other types of documents appeared: wills, marriage agreements, lease contracts, etc., though the single largest portion of the extant corpus is still made up of solemn diplomas (1,060 originals and/or cartulary copies). This is an astonishingly rich material that permits a thorough *descriptive statistical analysis*: how, where, how often and in what amounts was land granted to kings' *thegn*s? Though this approach has been at least partially practiced before (e.g. Keynes 2005 [1980]; Lavelle 2011; Snook 2015), as far as I am aware, diplomas *en masse* have so far not been used a source for social history. The application of such

methodology may cast a lot of light on the *thegn*s' economic standing and relationships with the monarchy (Sukhino-Khomenko 2016). Ideally, a full prosopographical dimension, i.e. studying the careers and lives of all individuals of whom we have documented knowledge, could contribute considerably to our understanding of the composition of the late Anglo-Saxon lay elite. However, reasonable doubts persist as to whether this voluminous task alone, which has sometimes been a topic for entire PhD theses (see e.g. Senecal 1999), will not require a whole team of specialists.

It is especially intriguing to compare these statistics against similar *Domesday* data. A preliminary search has returned hundreds of hits for *thegn* in its Latin form *tainus* (pl. *taini*) in the *Domesday Book*, and looking at the pair of similar information sets can prove beguiling. This, of course, does not mean that there lived only a few hundred *thegn*s at the time of the inquest: in most cases, the word is used in the plural form, and few *thegn*s' names are actually recorded. Regretfully, to my knowledge, existing *Domesday* databases are not designed to search for anonymous persons of whom only their social status is known (Palmer 2016), and that precludes 'old-school' manual searching patterns, although this task is nevertheless much facilitated by modern computer technologies.

Two vital methodological shortcomings must nonetheless always be borne in mind during this exercise. First of all, chronologically, the charters and the *Domesday Book* provide very different evidence – the diplomas demonstrate a dynamic picture; the *Domesday Book*, in contrast, shows merely a static one. Second, the *Domesday Book* was written 20 years after the Conquest by and for the Norman government. Hence, we are dealing largely with a rather Norman, not an Anglo-Saxon, perception of society.

Moreover, even a brief overview of the charter and *Domesday* evidence raises a suspicion that, though both sources belong to a documentary type, they might essentially concern starkly different social groups. The royal diplomas addressed to the royal *ministri* recorded kings' grants to a rather narrow (see the statistics in Keynes 2002) group within the monarchs' inner circle, with the average

donation being about 9.47 *hides* (1,819 *hides* recorded in 192 authentic and/or based upon authentic diplomas) (Sukhino-Khomenko 2016: 279–280). As mentioned in the introduction, numerous *Domesday taini* (colloquially, today they are usually called 'minor *thegn*s') therein seem to have enjoyed only limited economic prosperity: for example, according to Michael Costen's (2007: 65) figures, in Wiltshire, an average tenure of an anonymous *thegn* in 1066 was 1.39 *hides*. This has usually been explained as a sign of the *thegn*ly group's diffusion and erosion, a process which led to many of its members to amalgamate with the non-aristocratic strata while still preserving an elevated legal status, expressed in the *wergild* rate (cf. the opinions of Reid and Barlow above). However, a possibility must be entertained that, similarly to Old Norse *þegn*, the Old English cognate possessed more than one meaning, attested by typologically different sources, which makes this comparison all the more needed and warranted. Practically speaking, a question of why two groups that were so economically incomparable came to be referred to by one and the same term requires further contemplation. As said, the 1,200-shilling *wergild* is often proclaimed to be the uniting factor (see Stenton's opinion above), though it is hardly imaginable that a petty tenant would possess adequate resources, comparable to those of a king's man, to secure such demanding legal privileges (cf. Sawyer's scepticism on the functioning of the *wergild*). Other criteria have also been suggested: particular types of land ownership/tenure or, maybe, military service (Costen 2007: 62; cf. Maitland 1921 [1897]: 164). What seems yet to have received a methodological articulation is the possible notion of symbolic capital. Kings calling the recipients of land grants their *thegn*s might have implied some certain types of personal bonds that entailed military service for the donees. But what the country-folk might have instead observed in their everyday routines is that their affluent secular lords, clothed in lavish garments and armed with expensive weapons, referred to themselves as [king's] *thegn*s. Therefore, it could be hypothesised that, to the populace, any holder of such symbolic objects was essentially a *thegn* and a member of the lay elite. Unexpected support

for this argument may come from none other than Wulfstan, who not only continuously stressed the importance of the royal service, but, in *Norðleoda laga*, went so far as to deny a *thegn*ly *wergild* to a *ceorl* who owns "a helmet and a coat of mail and a gold-plated sword" (Rabin 2015: 71), unless he also possesses land to acquit obligations for the king. Particularly thought-provoking is the apparent wider circulation of swords in the Nordic lands in the Viking Age than in England (Androushchuk 2009), which yet again advocates for framing the study of Old English and Old Norse evidence in tandem and plies the question of whether there has been influence either regionally or in certain social arenas.

Unfortunately, no similar statistics exist for Viking-Age Scandinavia, which is a great pity. Rune stones are very tangible traces of that social reality, but they can only tell so much, and the immediate context is often wanting. Despair is, however, probably premature, as there are yet alternative ways, be they even perhaps not as exhaustive, to at least partially contextualise the possible socio-cultural circumstances of the *thegn*ly phenomenon also in Scandinavia. First, the very runic inscriptions, laconic in their content as they are, exist on a wider background and their general cultural surrounding has seen decades of investigations (e.g. Moltke 1976; Löfving 2001). Though not as vocal as literary pieces, the prestige and symbolic significance embodied by rune stones confer the notion of a commemorated person's prominence in the locality, if even Danish kings – Gorm and Harald Bluetooth – adopted this medium to communicate powerful messages. The sheer cost of transporting, raising and ornamenting such a monument sheds light on the wealth of the corresponding family or clan. Second, Scandinavia features not only *Tegneby* place names, absent in England, but other toponyms with a similar meaning and coined in a similar fashion as well: *Sveneby, Karleby, Rinkeby*. Comparing their patterns of distribution with archaeological data and putting them in the context of landscape can yet yield relevant material for the studies of the social orders in these regions (Brink 1999). Finally, given the Danelaw's uniqueness, should the statistical analysis of the *Domesday* and charter evidence

reveal consistent 'oddities' in this region not present in the 'English' part of the politically united Anglo-Saxon kingdom, they might be cautiously compared to the Scandinavian counterpart, although this shall demand a lot of comparative studies and very discreet approaches: as argued by Dawn Hadley (2000), Scandinavian incursions and colonisation of North-Eastern Britain cannot explain away all regional peculiarities in a *deus-ex-machina* fashion. At the end of the day, fleshing out the social reality of the Scandinavian *þegn*-hood may yet have some resources to fall back on.

Conclusion

The current paper's main goal has been to bring forward one feasible methodology for reassessing certain original historical lexemes in order to better form modern notions of the categories behind them. Achieving this is suggested in a threefold way.

First, one might wish to consider abandoning the search for meanings of a studied lexeme in dictionaries and instead deduce them from concrete literary contexts. This can at first glance seem a duplication of an actual dictionary, but modern progress in digitalisation of the historical sources enables applying methods of corpus linguistics in historical research, which used to be inaccessible for the dictionary-makers of the past.

Second, a corpus search can yield an unmanageable number of results, which in turn calls for prioritising the sources. Those considered 'primary' ought to be studied in full while the 'secondary' ones may receive a more selective approach. However, as a running phrase teaches us:

> There are no good or bad sources, there are only good or bad ways to use them. (Janson 1999: 71.)

Let the word 'primary' not delude a researcher, for it labels only those texts that do not always yield the answer to the immediate question asked. Instead they can illuminate further aspects of a problem under investigation that might get omitted by the 'primary' source material. Therefore, all sources ought to receive their maximum due attention, even if it entails a less exhaustive approach. In this connection, it is necessary to remember the probable chronological, regional, genre and

other distortions of search results. Hence, inner source criticism, not unlike the one hotly propagated and defended by the Weibull brothers (Janson 1999: 70–75; Torstendahl 1981: 117–126), remains as relevant as ever.

Third, upon tracing the probable meanings of a lexeme and their historical evolution, one can try 'putting flesh on the bones' of the reconstructed concept(s). This is usually carried out with the aid of the ancillary historical disciplines and by associating some 'practical' information with the study. That is to say, the third stage presupposes changing the focus of the inquiry from establishing the multifaceted nature of a historical concept to adding an actual practical, 'tangible' dimension to it.

This paper has tried to demonstrate how such a methodology might be applied to the study of the Viking-Age Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian *thegn*s. It is expected that the possible conclusions of the suggested approaches could touch on many problems in current medieval scholarship in England and Scandinavia. It is also humbly hoped that this case study can outline one feasible way to transcend disciplinary borders and add to a more holistic view of the Early Middle Ages. Re-approaching and bringing all available data together in the light of current episteme, as well as comparing it with contemporary material from other geographical regions, can help us better understand both the political and structural organisations of early medieval societies, and, perhaps, human societies more generally.

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Notes

1. A *hide* (Old English *hīd, hiwisc*) was a plot of land, capable of providing for one household throughout a year; later a fiscal unit (see Charles-Edwards 1972).
2. That is not to say that there were 188 *thegn*s in England in 900–1066. The total number of supposed land donations in favour of the *thegn*s in this period is 227, but only 188 of them are unanimously considered authentic by modern scholars (see Sukhino-Khomenko 2016). Some charters might be grants to one and the same person. Every Anglo-Saxon diploma normally contains a list of witnesses, many of whom are titled *ministri*, and *minister* is the standard equivalent for Old English *þegn* (for more detailed statistics see: Keynes 2002; see, however, above). Therefore, we may preliminarily conclude that the overall number of the Anglo-Saxon *thegn*s, whose existence is recorded in the 900–1066 diplomas alone, must be around the figure of a few hundred.
3. The problem of the over-reliance on Wulfstan's and further 'monarchocentric' sources when examining the late Anglo-Saxon aristocracy was touched upon by Christine Senecal in her doctoral thesis (1999: 17–28) and a subsequent article (2000: 251–252).
4. In this social context, a *ceorl* (modern English *churl*, German *Kerl*, Old Norse *karl*, etc.) is usually understood as a 'commoner', a 'rank-and-file' member of the Anglo-Saxon society. Rosamond Faith (1997: 127) characterises *ceorlas* as "a large and loosely defined social category [...], which included all those who were neither unfree nor of aristocratic birth," which also "may preserve vestiges of a social class of a type which escapes our modern typologies, a class in which both peasant farmers and lesser landowners were to be found."
5. To give Stubbs' predecessors credit, most elements of his scheme had been laid out in the preceding seven decades. Sharon Turner (1768–1847) was the first popular writer to transform the *thegn*s from an antiquated curiosity akin to the Scottish thane from *Macbeth* into an object of historical interest and study (Turner 1801: 76–83, 222–231). And John Mitchell Kemble (1807–1857) contributed the notion of the Germanic *comitatus* to Stubbs' description (Kemble 1849: 162–184), for Kemble was the pioneer of the German 19th-century historical scholarship on British soil.
6. As indicated by Reid (1920: 174) herself, "It is not easy to determine with exactness what rights were actually conveyed by a grant of sac and soc, toll and team, and infangthef." David Roffe (1989) and she understand *sake* and *soke* to be synonymous with what was later known as 'leet jurisdiction', *infangentheof* as 'the summary judgement of hand-taken thieves', and *toll* and *team* as the rights to pursue trade in one's estate and to warrant cattle purchases, respectively.
7. Cf. Stenton's (1932: 117) metaphor of "a true national levy".

8. Such as William Stubbs, John Green, Edward Freeman, and Frederic Maitland (see further Lavelle 2010: 47–55).
9. I would like to thank professor Elena Melnikova from the Institute of World History (Russian Academy of Sciences) for pointing this book out to me. Melnikova was in fact also the first colleague to direct my attention to Carl Löfving's works.
10. A similar paradigmatic critique of Aakjær's approach comes from Martin Syrett (1998: 246), who justly points out Aakjær's heavy dependence on the English post-Conquest sources, though even he did not consider *Constitutiones de Foresta*'s invalidity for the proposed argument.
11. For a more complete and exhaustive treatment of the problems of Aakjær's influential article, see Sukhino-Khomenko 2018.
12. Beginning from the 1860s, linguists have linked *thegn* with the Greek τέκνον ['child'] and derived both from PIE *tek- ['to beget']. In this case, the semantic evolution of the word would be reconstructed: 'to beget' → 'child' → 'boy' → 'servant' (e.g. Aakjær 1927: 18–19). However, linguist Guus Kroonen (2013: 536) has convincingly connected *þegn* with Proto-Germanic *þegjan- ['to request'] (cf. Old Norse *þiggja*, Old English *þicgan*), thus rooting it in the meaning 'retainer' rather than 'child'. When the present article was published, a paper on this matter involving the word's historical background and its analysis was being drafted by Guus Kroonen and myself for a further publication (preliminary results were delivered by me at the workshop Perspectives on the Nordic Middle Ages at Aarhus University on 4th May 2018).
13. A similar methodology has been recently used by Aleksei Shchavelev (2017) when reconstructing the earliest historical lineage of the Russian Rurikid dynasty in the 10th century. The problem has always been that the only extant Russian annalistic source for this period, the so-called *Primary Chronicle*, compiled only shortly before 1120, includes many folkloric elements and dates events retrospectively. Shchavelev set the *Primary Chronicle* aside and instead called upon synchronous foreign evidence – Byzantine, Latin, Jewish-Khazar and Arabic. His investigation demonstrated that evidence from these sources closely matched the *Primary Chronicle*'s genealogy, thus affirming the *Primary Chronicle*'s (or its prototype's) reliability in this matter. A similar procedure was proposed by Curt Weibull in his 1921 essay on the study of Saxo Grammaticus' works: Weibull insisted that events of Danish 12th-century political history be reconstructed off contemporary documentary evidence, and Saxo's troubled narrative be applied later on (Torstendahl 1981: 126).
14. As pointed out by Frog, this formula is also found in some saga texts, e.g. in *Sverris saga*.
15. For eddic poetry, indices by Hugo Gering (1903) and Robert Kellogg (1988), which for the most part overlap, have been consulted. The only differences are that Kellogg lists the occurrence of the name *Þegn* in *Rígsþula* ['The Song ofRíg'] with personal names, and he includes two occurrences in *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks* ['The Saga of Hervǫr and Heidrek']. I would like to thank Frog for suggesting incorporating these numbers into the present study.
16. It should be noted that, as in the case with Old Swedish, Old High German and Old Saxon, these figures are likely incomplete, for the Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages project is ongoing. Thus, when the database was first consulted in June 2016, it listed only 72 occurrences; the extra 20 instances in 2018 originate from the 2017 volume *Poetry from Treatises on Poetics*. Even today, not all listed occurrence have made it into the printed editions. Furthermore, though the headword search returned 93 results for the lexeme *þegn* and two for its compounds, certain allowances concerning various dubious readings had to be made for the sake of the chart's clarity (plus the search did not yield the *lausavísa* by Óláfr *bjarnylr* Hávarðarson, though the *lausavísa* itself is indexed in the database). Therefore, it is correct to speak of 89 confirmed occurrences (88 for *þegn* and one for *þegnskapr*) and six that remain dubious.
17. As disclaimed by the editors, the database is still being constructed, therefore its "material is incomplete and is for reference only" (Skaldic Project). The search was executed throughout the headwords of the dictionary relevant to the editions.
18. For Old Danish, the material from the *Gammeldansk Ordbog* ['Old Danish Dictionary'], developed by Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab ['The Danish Language and Literature Society'], has been used.
19. The figures for Old Swedish should still be considered preliminary and may be subject to revision. They have been extracted from both the accurate word register of Carl Schlyter (1877: *s.v.* 'þægn'), first editor of the Swedish *Landskapslagar* ['Provincial Laws'], and a potentially less complete list of examples in Knut Söderwall's *Ordbok öfver svenska medeltidsspråket* ['Dictionary of Swedish Medieval Language'] (Söderwall 1884–1918: *s.v.* 'þäghn'). In case of Old High German and Old Saxon, Thesaurus Indogermanischer Text- und Sprachmaterialien (TITUS), a joint project of the Goethe University Frankfurt, Charles University, Prague, Copenhagen University, and University of Oviedo, was used. Note that Kuhn (1944: 109–110) provides lower figures, though he probably did not seek to produce an extensive list. However, some compounds with *degan* listed in the dictionaries (such as *heridegan*) are for some reason absent from TITUS. This is probably due to the ongoing nature of the electronic project (although I cannot be certain here), which is why the figures for these languages must for now be considered preliminary. At any rate, it is believed that the acquired statistics might already be sufficient and, more importantly, illustrative of the suggested methodology.
20. "Sö 237, 349, U 34, 131, 201, 353, 363, 372, 456, 935, 937, 991, 990, 999, and a stone found in 1978 at Ösby, Lunda parish, as yet unnumbered" (Strid 1986: 314).

21. Similarly to the method used by Shchavelev, such 'brute-force' context analysis has also been inspired by Petr Stefanovich (2012). However, two major obstacles hinder its complete adoption when dealing with *thegn*s: for one thing, the number of individual cases Stefanovich meticulously went through amounts to merely hundreds, and, for the other, even that many instances turned his research into a 656-page monograph.
22. In the Anglo-Saxon studies, Lavelle (2010: 64) suggests that this may be at least partly due to the "result of the Germanist scholarship of the nineteenth century, in which J.M. Kemble argued that Continental Latin terminology should not be used in the study of Anglo-Saxon England and that 'we use no words but such as the Saxons themselves used'."
23. In the 1970s through the 1990s, heated polemics unfolded between Elsa Sjöholm, who challenged the hitherto prevailing *germanischen Urrecht* theory and maintained the Swedish provincial laws' medieval continental origin (and, hence, their inapplicability for studying Viking-Age social structures), and her academic adversaries (Sverre Bagge, Thomas Lindqvist, and Ole Fenger), who saw Sjöholm's methodology as too rigid (for a current but not entirely impartial overview, see Brink 2014).
24. This chart is based on Sukhino-Khomenko 2014.
25. A masterpiece of an overview and assessment of these problems is Wormald 2001.
26. See e.g. a thorough contextualisation of Wulfstan's writings in Ponz-Sans 2007.
27. Unlike *Tegneby*, place names with the element **rink-* can be found not only in modern-day Sweden (18 instances, predominantly in the Mällaren region) but also in present-day Denamark (8 instances) (Hald 1933).
28. 'Feudal mutation', also termed 'transformation' – a controversial theory in francophone historiography, first formulated by Georges Duby in 1953 and later much debated in the journal *Past & Present* (Abels 2009: 1018–1020).
29. Note that, as cultural objects, charters fulfilled far more diverse functions (see e.g. Keynes 2005 [1980]; Snook 2015).

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DR 129 = Rune stone located in Durup, Durup sn., Gislum hd, North Jutland, Denmark. In Jacobsen & Moltke 1942: 602.

DR 143 = Rune stone located in Gunderup, Gunderup sn., Fleskum hd, North Jutland, Denmark. In Jacobsen & Moltke 1942: 602–603.

DR 150 = Rune stone located in Hurup, Hurup sn., Refs hd, North Jutland, Denmark. In Jacobsen & Moltke 1942: 603.

DR 209 = Rune stone located in Glavendrup, Skamby sn., Skam hd, Fyn, Denmark. In Jacobsen & Moltke 1942: 606.

DR 372 = Rune stone located in Aakirkeby, Åker sn., Sønderhd, Bornholm, Denmark. In Jacobsen & Moltke 1942: 615.

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Castrén's Lectures on Finnish Mythology: Methodological Reflections

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Abstract: M.A. Castrén's Föreläsningar i finsk mytologi *['Lectures on Finnish mythology'] represents an important phase in the study of mythology and religion. It is the first comparative study on Finnish and related mythologies that draws on contemporary international scholarship. The* Lectures *are here reviewed critically both as an emblem in the history of the discipline and as a case study on challenges in combining methodologies from different disciplines and approaches.*

In recent discussions about the history of the humanities, the central and driving role of the comparative method has been brought up in compelling ways. Devin Griffiths (2017), for example, emphasizes the interrelated nature of the comparative methods developed in 19th-century Europe, while Han F. Vermeulen (2015) has discussed the ways in which the comparative method developed into the birth of ethnography. Furthermore, the interaction of national or imperial ideology with international academic discussions has been examined in folklore studies in ways that show that imperial regimes tended to develop comparisons on different levels of practice than national regimes. To cut a long story short, imperial regimes tended to compare their provincial and colonial folklore, both seen as inferior, to national high culture. National regimes, in their turn, tended to emphasize folklore's authenticity as a genuine expression of the roots of the nation compared to its contemporary culture, considered somewhat estranged from its origins. (Dundes 1985; Baycroft 2012; Gunnell 2012; Wingfield & Gosden 2012; Roper 2012; Hopkin 2012; Ó Giolláin 2014.)

The evolution of Finnish folklore studies is fundamentally related to the history of the comparative method. This is not only since the development of the Historical-Geographic Method by Julius Krohn (1885), which became internationally known especially through works of his son Kaarle Krohn (e.g. 1926), but since the beginning of the 19th century, the time of works written or presented as lectures that provided foundations for those later comparative approaches. These lectures were written down by Matthias Alexander Castrén (1813–1852), whose endeavours have been depicted in the frames of National Romanticism, and the *Kalevala*. In addition, the relationship of Castrén to philology is well known. What has been poorly studied is his work with the development of the comparative method in the context of mythology and ethnography.

In the following, we will sketch the interplay between comparative linguistics and mythology in the context of Finnish and Russian research on linguistic communities of Eurasia. At the center of our sketch is Matthias Alexander Castrén and his posthumously published manuscript *Föreläsningar i finsk mytologi* (1853a) ['Lectures on Finnish Mythology']. The aim of the article is to display how different traits in European research on (Germanic) mythology and comparative linguistics in the mid-19th century were complemented by the developing field of ethnography in Castrén's study on what he called 'Finnish' mythology. Moreover, we will discuss the contemporary ideologies and attitudes that informed Castrén's work and are also reflected in the results, particularly in the *Lectures*. Castrén's work was situated in a developing continuum of pioneering European fields of research. Our outline will not only shed light on the background of Castrén's work and the popularity of the comparative framework in a European context, but also show how the research that had its root in comparative methodology continued to evolve in the Finnish context.

Historical Context

At the turn of the 19th century, National Romanticism was on the rise in the eastern counties of the Swedish Kingdom, or the area that is roughly equivalent to Finland today. Nevertheless, the movement did not expand much beyond narrow academic circles until 1809, when the area became part of the Russian Empire, renamed the Grand Duchy of Finland, and received remarkable autonomy. Swedish remained the official language, but Finnish was increasingly being used alongside it, and Finnish and related languages and

cultures became subjects of interest among the educated classes.

One of the first scholars to carry out the mission of collecting information about speakers of languages related to Finnish was Anders Johan Sjögren (1794–1855). He was inspired by the National-Romanticist ideas of Johann Gottfried Herder and the earlier formulations of the 'Finnish' mission by the famous Finnish scholar of the enlightenment, H.G. Porthan. Sjögren made his way to the inaccessible Karelian forests that lay close to Finland's eastern border and continued all the way until the Ural Mountains and Perm. He conducted pioneering fieldwork and wrote historical, linguistic and ethnographic studies that obviously made an impression on the academic circles in the Russian Academy. Later, he could work under the auspices of the Russian Academy of Sciences as he became a member of the Academy and an academician. (Branch 1973; Branch 2002.)

Sjögren's position shows clearly how the development of the Finnish comparative tradition, be it linguistic or ethnographic, stands on two bases. Sjögren's starting point was a nationalistic and Finnish one. He wanted to illuminate the history of the Finnish language and people, which is illustrated by the fact that he labelled the languages and *stammer* ['tribes'] he studied, today called Finnic (including Finnish, Karelian, Ingrian, Veps and Ludic), Sámi, and Permian (Komi and Udmurt) as *finska* ['Finnish']. This approach defined the related languages (and cultures) in a way that introduces them as inferior or secondary to the Finnish, an approach that affected, for example, conceptions of Karelian culture, although this was certainly not unique to Finland. Castrén adopted this practice, broadening the scope of meaning further so that Finnish denoted what he called Altaic people, a group of speakers of languages that are nowadays considered to include both Uralic and Turkic language families. At the same time, with this nationalistic frame, Sjögren worked for the Russian Academy, and constantly had to justify his research in terms of the imperial aims as being important for the Russian State. (Branch 1973.) Consequently, his work had both nationalist and imperialist interests, but, simultaneously, Sjögren main-tained scholarly ambitions in the developing field of comparativism. He wanted not only to increase the amount of data for comparative research, but also to develop methodology in both fieldwork and analysis. (Branch 1973.) He is thus also an important example showing how politics may become intertwined with scholarly work.

Sjögren's work has been partly superseded both by Elias Lönnrot's work on the *Kalevala* and Finno-Karelian poetry and by Castrén's later work. However, he is as an important link between Lönnrot and Castrén and the earlier work on Finnish languages and cultures. Lönnrot inspired Castrén through the *Kalevala*, but he also acted as a model in fieldwork, not to mention the importance of economic and social support Lönnrot and the academic circles in Helsinki provided for Castrén. Compared to Sjögren and Castrén, Lönnrot was more clearly carrying out an aesthetic mission in collecting poetry and compiling the national epic. Still, his *Kalevala* became the cornerstone of Finnish research on oral poetry for decades, mainly because the epic provided the largest amount of data available to scholars.

The Lectures

Castrén's *Lectures on Finnish Mythology* form an image of ancient Finnish mythology through three themes:

1. Supernatural beings
2. Rituals and sacred places
3. Heroic epic

Castrén lists and describes Finnish pre-Christian mythic beings' cultural origins, functions and distribution of labor, largely on the basis of earlier mythographers' texts. He develops and supplements the ideas in these texts with the help of Kalevala-meter ritual poetry, comparative linguistics and theories concerning early forms of religion. Castrén lists the deities of Finnish mythology beginning from the supreme deity named Jumala or Ukko, to whom all other gods are subordinate. He categorizes all deities into the deities of air, water and earth, in accordance with natural phenomena or 'elements'. Besides these, there are the deities of the Underworld that govern the life after death. The deities and other mythic beings in these categories are

organized hierarchically in Castrén's presentation. These hierarchical levels are:

1. Chief gods and their family members who govern the elements of nature
2. Their servants who govern different components of these elements of nature (animal species, tree species, etc.)
3. Sprites / elves who are more ethereal and non-personified guardian spirits of individual subjects

In addition to these, there were other invisible forces that affected people's lives, such as:

4. Spirits of the dead
5. Spirits of the living
6. Spirits of diseases

Castrén's discussion of the ritualistic and ethnographic side of the ancient Finnish belief system draws largely on comparative observations of ethnography that Castrén makes on the basis of his own fieldwork as well as Russian and German ethnographic research literature. This discussion concerns what would today be called Uralic or Altaic religious life rather than being specifically Finnish. Castrén describes the cult images and sacred places of different peoples in a very detailed manner and compares them insightfully, using them as analogical evidence in recognizing and explaining the scarce and insufficient Finnish evidence.

The last part of the *Lectures* focuses on kalevalaic heroic poetry mainly based on the *Kalevala*. There are long sections that describe the *Kalevala*'s plot and characters. Castrén discusses especially the possible mythological origin of the heroic poetry. He compares kalevalaic heroic epic (on which the *Kalevala* is predominantly built) with the heroic traditions of other Uralic (and Altaic) peoples, coming to conceive of the heroes in kalevalaic epic as fundamentally human figures instead of mythological deities as held by the other prevailing concurrent view. On the other hand, Castrén sees such similarities between the heroes of the *Kalevala* and certain Old Norse deities that they lead him to maintain the possibility of a mythological origin of the heroes of the *Kalevala*. However, he cannot or does not make any attempt to determine whether one view is more correct.

Lectures on Finnish Mythology represents a historical and comparative general overview of reconstructed Finnish and Uralic or Altaic pre-Christian belief systems. Castrén wrote it on the basis of a series of lectures that he started in the autumn of 1851, freshly nominated as the first Professor of Finnish at the Imperial Alexander University in Finland (today known as the University of Helsinki). More accurately, Castrén held two intersecting series of lectures that autumn. One dealt with the ethnology of the so-called Altaic peoples, the other with Finnish mythology. He lectured once a week for ten weeks and wrote out these lectures during the course of the series. Castrén's health declined during the autumn but he intended to continue the series during the following semester, preparing the lectures during the winter break. However, he was no longer able to leave home when the semester started. Castrén finished the manuscript of *Finnish Mythology* on his deathbed, and he died of tuberculosis on the 7th of May, 1852.

The original manuscripts are held at the Finnish National Library (KK MC XXVIII Varia 3). In addition to the original text in Swedish (published posthumously in Carl G. Borg's edition: Castrén 1853a), the *Lectures* were also published in German (Anton Schiefner's edition and translation: Castrén 1853b) and, recently, in Finnish (Castrén 2016).

Lectures on Finnish Mythology has had a significant impact on the development of Finnish ethnography and folklore studies, as it laid the foundation for many frames of comparison and arguments about the birth and essence of the vernacular religion of the Finns and peoples related to them for much of the latter half of the 19th century. Although the general applicability of Castrén's work began to be criticized already by Julius Krohn (1894), the general frame of comparing Finnish vernacular religion to that of other Uralic linguistic communities has remained a part of the scholarship even up to the present day (see Anttonen V. 1987; Anttonen, P. 2005; Siikala 2012). Outside of academia, Uralic contacts and cultural traits are still considered an important part of Finnish heritage (Haapoja 2017).

Sources for Castrén's Lectures

Whereas Castrén's theoretical premises were rooted in continental European and especially German scholarship, he came to his results and interpretations through an interplay between this theoretical framework and the source materials he used. Castrén's approach could be described as empirical: it was grounded on the European theoretical heritage, but his argumentation leaned primarily upon the source materials he used. The material basis for Castrén's work can be divided roughly into three categories:

1. Earlier publications on 'Finnish' mythology
2. The two editions of *Kalevala*
3. Ethnography of numerous Siberian peoples more or less related to the Finns

Earlier Key Publications on Finnish Mythology
The studies on Finnish mythology prior to Castrén provided him with both substance and basic categorizations. As primary sources, they included linguistic specimens, oral poetry, narratives and reports on actual folk beliefs. Through these materials, the studies specified the basic idea of what Finnish mythology and folk belief consisted of and what could be expected of it. Furthermore, these studies were organized in a way that gave Castrén a model or pattern for organizing his research and the *Lectures*.

A written form of Finnish was not developed until the Reformation, prior to which there are very few texts that refer to mythology or religion of Finnic-speaking peoples of Finland or Karelia, and those are notoriously problematic to interpret (Frog 2014: 442–444). The earliest published source for Finnish mythology is a list of heathen deities in verse form that Bishop Michael Agricola included in the preface to his 1551 collection of psalms (*Psalter*) in Finnish. In this text, Agricola attributes twelve deities each to two 'Finnish' groups, the Tavastians (people of Finland's Häme region) and the 'Karelians' (likely people of Finland's Savo region), or twenty-four deities altogether. That there are twelve deities per group is hardly coincidental but rather consciously follows the number of main deities in the Greek and Roman pantheons.[1] As a source for mythology or folk belief, Agricola's poem is severely limited, incomplete and inconsistent, but it is considerably older than any other source and therefore practically impossible to leave aside in any study in the field. The deities that Agricola lists in this text are reviewed in the two important 18th-century treatises on Finnish mythology (see below), and discussed by Castrén as well. Castrén values Agricola primarily for providing testimony (albeit rather confused) from a point of view that is contemporary with the pre-Christian Finnish vernacular beliefs he discusses, but Castrén's stance towards Agricola is otherwise mostly critical (e.g. Castrén 1853a: 34–35, 65–66, 91–92).

Christian Eric Lencqvist's doctoral dissertation *De superstitione veterum Fennorum theoretica et practica* (1782) ['On Theoretical and Practical Superstitions of the Ancient Finns'] was supervised by professor Henrik Gabriel Porthan, a pioneer in the study of Finnish oral poetry. This work was the first systematic description of Finnish pre-Christian beliefs, categorizing, for instance, supernatural beings in Finnish mythology hierarchically into deities of natural phenomena, two orders of euhemeristically interpreted deities that had originally been heroes, and into other minor supernatural creatures. Castrén uses Lencqvist's dissertation as his central source: he categorizes the deities and creatures of belief traditions more precisely than Lencqvist but follows his cardinal division of categorizing supernatural agents into deities of natural elements, gods of higher and lower ranks, and into other creatures of belief. Castrén cites numerous passages in Lencqvist's work and makes commentaries on nearly all his arguments, also taking up ideas presented there and pursuing them within his own theoretical framework.

The dictionary of Finnish mythology, *Mythologia Fennica* (1984 [1789]) ['Finnish Mythology'] by Christfrid Ganander (and supervised by Porthan) is densely referred to in Castrén's *Lectures*. In this dictionary, Ganander not only describes Finnish mythology but also shows connections between Finnish, 'Lappish' (Sámi), Swedish and ancient Scandinavian mythologies. The headwords of the dictionary are predominantly mythological beings, places and rituals. Many of them are treated so exhaustively that the descriptions resemble

miniature treatises. Ganander's sources include, besides Swedish research literature, Agricola's list of Finnish deities and large collections of Finnish oral poetry. Ganander announces that he has got the mythological vocabulary and their meanings from the oral poetry. His work serves Castrén especially as a source for original mythology-related folk poetry, and he takes advantage of Ganander's numerous explanations.

In addition to the sources of Finnish mythology, also of note are Castrén's wide reading on Sámi mythology and application of the relevant literature, which have a central role in the *Lectures* and represent the inclusive scope within which 'Finnishness' was being discussed. Castrén makes reference to, for example, Johannes Schefferus' *Lapponia* (1673), one of the first collections of data about Lapland, Erik Lindahl and Samuel Öhrling's *Lexicon Lapponicum* (1780), Johannes Tornaeus' description of Tornio and Kemi areas of Lapland (1672) and Jessen-Schardebøll's text (Leem 1767) on northern religion. Jessen's text has later been evaluated as having no independent value as a source, as it represents a mere copy of Hans Skanke's earlier unpublished manuscript that again goes back to Thomas von Westen's numerous texts (see Rydving 1995: 23) – works to which Castrén otherwise had no access. Schefferus', Lindahl and Öhrling's and Tornaeus' works, on the other hand, represent central texts in the research on Sámi mythology and ethnography still today (see Rydving 1995: 19–32; 2000). The latter texts represent or are based on the descriptions of missionaries and/or priests, and thus reflect Swedish or Norwegian colonial policies.

The Kalevala

Another important literary source for Castrén, besides the key works of earlier mythography discussed above, were the two editions of the *Kalevala* compiled and composed by Elias Lönnrot (1835; 1849). Castrén knew the *Kalevala* quite well: he published a Swedish translation of the first edition (Lönnrot 1841; see also Castrén 2019), and he also knew Lönnrot personally. In 1841, for example, the two men made an expedition together to Lapland and Viena Karelia (i.e. the northern region of Russian Karelia where the richest mythological epic material was found).

Originally, Lönnrot believed that the poems, which he collected into a compilation that later evolved into the *Kalevala*, were representative of Finnish Mythology (Siikala 2008). Jouni Hyvönen (2008) and Juha Pentikäinen (1999: esp. 3–7) have discussed *Kalevala* as 'mythography', Lönnrot's academic and poetic synthesis of his knowledge of kalevalaic poetry: "[...] the Kalevala, as a mythological work, was also the result of Lönnrot's synthesis of the pre-Christian religion of the Finns seen in comparative perspective" (Pentikäinen 1999: 6). Later on, however, Lönnrot thought that the kalevalaic epic poems were rather depictive of history, the life and historical events of the Finns' past (see also Wilson 1976). In his introduction to the first edition of *Kalevala* in 1835, Lönnrot discusses the kalevalaic epic poems as texts that depict and reflect historical events (1835: xi–xvi). He writes that even though many of the epic heroes are referred to as being 'gods', they seem to be humans who, in the course of time, have become compared to gods due to their posthumous reputation (Lönnrot 1835: xi–xiii). These views match with Lönnrot's idea of an early, primitive form of monotheism as the primeval 'Finnish' religion (Lönnrot 1839), which, according to Lönnrot, would be supported by the fact that the thunder god Ukko held a supreme position in both epic poetry and incantations (Lönnrot 1836). The idea of primitive monotheism as the original form of religiousness among humankind before its dispersal and degeneration into endless forms of worship originates, of course, in the biblical narrative about the Tower of Babel. It was applied as a theoretical premise also in Finnish scholarship, for example, in the early studies on Finnish mythology by Lencqvist and Ganander (see Pulkkinen 2003: 69).

In the construction of the overall structure of the *Kalevala*, Elias Lönnrot attempted to follow the internal logic of his materials, the poems themselves. Many of the poems referred to the same personae and events, and Lönnrot's idea was that these references guided towards the structure of a solid epic whole. Certain epic poems, in the forms that Lönnrot heard and recorded them among the people, were easier to connect to each other to constitute a narrative than others. Different versions of

poems accounting for same events varied considerably both from region to region and even from singer to singer. Lönnrot was forced to select among these, and he also synthesized them into larger wholes and constructed links between them in his creation of a large, coherent epic (Kaukonen 1979; in detail, see Kaukonen 1939–1945; 1956; for discussion in English, see e.g. Pentikäinen 1999). Versions of poems that better corresponded to Lönnrot's ideas and aims (reciprocally shaped by singers who impressed him) dominated the *Kalevala*'s structure already in the first edition. Further-more, as the collections of oral poetry expanded after the publication of the *Kalevala*'s first edition, the number of options for the narrative and its overall structure correspondingly increased for Lönnrot in his work on the second, revised, reorganized edition of *Kalevala* that expanded to nearly double its earlier length. The second edition of *Kalevala* was more pronouncedly a result of Lönnrot's selection from a growing corpus of oral poetry and consciously organizing material into a linear form (Kaukonen 1979; Honko 2002).

The *Kalevala* is mostly comprised of authentic (although edited) folk poetry, whereas Elias Lönnrot selected the presented poems and fragments thereof and created the overall narrative structure. Castrén conceived of the *Kalevala* as a representation of ancient Finnish indigenous culture and mythology. When making his first scientific expeditions to Finnish Lapland and Viena Karelia with Lönnrot, he firmly held this view, documenting languages and oral traditions. In Viena Karelia, he also gathered information for his well-reputed Swedish translation of the first edition of the *Kalevala* (1841). He met singers of kalevalaic epic, including those who had earlier performed for Lönnrot, but he only transcribed poems where he considered them not already present and preserved in Lönnrot's epic – indicating how he saw *Kalevala* in relation to the oral tradition.

Since Kaarle Krohn (e.g. 1903–1910; 1918; cf. Krohn K. 1924–1928), Finnish folklorists have bemoaned that Castrén used the *Kalevala*, not the corpus of kalevalaic poetry, as the frame of reference for his *Lectures*. This has, according to the critics, downshifted the potential of the *Lectures*' opening of Uralic comparative mythology to a mere commentary on the *Kalevala* (see Haavio 1952; Hautala 1954: 152–156; Kemppinen 1957: vii; Siikala 2012: 43). Nevertheless, the *Lectures* cannot be read only as a commentary on the *Kalevala*, although Castrén uses Lönnrot's epic as his reference when dealing with Finnish religion. His use of the *Kalevala* is highly reflexive, but, in addition to that, Castrén is also referencing a large body of past studies on mythology and also his own, extensive field work.

Ethnography of Siberian Peoples

Castrén is best known as a linguist who documented and studied Asian languages (Karttunen 1994: 161; Korhonen 1986: 34–35). These were predominantly Uralic and Turkic languages that had a common origin according to Castrén's hypothesis. At the same time, he studied the religions, customs and other ethnographic aspects of the communities whose languages he studied. Castrén's expeditions were inspired by, in addition to his linguistic aspirations among Uralic language groups, his National-Romantic interest in the *Kalevala*. Besides the *Kalevala* and discussions about Finnish mythology, *The Lectures on Finnish Mythology* are based on Castrén's extensive fieldwork expeditions in Northern Russia and Siberia that took him as far east as Lake Baikal. These solitary expeditions took most of Castrén's time between the years 1841–1849, during which he spent less than a year in Finland when he defended a dissertation on Komi grammar in 1844–1845 before leaving again on another expedition.

Although he primarily travelled alone, his expeditions were part of Russian ethnographic programs that developed in the Russian Academy of Sciences for decades. These programs aimed to produce more profound data on peoples and resources of the vast Russian Empire. Consequently, Castrén's routes often followed those taken by his predecessors, Daniel Gottlieb Messerschmidt (1685–1735) and Peter Simon Pallas (1741–1810), to mention the most notable. (Tokarev 1966; Vermeulen 2015.) This is especially true for the carefully-planned second expedition from 1845–1849. Compared to this, the first expedition was not so thoroughly organized in advance.

Castrén's first expedition began almost immediately after he unexpectedly received news that the Alexander University had given him a grant for his fieldwork trip with Elias Lönnrot among Finnish and Russian Sámi in 1842. Following Anders Johan Sjögren's advice, Castrén travelled through the Arkhangelsk Government (which encompassed northern territories of Karelia around the White Sea) and went to the east, where he began to document Tundra Nenets language and customs. During this expedition, Castrén more or less improvised, travelling by sledge and by boat in the company of different groups, moving from one village to another, meeting and interviewing Nenets and also Komi living nearby or when passing through villages. He crossed the Ural Mountains with a company of Komi late in 1843, and arrived in Obdorsk (today Salekhard) in November. Obdorsk and Western Siberia provided Castrén with everything he could hope for: a multiethnic hub of reindeer herders, hunters and fishers, speakers of Tundra and Forest Nenets, Khanty, Mansi and Selkup who lived on the tundra and along the River Ob water system. However, having finally arrived at this place that he called his London, Paris and Berlin, he had to leave. He had caught tuberculosis already on the western side of the Urals, and Castrén reluctantly departed home via a southern route in the beginning of 1844. (Castrén 1852; Salminen 2019.)

The second expedition began in 1845, after Castrén had gathered some strength. Johan Reinhold Bergstadi accompanied him, but Bergstadi returned home in the early months of 1847, having already extensively studied the communities along the upper reaches of the Western Siberian rivers and those living on the shores of the River Yenisei. After Bergstadi left, Castrén continued his travel further to the south and east to the Sayan Mountains, beyond Lake Baikal and into China. Beginning his return in mid-1848, a weakened Castrén came back to Finland in early 1849. This excursion allowed Castrén to deepen his knowledge of most of the western Siberian languages, but also to widen his field to languages that he thought to be, and presented as, linguistically related: northern and southern Samoyedic languages, Kot and Ket, and some Tungusic

(such as Even and Evenk), Turkic (Tofa) and Mongolic (Buryat) languages spoken in southern Siberia. (Castrén 1852; Salminen 2019.)

In addition to extensive, systematic linguistic data, Castrén had noted down materials on folklore, manners and customs, clothing and dwellings of the linguistic groups. He also paid attention to archaeology and made excavations during his expeditions. As noted by Timo Salminen (2017), the role of archaeology is marginal in Castrén's work, but it is nevertheless an established part in his holistic study of the history of the Altaic peoples. This is reflected both in the overall picture Castrén constructed of the history of these peoples, but also in his more detailed analysis of the early history of the so-called *Zavoločkaja Čud'* ['*Čud'* beyond the portages'], an ethnonym mentioned already in the Russian *Primary Chronicle*. Salminen notes that Castrén makes a synthesis based on historical, linguistic and archeological observations in order to explain who the people living in north-western Russia were. (Salminen 2017: 18.) It is indeed the holistic nature of Castrén's work that draws attention both in his fieldwork and in the *Lectures*.

It is also notable that Castrén makes references to earlier ethnographic texts based on the Russian 18th-century expeditions. Especially important for Castrén were the expeditions taken by Daniel Messerschmidt and Peter Pallas. As a traveler, Messerschmidt was unfortunately left between the broad interests of Peter the Great, who sent him to his journey in 1719, and the ignorance of Catherine I, within whose reign Messerschmidt arrived back to St. Petersburg in 1727. Having collected a multimodal and huge body of material on the nature and people of Siberia, Messerschmidt was given no credit for his work, although he had to leave the materials to the Kunstkamera. August Schlözer reworked these materials when writing his *Allgemeine nordische Geschichte* (1771), as did Johann Gottlieb Georgi in his huge *Beschreibung aller Nationen des russischen Reichs* (1776–1780), based on Messerschmidt's expeditions. Peter Pallas, again, was the leader of one of the subgroups of the so-called Second Kamchatka Expedition. He travelled with his team in the

western and central regions of Siberia, the Altai Mountains, Baikal and Sayan Mountains deepening in many ways Messerschmidt's data. Pallas was also able to publish his materials and findings in a three-volume *Reise durch verschiedene Provinzen des russischen Reichs* (1771–1776) ['Journey through Different Provinces of the Russian Empire'], and his texts center not only on geography and geology, flora and fauna, but also on the people and their everyday life and folklore.

Theoretical Basis for the Lectures

> Wie auf dem Gebiet der Linguistik suchte Castrén auch auf dem Gebiet der Mythenforschung sich mit den neuesten Leistungen bekannt zu machen und so seinen Gesichtskreis zu erweitern. So bedeutend seine Vorlesungen über die finnische Mythologie sind, so hätten sie unendlich gewonnen, wenn es ihm vergönnt gewesen wäre im Laufe der Jahre neu hinzukommende Materialen zu benutzen und die neuen Gesichtspuncte der Mythenforschung dabei im Auge zu behalten. Seine Briefe legen hinlänglich Zeugniß dafür ab, wie sehr es ihm um eine Vervollständigung seiner Kenntnisse auf diesem Gebiet zu thun war. (Schiefner 1857: 429–430.)

> As in the field of linguistics, Castrén sought to become familiar with the newest achievements in the field of mythology studies and thus to widen his insight. Even though his lectures on Finnish mythology were remarkable as such, they would have benefited endlessly had he been able to get acquainted with the new increasing materials in the course of years, and simultaneously to keep an eye on new perspectives in mythology studies. His letters provide clear evidence of how much he worked to replenish his knowledge in this field.

Castrén is not very explicit about his methodological background. His *Lectures* get well contextualized, however, in general European discussions over the relationships of languages, folklore and cultures and how these build the history of humankind. Moreover, Castrén's work should be understood in the context of Finnish studies in arts and culture that had their roots in both Swedish discussions and influences direct from central Europe. In addition, the influence of the Russian Academy of Sciences cannot be ignored, as Castrén was not working only for the Finnish nation, but also for the Academy in St. Petersburg. The study of Finnish culture, language and history requires defining or imagining the endemic nature of the previously barely-acknowledged 'nation'. Constructing the concept of 'Finnishness' was an important motivator for much of Castrén's work.

In the 18th century, the birth of nation-states in Europe was followed by ideas concerning people's belonging and identification, 'nationality', especially in relation to peoples in other nation-states (Hroch 2007). The growing interest in the particularities of individual 'nations' led to interest in traditions and languages of the common people (see also Iggers 1999). Earlier, a nationality was defined largely through the elite and its dominant language but, as the governance changed following the French revolution and the balance of the estates in Europe changed more generally as well, common people, the 'folk', came to focus and gained a more prominent and active political and social role within societies (e.g. Wallerstein 2003).

National-Romanticist Traits: Castrén and Jacob Grimm

The idea of nationally distinctive features that differentiate one group of people from others and identify particular groups as deriving from a remote past was a central element in German Romanticism and the quest to identify and reconstruct these features was among its most important projects. Emblematic of this movement is the work of Jacob Grimm (1785–1863), a German researcher of language, mythology and folklore, to whose work *Deutsche Mythologie* (1844) ['German Mythology'] Castrén often refers. One of Grimm's central points of departure was the belief that the original, genuine Germanic past and its spirit could be found in folklore (Bascom 1977: 3). This spirit was conceived as most purely reflected in myth as a people's inspired symbolic expression (Frog 2018: 19). For Grimm, myth was a living phenomenon underlying the expressions of a 'nation', not an individual, and its traces and reflections were possible to recognize in recent folklore and not only in texts written in the ancient past (Williamson 2004: 81, 90, 111–112). According to Grimm, the history of a national culture was

a history of decline, 'devolution', which began soon after the culture had taken shape. For Grimm, this decline was most evident in language but also concerned other areas of culture such as religion. The history of a nation was characterized by drifting ever farther away from an original culture which, however, needed to be understood if a nation wanted to realize its true essence. Fortunately, the mythologies of bygone eras could be reconstructed with the same methodology as used for the reconstruction of earlier phases of language. Grimm expresses this in a poetic albeit complicated way in the introduction to the second edition of *Deutsche Mythologie*:

> Die geschichte lehrt in der sprache, je weiter hinauf wir ihr zu folgen vermögen, sinnliche vollendung gewahren, die mit dem steigen bildung sinkt [...] gelten also in der sprache schlüsse auf das was abhanden ist, zuckt ihre gegenwärtige beschaffenheit noch weit zurück in die ältere und älteste; so muss auch in der mythologie ein ähnliches verfahren sich rechtfertigen und aus ihrem versiegenden wasser die quelle, aus den stehngebliebnen sümpfen der alte strom geahnt werden. die völker hängen und halten fest am herge-brachten, wir werden ihre überlieferung, ihren aberglauben niemals fassen, wenn wir ihm nich ein bett noch auf heidnischem grund und boden unterbreiten. (Grimm 1844: vi.)

> History teaches us to recognise in language, the farther we are able to follow it up, a higher perfection of form, which declines as culture advances [....] Now if such inferences as to what is non-extant are valid in language, if its present condition carries us far back to an older and oldest; a like proceeding must be justifiable in mythology too, and from its dry watercourses we may guess the copious spring, from its stagnant swamps the ancient river. Nations hold fast by prescription: we shall never comprehend their tradition, their super-stition, unless we spread under it a bed on still heathen soil. (Grimm 1882–1888 III: vi.)

Castrén sought to develop images of Finnish mythology by pursuing its 'original' forms. However, the notion 'original' is problematic in connection with vernacular (or perhaps any) cultural forms because it is virtually impossible to indicate a specific initial form of any cultural phenomenon that would not have predecessors. To Castrén, the concepts 'original'

(*ursprunglig*) and 'origins' (*Ursprung*) seem to refer to, respectively, those phenomena and the contexts in which they initially appeared whose predecessors are not recognizable on basis of his theoretical and methodological framework or the materials available to him. In other words, 'original' are those forms of mythology that are arguably the oldest: those whose parallels are met in the most distant cognate languages, those that are linguistically most archaic and that reflect a worldview that is most primitive. In order to identify the oldest worldview and the conceptions that it included, Castrén needed a theoretical model to determine the relative ages of different conceptions that the myths reflected. Dating linguistic relics that reside in oral tradition, such as mythic narratives, is very difficult. Seldom do they retain features on basis of which they are datable to a precise time or even to a particular era, especially among peoples whose livelihoods and cultural surroundings have been spared from drastic changes for long periods. Castrén was well aware that folk traditions are dynamic by nature: new elements are constantly being piled upon older ones, older ones replaced by them and subject to transformation. Conceptions and practices from different eras may prevail simultaneously within one group. The impact of major religions like Christianity and Islam on older forms of religion has been especially significant. Castrén complains on several occasions about ancient conceptions having been corrupted by these religions (e.g. Castrén 1853a: 14–15, 182–185), much as Grimm complained about Christianity having displaced the vernacular Germanic religion (e.g. Grimm 1844: 1–11).

The Model of Human Development in European Scholarship
In his quest for original forms of Finnish mythology, Castrén found a theoretical frame-work for determining the ages of different mythological phenomena, besides in theories of language history, in models of the development of religious thought. These, in turn, relied on theories of stages of cultural development. Castrén does not discuss these theories at any length. Instead, his approach is to be read in his choice of particular terms, observations and inferences in the text. In the

following, we will discuss briefly the background of these theories of development in European research and how they are seen in Castrén's discussion.

In the 18th century, a concept for an early stage of religion called 'primitive monotheism' was current. Primitive monotheism refers to the phase in human history referenced in the Bible as between banishment from the Garden of Eden and the demolition of the Tower of Babel, a period when humankind was still in direct contact with God. At that time, it was still quite natural to rely on the Bible and its descriptions to understand early stages of culture because the Bible was conceived as an authoritative text on the history of humankind. Closer to the 19th century, the Bible was no longer considered to hold the unquestionable historical authority that it had since the Middle Ages. Knowledge of different cultures and religious systems increased towards the end of the 18th century, and the idea that religious thinking develops over time from primitive to more sophisticated forms gained footing in Europe. Without exception, Christian monotheism represented the highest level in these theories. (See Simon 1956; Vaughan 1972: 10–12; Meek 2010.)

The idea of a universally uniform, gradual development of cultures towards the highest level that was represented by European cultures originated in the 18th century and developed towards cultural evolutionism around the end of the 19th century (see Stocking 1967: 87–94). Cultural development was identified with the development of the human mind and, therefore, a high level of culture was connected to a high level of intelligence, and the opposite was considered to hold true as well. Forms of religion were equally seen to be determined by the cultural level of development: in primitive cultures, religiosity was considered to be simple, reflecting an instinct-driven, limited intellectual capacity. The roots of religion were thus considered to be in attempts to rationalize fearful, unexplained phenomena with deficient knowledge and insufficient intelligence. David Hume, for example, argued in 1757 that the origins of religion were in emotion, especially fear, as opposed to philosophical reflection (Hume 2007: 37–38), which can be observed

as a philosophical trend that continues into the 19th century.[2]

The theory of the universally uniform development of cultures was implicitly accompanied by the idea that, in contemporary undeveloped cultures, there were to be observed phenomena, such as forms of religious thinking, that were analogical with the earlier, less developed stages of European cultures. Shortly after David Hume had explained the roots of 'idolatry' to be in the way that primitive people identify invisible forces with observable objects (Hume 2007: 49), Charles de Brosses (1709–1777) compared the 18th-century religious practices in West Africa to relics depicting the religion of ancient Egypt in his *Du culte des dieux fétiches* (1760) ['On the Cult of Fetish Gods']. Based on this comparison, de Brosses suggests that the worship of stone idols and other objects, or *fetishism*, represents the earliest form of religion (see Feldman & Richardsson 1972: 172). According to de Brosses, the mind of a 'savage' needs a concrete object for worship and only in a more developed stage of a culture is it possible to worship an abstract, invisible deity (Ellen 1988: 214).

Auguste Comte created one of the earliest models for the development of cultures, in which he determined the stages of development of religion as:

1. Fetishism
2. Polytheism
3. Monotheism

Comte thus embedded the development of religious thinking within the larger scheme of a universal pattern of development of culture and suggested similar regularity for the development of religious thinking. He conceived fetishism as being one form of magic, an attempt to affect different phenomena by supernatural means. (Martineau 1853: 1–5.)

Following C.G. Heyne, Georg W.F. Hegel (1770–1831) had also counted fetishism as a phenomenon parallel with practicing magic in his 1827 lectures. Hegel resorts to the notion of an undeveloped mind incapable of imagining abstractions as a reason why "[divine] power is set forth only as something external and sensible" (Hegel 1988: 235; see also Williamson 2004: 32). Castrén was familiar with Hegel's theory of the types of religious thinking, even

though he does not refer to it in his *Lectures*. According to Hegel, there are three types of religion:

1. 'Natural religion' in which natural objects are conceived to be one with their spirit (e.g. 'thunder-god' referring to 'thunder'), and in which man himself is the highest imaginable being.
2. Religion in which spirit is detached from natural objects but is still linked to them and in which, consequently, gods are conceived to accompany and manifest in natural phenomena such as thunder but also to exist as independent entities.
3. 'Consummate religion' which means that the divine is understood to impregnate everything and that everything, including the acts and thoughts of men, are seen to manifest the divine.
(Hegel 1988: 207–209, 229–235, 271–292.)

It is possible, on a general level, to identify echoes of Hegel's ideas in Castrén's *Lectures* in the notion of the development of mythology. Elsewhere in his notes, however, Castrén mentions that, on the basis of his experiences in the field, he cannot accept Hegel's theory as such. According to Castrén, the conception of deities appearing in Hegel's theory (see e.g. Hegel 1988: 235) does not fit with the principles of shamanism:

Hos alla dessa folkslag herrskar Schaman-ismen, som i detalj framter många olikheter, men i hufvudsaken dock är densamma. Denna Schamanism utesluter ej Gudsdyrkan, såsom Hegel will, utan alla Schamanismen tillgifna folkslag äga begr. om idom Gudomligheten. De antaga till och med alla ett högsta väsen, men hkt anses wara för mskan otillgängligt (Dess beskfhet). Utom dess föreställer man sig, att hela naturen är uppfyld med lägre andewäsenden, och dessa äro för mskan tillgängliga. Att besvärja dessa andar, är Schamanens hufvudsak. (KK MC Fennica II:2: 22–23.)

Shamanism prevails among all these peoples, differing in details in many ways but in general being one and the same. This shamanism does not exclude worship of god, as Hegel proposes, but, instead, all peoples that perform shamanism know the concept of divinity. They all accept [that there is] a highest being but consider him inaccessible to humans (His bitterness). In addition, it is understood that all of nature is filled with lower spirit-beings that are accessible to humans. A shaman's main task is to conjure these spirits.

Castrén and the Model of Human Development
Although he does not subscribe to Hegel's model as such, the theory of a universal development of cultures is essential for Castrén's theoretical framework. Its centrality is visible in, for example, terms by which he refers to peoples he considers to be lower on the ladder of development, such as *ohyfsade* ['unsophisticated, indecent'], *vildar* ['the wild (people)'], *råa menniskor* ['immature people, savages'], *lägre kulturgrad* ['lower level of culture'], *nationens barndom* ['nation's childhood'], etc. These terms appear arrogant and racist to a modern reader but were typical in the scientific discourse of the 19th century that leaned on the heritage of colonialism.

The aim of Castrén's research was to identify the original – i.e. primitive – elements and structures in Finnish mythology and therefore these elements were to correspond to undeveloped cognitive capacity. Indeed, Castrén attempts to identify with primitive thinking by interpreting his materials primarily through concrete examples and by avoiding abstractions and metaphors as keys for interpretation, as is evident from the following remarks on the Finnish word *jumala* ['god']:

[...] så kan jag dock omöjligen instämma I deras åsigt, som förmena att detta ord enligt sin ursprungliga betydelse uttrycker det abstrakta begreppet af gudom, en gud i allmänhet. Överhufvud förekommer detta begrepp aldrig i folkslagens barndom, utan dess uppkomst förutsätter redan en längre framskriden kultur. Råa och ohyfsade folk sakna vanligen uttryck till och med för de alldagligaste abstrakta begrepp. (Castrén 1853a: 10–11.)

[...] it is impossible for me to agree with the opinion that this word [*jumala*] by its original meaning refers to the notion of an abstract divinity, 'god in general'. This kind of a notion does not even exist in the childhood of nations, but instead, its existence requires a developed culture. Immature and uncivilized peoples usually lack even ordinary abstract notions.

Castrén sees the astonishment before natural phenomena to have led to the conception that they are divine: "What is there in nature that

could better evoke a savage's astonishment and induce him to worshipping than the sky with its Sun, Moon and thousands of stars?" (Castrén 1853a: 15). Because the thunderstorm is the most impressive of natural phenomena, it became the central divinity, the supreme god. Following the Hegelian line of thought, Castrén argues that natural objects were originally worshipped in their outward appearance, which is observable already in that the objects and the divinities associated with them often have the same designation.

According to Castrén, a divinity could be conceived as existing without a concrete manifestation or 'body' only in a more developed stage of religious thinking, which, for Castrén, meant the beginning of polytheism (Castrén 1853a: 25–27, 106–107, 159–161). He suggests that Finns also originally worshiped natural objects in their perceivable appearance and only later separated divinities from these objects (e.g. Castrén 1853a: 106–107). Russian researchers who have assessed Castrén's legacy have noted that his idea of the manifestation or personification of divinities in worshipped objects (e.g. Castrén 1853a: 159–163) resembles the idea of animism that was defined twenty years after Castrén's *Lectures* by Edward B. Tylor (Bogoraz 1927: 31–33; Štenberg 1927: 50–53; Nordberg 2013: 67–73). According to Tylor, the conceptions that primitive peoples held about spirit or spirits in all matter and the independence of these spirits represent the most primitive form of religious thinking (Tylor 1871: e.g. 385, 430–432).

The ideas that Castrén presented concerning worship of the dead were not far from those that were brought up soon after his death by, for example, Friedrich Max Müller and later by Edward B. Tylor (Anttonen, V. 2010: 29–34). Whereas Castrén was able to construct a rather exhaustive and consistent typology of the other mythological beings and their functional roles within the system of belief, the worship of the dead seems to have proved problematic. Castrén acknowledges its importance in the belief systems of many peoples he has studied, and, on the question of why bygone relatives and other people became venerated, Castrén argues: "The respect for the dead, among many peoples, was not only based on the fear of his harmful visits but instead, it followed partly

the belief in the higher, divine essence that he had acquired through death" (Castrén 1853a: 122–123). Hence, he considers that the dead transform into divine beings in moving out of the world of the living, at least in the 'more developed' type of cult of the dead that he calls *en ordentlig kult af de döda* ['a proper cult of the dead'] in which rituals are not performed out of fear alone (Castrén 1853a: 123). For Castrén, as for English anthropology after him, ritual practices were central indicators of religious thinking. He argues that the attitude towards 'spirits' and 'divinities' did not differ drastically in rituals but that these beings were equally appealed to, the difference being found primarily in the sphere of activity that they were associated with and, consequently, in the purposes for which they were addressed. (Castrén 1853a: 174.) Indeed, it seems like Castrén's descriptions of spirits living in natural phenomena and natural objects were situated on a continuum of discussions between Hume and Hegel and the anthropological research which began after Castrén's time.

Castrén's Linguistic Approaches
Interestingly, Castrén sets out his methodological points of departure in the introduction to *Ethnological lectures* (1857a–b). In the introduction, Castrén describes three different disciplines that come together in his ethnological lectures. The first is philology, an auxiliary discipline for history in the sense that it concentrates on literature. Castrén notes that oral literature should be added as material for philology: he writes that, for the Finns, oral poetry in Kalevala-metre is comparable to literature as a type of source material, and that this poetry can provide researchers with knowledge about the spiritual life of the Finns regarding, for example, their *religion, seder, lefnaddsätt, och metd ett ord: hela deras andliga lif* (Castrén 1857a: 8) ['ancient religion, customs and way of life, in short: their spiritual life as a whole']. The second discipline is linguistics, and especially historical and comparative linguistics, which offered Castrén knowledge about history through careful comparison of sounds and structural qualities of the languages in question. The third that he has used in his analysis is ethnography – noting that Castrén tends to use *ethnography* and

ethnology as synonyms. Ethnology is needed, according to Castrén, because Finns do not have historical data describing the times to which kalevalaic poetry refers. Moreover, modern elements have already infected the songs, which is why oral poetry is *ett brokigt hvimmel* ['a miscellaneous bustle'] (Castrén 1857a: 8) as a source material for history. According to Castrén, the early history of the Finns can be uncovered through comparing the ideas in kalevalaic poetry to the ideas of related peoples who *ännu bibehållit sitt rena, ursprungliga skaplynne* ['still have maintained their pure and original character'] (Castrén 1857a: 3–8).

These notes open up Castrén's thinking somewhat. It is clear that he was oriented towards historical, original, uncorrupted features of cultures, which he again defined based on language. At the time, the three different disciplines were all developing at a rapid pace, and Castrén was both building on them and also developing them. Moreover, he constructed his methodological core around the comparative method, which was best developed in linguistics and philology (which were not clearly distinguished), and which he took as "a model in seeing lawlike patterns to explain the objects of [his] study" in a similar manner to other researchers of his time in fields such as anthropology, sociology, mythology and folklore studies (Griffiths 2017: 481).

The obvious background for this kind of search for the specific, vernacular and uncorrupted cultural traits of linguistically defined groups is in the Neo-Humanistic thinking of Hegel and Herder, which developed in National-Romanticism around Europe. As has been noted by, for example, Satu Apo (2006: 261–264), the ideas about each culture's specificity and value as such, and about the importance of oral poetry in expressing this specificity, offered not only a weighted theoretical starting point, but also political impetus for those young nations that did not have their own written literature or history – such as the Finns.

Comparative linguistics and philology are most indebted to the vast European projects that aimed to document different languages during the Enlightenment, which provided the basis for developing insights. As noted by scholars concerning the history of comparative linguistics, the central researchers in the development of the field were Franz Bopp, Jakob Grimm and Rasmus Rask, whose work concentrated on systematic historical comparisons instead of descriptions of languages. (Campbell 2002; Lehmann 1992.) In addition, the analogies between living organisms and languages and the implications of these analogies for the study of languages made by Friedrich von Schlegel oriented researchers towards systematicity, and also towards morphology. Comparing the morphology of languages became the central method for comparative linguistics, but Rask's work on sounds also produced promising results. While attention to morphology resulted in comparative grammar, Rask's method was based on proceeding through the sounds and their correlation to each other in neighboring languages. (Pedersen 1962: 261; Lehmann 1992: 30; Campbell 2002: 90.)

Castrén was well aware of the latest theories and methods of comparative linguistics, and he also wanted to adapt the methodological practices in the comparison of cultures and mythologies (Schiefner 1857). It seems that Castrén treated the features of mythology as units of comparison parallel to morphological units or sounds in linguistics. His reasoning about the age and originality of features of mythology, for example, is based on the distribution of notions, ritual practices, or ideas. Therefore, if a feature is met across a wide area and among many linguistic communities, it is considered old, whereas rare and singular features are seen as new or younger. This line of thought is clear, for example, in the first chapter of the *Lectures*, where Castrén shows that *jumala* is the oldest and most original name for a god. This is based on the observation that the name is known even among the Samoyedic languages, whereas other names denoting a god are known only among some linguistic groups. *Ukko*, for example, is known *i betydelsen af en gudomlighet* ['in the sense of a deity'] only in Finno-Karelian, Estonian and Sámi traditions, which is why Castrén considers it to be a younger notion (Castrén 1853a: 27–28). Likewise, Castrén seems to be almost sorry to

declare that *sampo*, one of the central symbols of the *Kalevala*, has to be a loan from Scandinavian mythology because there is no evidence of anything like it among any other people speaking related languages (Castrén 1853a: 270–276).

Castrén's Ethnographic Methodology
The extensive field expeditions taken by Castrén were driven by his passion for history, languages and cultures. It was clear that, in order to build a more coherent and more detailed history of mankind, one needed a qualitatively new kind of systematically collected material, which would lend itself to systematic comparisons. Consequently, although Castrén was definitely guided by the national and Romantic visions of the Finnish nation, his scientific frames can be found in the contemporary discussions about the history of mankind. This history was to be found through the comparative analysis of languages and the customs and material culture of their speakers. A holistic approach was common in fieldwork of the time, and Anders Johan Sjögren was one of the central developers of the method in Russia. He is not only the link between Castrén and the Russian Academy of Sciences, but also between Castrén and Rasmus Rask. Historically, Sjögren links Castrén to the chain of Finnish humanities and the so-called Turku School of Romantics.

Sjögren was a Finnish linguist who began to study languages, customs and oral traditions of Finnic peoples in Western Russia at the beginning of 19th century. He made his way to the Russian Academy of Sciences through tireless fieldwork and publications that reconstructed the history of various northern Russian linguistic communities based on archival and detailed field materials. (Branch 1973.) He became the holder of the first chair of ethnography in the world, in the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg, and had considerable impact in the design and support of Castrén's fieldwork (Branch 1968). Sjögren admired the work of contemporary comparative linguists, such as Rasmus Rask, who encouraged Sjögren in his work. The insistence on exact documentation of living languages and their variation, not only at the lexical, but also at the morphological level was the central driving force behind both Rask's and Sjögren's work.

The field of ethnography did not develop only through analogies to linguistics. The interest in ethnographic knowledge had developed in the active interchange between German-based thinking and field expeditions in Russia, which has been lately discussed and profoundly illustrated by Han F. Vermeulen (2015). In this context, the development of ethnology is linked to ideas about the interchange between linguistic groups and their history with the Russian imperial interest in gaining better knowledge of the resources within its borders. Consequently, German philosophers, beginning from Leibniz, were able to add questions about language, customs and folklore to the questionnaires and work tasks of the vast imperial expeditions that took place in the course of the 18th century. Known as the great northern expeditions, these took many years and, although they always had one central task, there were always several smaller expeditions with their own itineraries within each expedition. The tasks of the expeditions were mainly related to natural resources and economics, as well as mapping possible new trade routes.

August Schlözer's *Allgemeine nordische Geschichte* (1771) ['General Northern History'] and Johann Gottlieb Georgi's *Beschreibung aller Nationen des russischen Reichs* (1776–1780) ['Description of all Nations of the Russian Empire'] had considerable impact on the picture of the peoples of Siberia and, more significantly, on the development of ethnology. Schlözer's thinking linked *Ethnographie* or *Völkerkunde* to a general history of the world consisting of chronological, technographical and geographical descriptions. *Völkerkunde*, which was meant to produce a holistic, universal and empirical description of nations of the world, would complement world history. Georgi's work is holistic: it not only describes many cultural features of 65 peoples living in Russia, but also classifies them linguistically, and according to their religion and economy.

Following these ideas and carefully reading Messerschmidt's notes, Vasili Nikititsh Tatiščev and Gerhard Friedrich Müller made several additions to the list of tasks for the second Siberian expedition in the mid-18th century.

These additions are not only lists of questions, but contain clear methodical points that tell about the development of holistic thinking and fieldwork methodology. Müller's starting point was to produce systematic and comprehensive data concerning all the peoples there so that these could be compared to each other. The instructions not only list a huge number of details to be collected, but also bring forth ideas about personal observations, interaction and meeting people at their homes. (Bucher 2009; Vermeulen 2015: 164–183.) Tatiščev's and Müller's instructions had considerable impact on Peter Simon Pallas's work, and, for example, Vermeulen (2015: 307) highlights the *Völker* thinking behind Pallas' texts (see Pallas 1771–1776). It is noteworthy that Pallas' and Georgi's texts are often mentioned by Castrén in his *Lectures* indicating that he was reflecting on them and building his interpretations on them. In addition, it is clear that Castrén's travel routes followed Messerschmidt's and Pallas' itineraries. The material evidence on Finnish mythology and rituals available to Castrén was extremely scarce, and therefore he was forced to resort to comparable, analogous evidence from related peoples, largely limited to those along the routes of his expeditions. Therefore, the earlier expeditions had an impact on the image of Finnish mythology as well.

It is difficult to say how exactly this choice of subjects for fieldwork affected Castrén's view of Finnish mythology. However, it shows that Castrén's work was situated in a developing continuum of pioneering European fields of research. In his work, Castrén built upon previous research and, through his efforts and talent, took this line of research further. Besides conducting the research tasks that he was assigned, he attempted to answer the expectations set by his Fennomaniac social surrounding by utilizing the results of his work in reconstructing a past and constructing an identity for an evolving nation. This reflects clearly how the development of Finnish comparative philology, including disciplines today known as linguistics, folklore studies and ethnology, shared the space not only with national and Romantic ideas emphasizing the aesthetic in vernacular expression, but also with the imperial efforts to gather information

for administrative purposes from the multinational and multicultural imperial expanses.

Conclusion: Some Critical Remarks

Castrén's work builds on four main categories of sources: previous Finnish 18th-century scholarship, the *Kalevala*, his own ethnographic fieldwork and his predecessors' ethnographic reports. Castrén discusses these sources on the basis of concurrent European ideas philologically oriented to comparative studies on mythology. This leads to a certain methodological unevenness because Castrén attempts to include all existing knowledge concerning Finnish mythology as well as his own observations on expeditions into his model or theoretical construction of the historical development of Finnish mythology. Since Castrén's sources in previous mythographies, including the *Kalevala*, are compiled and organized within a framework that differs from his, the sources and the way that Castrén organizes them are not fully commensurate. His attempt to describe simultaneously a hierarchically ordered system of mythological beings, rituals involved with them and their development in history seems necessarily to lead to an organization in which the hierarchy is an artificial frame of representation that will not accommodate historical development as a factor. Indeed, the hierarchical system, adapted from Lencqvist's treatise, seems to be misleading and even unfit for Castrén's approach. This failure to properly connect the system with its development in history means that the system and its manifestations in actual historical contexts blend together in Castrén's discussion.

The methodological challenge faced by Castrén lies in the structure of the discussion which presumes that the hierarchical order is not variable and that diachronic development can be discussed separately in terms of each group of beings. However, in this kind of approach, it is not possible to take into account diachronic development – i.e. changes to the hierarchical model itself. Things are made still more problematic by the fact that the categories into which Castrén organizes mythological beings are not exclusive but rather overlapping, and the principle by which

these categories are determined does not seem consistent (e.g. the grounds on which the categories 'demons', 'spirits' and 'spirits of the dead' are distinguished). This all means that Castrén's overall model of the history of Finnish mythology accommodates, and hence is partially based on, the co-existence of beings and conceptions that may have never prevailed simultaneously in any historical belief system.

Castrén's use of a universal pattern of development of religious thinking as a means to determine relative ages of different deities and phenomena, with only limited access to external anchors of time, for example in archaeology, might be considered methodologically deficient. The universal patterns are theoretical constructions basically structured as hypotheses and therefore can hardly provide a solid spine for a chronology. Castrén refers to ethnographic comparative evidence in explaining cultural (and mythological) phenomena and in order to show the diverse forms in which individual phenomena may appear. The subjects for Castrén's comparison were selected largely (although not exclusively) from the groups of peoples among which he had conducted fieldwork, and these groups were selected in the first place on the basis of an assumed affinity of language. In Castrén's discussion, affinity of language indicates affinity of culture, and therefore the ethnographic comparison was (largely) based on presumed affinity. This would easily have led to assumed analogies in cultural phenomena as they were included in the research frame itself. This explains why some of them appear somewhat excessive.

For Castrén, comparative study illuminated Finnish mythology on several levels simultaneously: with the help of comparative materials, he not only studied the etymologies of terminology and histories of ritual practices but also scrutinized the social practices of cultures in certain forms of livelihoods (analogy) and discussed human psychology (universalisms in the development of religious thinking) in a way that brought different levels and spheres of comparison together, into an unspecified bundle of related phenomena with emphasis on genealogical comparison due to Castrén's interest in origins. This is related to the model of the comparative method that Castrén applied in his work. As noted by Griffiths, the comparative model may be based on assumptions of genealogical connections between the patterns or phenomena analyzed, or alternatively on premises of other kinds of frames, such as environment, human nature, or the structure of social systems that would explain the similarities and differences. Griffiths names the first of these as a narrative approach, which describes Castrén's work extremely well. (Griffiths 2017: 482.) He was, come what may, pursuing an aim of building a history of the Finnish nation, its mythology and vernacular religion based on comparisons with linguistic groups that he thought to be related. Within the narrative model, systematic changes result in differing languages and traditions, but analogical modification creates idiosyncrasies, eventually leading to *ett brokigt hvimmel* ['a miscellaneous bustle'], which obscures possible genealogical relations. (Griffiths 2017: 498.)

Comparative linguistics focused mostly on lexical features in languages and, similarly, Castrén devotes linguistic/philological attention mostly to words and especially to the names of deities and other beings. His approach leaves little room for the possibility that referents of words may change or become blurred as the context or the religious system changes. The history of the significance of proper names referring to deities may be especially difficult to trace: as the referents are abstract, their connection to their names is emphatically contractual. Therefore, those relationships are exposed to influences and change: referents of such names may even vary within a language group. Castrén seems to seek or construct main currents within the religious traditions he discusses instead of discussing the religion of a community as a sum of the diverse conceptions within it. He treats divergences from the mainstream religion in terms of anomalies, insignificant variants. Challenges in interpreting historical, even ancient significance and meanings are highlighted in connection with religious phenomena; vast comparative material may be used to uncover historical meanings in any one language, and this is how Castrén uses it, but even Castrén's vast materials do not always provide answers.

Castrén's *Lectures* broadly represent the nomenclature connected to Finnish mythology

in a framework that emphasizes the hierarchical relations of supernatural agents in a reconstructed, hypothetical religious system. The work connects solidly to its own time and the scientific and ideological currents in it, but it also highlights many interesting insights into analogies found among Siberian belief systems. Castrén discusses the different aspects of mythology in a detailed and profound manner but refrains from drawing conclusions from his observations and discussions. He sketches different elements of the mythological system as well as their development in history and relations to neighboring and more distant cultures but does not construct a solid overall picture of the processes that have led to the evolution of the system. Indeed, he states already in the introductory chapter that this is not his intention. Therefore, the work appears as the documentation or representation rather than analysis of the evidence that is discussed. Nevertheless, the conception of a history of cultural development and theories behind this conception strongly guide, although rather implicitly, the organization and selection of the evidence displayed. It remains possible that Castrén intended to write the history of Finnish mythology later but that tuberculosis did not leave him the time to do so.

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Notes

1. Agricola fills out his lists with types of supernatural agents that would not be discussed as 'gods' today, like *tonttu* ['house spirit'], borrowed from Swedish *tomte*, and most commonly used as 'Christmas elf' today. Some scholars consider the list for Tavastians only to include eleven pagan gods because the mention of *piru* ['devil'] is not seen as a pagan god *per se*. (For discussion of this list, see Anttonen V. 2012.)
2. Other examples may be the philosophers Paul Holbach (1868 |1770]: 174–175), Charles Dupuis (1798) and Georg W.F. Hegel (1988 [1825–1826]: 225) who proposed that the fear of natural phenomena, such as thunderstorms, was the impetus for religious thinking.

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Great Goddess Theory in Ancient Germanic Studies

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Abstract: The present article discusses a historical tendency among scholars to focus on male-gendered deities in the Germanic corpus, a boom period of goddess studies in the 1990s under the influence of Marija Gimbutas, and the place of Great Goddess theory in the field of ancient Germanic studies today. Great Goddess theory is argued to remain an influence in ancient Germanic studies, particularly in the field's tendency to identify goddesses as extensions of a single entity.

As discussed in previous volumes of this journal,[1] female-gendered deities make up the great majority of the gods named on record among the Germanic peoples, both inside and outside of the North Germanic corpus. However, in a monograph published in 1994, Swedish scholar Britt-Mari Näsström mentions a tendency among scholars to focus on male-gendered deities while paying considerably less attention to their female counterparts:

> Although Freyja appears as a prominent deity beside Óðinn, Þór [*sic*], Freyr, and Loki in the sources for Old Norse mythology, scholars have not as yet paid much attention to her,

preferring to concentrate their studies on the male gods and, to a certain extent, on Frigg, Iðunn and Skaði. (Näsström 1994: 2.)

Näsström refers to the comparative lack of scholarship regarding Freyja as a "great silence" and emphasizes that "scholars have chosen to avoid discussing qualities [of Freyja] that deviate from the aspect of fertility" (Näsström 1994: 2).[2] Similarly, in a paper published in 1997, Austrian-American scholar Lotte Motz concurs: "scholars of Germanic myth have, on the whole, paid little attention to female godheads [...]" (Motz 1997: 29) and, a few years later, in a book published in 1999,

British scholar Hilda Ellis Davidson echoes the observations of her peers:

> In mythographical studies based on Icelandic written sources [...] the goddesses commonly receive no more than a brief mention at the end of detailed chapters on male gods such as Odin and Thor, or enigmatic male figures such as Balder and Loki. (Davidson 1999: 9.)[3]

Little appears to have changed since. While Norse mythology has never been more visible in the popular culture of the West, even well-attested goddesses such as Frigg and Freyja remain all but absent, playing little to no part in most modern interpretations and retellings, continuing a long tradition of portraying the Viking Age as a primordial precursor to modern concepts of hyper-masculinity.[4]

No scholars have written as extensively on the topic of Germanic goddesses as Näsström, Davidson and Motz. During the 1990s, this trio (and a few others) produced an unparalleled amount of scholarly material focused on the topic. Their works share a number of similarities, but perhaps the most obvious commonality among the relevant works of the three is a shared lineage of concepts extending ultimately from Great Goddess theory, a theory (or, really, a complex of theories) that proposes the veneration of a monotheistic or semi-monotheistic female divinity in a remote past.

Approaching the Great Goddess

Understanding Great Goddess theory and its myriad forms first requires consideration of its origins. The theory first takes shape[5] in the mid-19th century work of German archaeologist Eduard Gerhard. In an 1849 lecture to the Royal Academy of Sciences, Berlin,[6] Gerhard maintains that, historically, behind the various goddesses of the Olympian-era Greeks, there once existed a single Great Goddess. According to Gerhard, this ancient Mother Goddess seems to have eventually split into a plurality of goddesses via a process of diffusion and synthesis, ultimately yielding at least a large portion of the various goddesses found in the ancient Greek record (e.g. Gerhard 1851: 7, see further Borgeaud 2004: xi–xiv).

Gerhard's concept would go on to influence the work of numerous scholars (see discussion in Lapatin 2003: 67–69). One such figure was Swiss classical philologist Johann Jakob Bachofen. While the concept of a historical, more or less monotheistic Great Goddess was first essentially limited to regions of the Mediterranean, the work of Bachofen took Gerhard's comparatively cautious approach a step further. In 1861, Bachofen published *Das Mutterrecht* ['The Mother-Right'], in which he proposes that *all* Greek deities, both male and female, stem from a Great Goddess figure, a single Mother Goddess. While Gerhard's work examines cultural exchange between polytheistic peoples, Bachofen proposes a stage of monotheism focused on what amounts to a Great Goddess. He hypothesized that this Great Goddess existed among all cultures sometime in a distant past, along with an accompanying age of *Gynaikokratie*.[7]

Bachofen's conceptualization of the Great Goddess as a religious focal point in an age of matriarchy resonated strongly with the ideological changes of later times. In the 20th century, the Victorian concept of the Great Goddess was revived and tailored to fit contemporary tastes. It received particular prominence from the 1970s into the late 1990s, when it was taken up in the discourse of new forms of feminist-oriented spirituality. (To be clear, Bachofen could hardly be categorized as a feminist: for example, he saw this purported matriarchal period as a phase from which mankind needed to 'evolve' in order to reach then-modern society.) In its new context, the idea that a Great Goddess was once venerated and/or that an age of matriarchy occurred in a European prehistory provided something of a mythological charter for new feminist currents.[8]

Today, no scholar is more closely associated with Great Goddess theories and an age of matriarchy than Marija Gimbutas. A rare example of a scholar who breached the ivory tower, Gimbutas's achievements remain remarkable. For example, she co-founded *The Journal of Indo-European Studies*, held the position of chair of European Archaeology at the University of California, Los Angeles, and proposed the still largely-accepted Kurgan hypothesis.[9] Yet, what brought Gimbutas her greatest fame is also the source of her greatest criticisms. During the last decades of her life in particular, she aggressively promoted her theories regarding what she referred to as 'Old

Europe', Europe prior to the expansion of the Indo-Europeans. Liberally drawing from advances in Indo-European studies – including her own impressive archaeological work – Gimbutas hypothesized that a Great Goddess was venerated among the pre-Indo-European peoples. Much in accordance with scholars like Bachofen, she considered the Indo-European peoples to have superseded these matriarchal societies. According to Gimbutas, the warlike Indo-European Father Sky came to reign in the place of a peaceful goddess-centered culture. Her theory posited that with this divine patriarch came a more violent, male-focused culture in place of the matricentric culture of Old Europe.[10]

Aimed at both academics and a general audience, Gimbutas's Great Goddess-focused works were (and in some circles remain) highly influential, especially in popular culture. A testament to her reach, works Gimbutas authored continued to enter publication for several years after her death. During her Great Goddess era, Gimbutas's theories about Old Europe circulated both inside and outside of academia, wielding significant influence in popular culture and creating an unprecedented public enthusiasm for concepts once restricted to Victorian academia and obscure spiritual circles.[11] But these theories – and no doubt their aggressive promotion – also generated strong criticism from the academic community (see e.g. Steinfels 1990; Allen 2001).

Gimbutas's enigmatic popularity cast a shadow over the activity of scholars such as Näsström, Motz, and Davidson, at times provoking responses from them. However, works published by these scholars share a handful of core assumptions with Gimbutas, namely influences from Great Goddess theory.

Britt-Mari Näsström

Näsström's *Freyja – The Great Goddess of the North* (1997) remains a hallmark of Germanic goddess studies. While Näsström examines a host of figures and attestations over the course of her study, a central claim of Näsström's book is that Freyja was at some point a Great Goddess figure among the North Germanic peoples and that most of the goddesses attested among the North Germanic peoples developed from Freyja. She argues that these other goddesses are ultimately hypostases of Freyja reflected as different entities in the record.

Much of Näsström's study of Freyja details and discusses evidence regarding goddesses in the Germanic sphere. Toward the end of her study, Näsström discusses how partitioned aspects of the North Germanic Great Goddess were demonized and folded into witchcraft-related folklore or were otherwise absorbed into the Christian figure of Mary (Näsström 1997: 214).[12] Yet despite all attempts by the new regime to suppress the deity, Näsström argues, the Great Goddess remains indomitable:

> In the course of the last few decades, the Virgin Mary has returned to the Protestant Churches attended by an increasing popularity. This reflects a need on the part of the female half of Christianity to be represented by its own sex in the divine sphere. Applying a perspective supplied by the history of religions, we are again able to discern a return of the Great Goddess. (Näsström 1997: 214–215.)

Hilda Ellis Davidson

Due to Davidson's widely available (and highly regarded) works on the topic of ancient religion in northern Europe (e.g. Davidson 1990 [1964]; 1988; 1993), she remains one of the best known and most visible scholars in the field of ancient Germanic studies in the English-speaking world. Late in life, Davidson came to focus more and more on the topic of goddesses in northern Europe and the contributions of women in her field.[13] Davidson's *The Lost Beliefs of Northern Europe* (1993) includes a section focused on "The Cult of the Great Goddess" (1993: 108–113), making this her first book to go in depth regarding the idea of a Great Goddess among the ancient Germanic peoples.[14] Here, Davidson writes that "clearly there were a multiplicity of goddesses, but the literary sources also tend to give the impression of one supreme and powerful goddess who might be regarded as the wife or mistress of her worshipper" (1993: 108). She says that, among the Scandinavians, this figure "appears to be Freyja" and that the goddesses Frigg and Freyja "may indeed be two aspects of the same deity" (1993: 108). According to Davidson, other goddesses who may be 'aspects' of this Freyja-Frigg Great Goddess include Gefjun,

Iðunn and Gerðr (1993: 108, cf. 110). Later in the same section, Davidson says that "no doubt the dominant goddess with her many names varied in character according to the background against which her worship took place in different regions of Scandinavia" (1993: 111). However, while she seems willing to accept that some sort of Great Goddess of the North Germanic peoples existed, Davidson is critical of:

> claim[s] [...] that the cult of the Great Goddess was a powerful and important one in Scandinavia, and that the later cult of Odin in the Viking Age took over some of its ritual and symbolism [...] the evidence we possess hardly justifies such sweeping generalizations. It is vague and suggestive merely [...]. (Davidson 1993: 111.)

Davidson implies a conceptual division between a Great Goddess and a multitude of more 'local' figures and acknowledges that the concept of a Great Goddess is not at all reflected in the *Prose Edda*. She appears to consider the figures within the *dís–valkyrja–norn* complex, a collectively-treated group of female-gendered entities associated with concepts of death and fate, as categorized within a 'local' sphere, external to a Great Goddess (cf. Davidson 1993: 113–126).

Focus on the Goddess culminates in one of Davidson's final works, *Roles of the Northern Goddess* (1998), a book-length study that implies a similar division of female entities among the peoples of northern Europe. *Roles of the Northern Goddess* is in many ways unlike the rest of Davidson's work. The book in general seems to be something of a response by Davidson to the works of Gimbutas. By the end of *Roles of the Northern Goddess*, Davidson appears to again describe 'aspects' of a Great Goddess, although she never reconstructs a prehistory, nor attributes this Great Goddess to some sort of a matriarchal era in the remote past. Davidson's definition of 'Great Goddess' remains murky and open-ended throughout *Roles of the Northern Goddess*.

Lotte Motz

Motz produced a variety of texts involving the concept of a 'Great Goddess' in Germanic mythology, especially in the 1990s (e.g. Motz 1997), and, a year after her death, Motz's "The Great Goddess of the North" was published (1998). Motz in fact attacks positions held by Gimbutas in the monograph (1997: 24–38, 180–186). In the article, she carefully distances herself from Gimbutas' views when introducing what she means by the phrase 'Great Goddess': she applies the term more in line with Middle-Eastern concepts of deities such as the Sumerian-Semitic-Hellenic deity complex of Ishtar-Innana-Astarte, the Semitic Anat and the Phyrgian Cybele, all of whom she defines as 'Great Goddesses' (Motz 1998: 29). Motz spends the rest of the study linking Freyja with the figures that she defines as Great Goddesses, often emphasizing "Middle eastern [*sic*] analogies". She concludes that "the many resemblances between Freyja and the eastern goddesses cannot have arisen by accident" and advances a model in which the goddess Freyja was introduced to the peoples of Europe through diffusion during Indo-European expansion. Motz proposes that the Indo-Europeans gained knowledge of agriculture from the Near East during this period. (Motz 1998: 36.)

Motz goes on to survey several female-gendered figures from both the North Germanic and continental Germanic corpus (including figures from continental Germanic folklore, such as Frau Perchta). She concludes:

> we may assume that a powerful female divinity had developed in some areas of the Germanic world; she was a creature of the wilderness and also a visitor to human houses [...] unlike her northern sisters the continental goddess shows no affinities and her contact with the women's world is marked. (Motz 1998: 52–53.)

Examining the Germanic corpus, Motz admits that, while "a superficial view does not reveal the existence of a Great Goddess in the Germanic realm," she believes that "it may be that the features of a Great Goddess are merely obscured" (1998: 29–30). Her approach often contrasts sharply with that of Näsström, perhaps most notably in Näsström's criticism of the so-called 'Oriental Hypothesis' (1997: 27–29), which Motz embraces (1998: 35–36).[15] Näsström (1997: 29–32; 1999) instead places Freyja into the framework of French Indo-Europeanist Georges Dumézil's tripartite social structure.

Marija Gimbutas

Gimbutas herself infrequently wrote about Germanic goddesses. Rare examples of turning her focus to the ancient Germanic peoples can be found in her final book, *The Living Goddesses* (1999).[16] In this work, Gimbutas categorizes goddesses in two sections that reflect her most famous theories: 'Religion in Pre-Patriarchal Europe' and 'The Living Goddesses'. Aside from Minoan Crete, the second division contains a section dedicated to several Indo-European language branches in Europe, including Germanic (Gimbutas 1999: 188–197). As elsewhere in the book, Gimbutas's main goal in this section is to identify deities that she claims were venerated in Old Europe prior to "the strong presence of Indo-European warrior deities" (1999: 190). This section introduces a variety of claims that are difficult to explain other than perhaps through reliance on inaccurate secondary sources or invention on the part of the author.[17]

Gimbutas notably rejects Dumézil's third function (fertility, production) designation of the Vanir in favor of an interpretation of this group as 'Old European' gods (referring to Dumézil's explanation as "rather misleading"). Instead of Dumézil's interpretation of the Æsir–Vanir War as a social charter, Gimbutas describes the war as a reflection of the masculine and warlike Indo-European invasion of peaceful and female-centered Old Europe.[18] In other words, the Æsir ended the Great-Goddess-worshipping matriarchy. Here again Gimbutas harks back to the hypotheses of her predecessors, Gerhard and Bachofen, who sought to reconstruct evidence of an earlier era of Great Goddess veneration and matriarchy (respectively) through researcher interpretation.

Great Goddess Theory in Ancient Germanic Studies Today

Näsström, Motz, Davidson and Gimbutas all seek to identify a Great Goddess among the ancient Germanic peoples, doubting the record's representation of goddess figures as individual entities in favor of identifying them as extensions of a more important, singular female-gendered godhead. Each scholar proposes an origin for this purported Great Goddess in different networks of influence and time periods. Ultimately, although only Gimbutas explicitly proposes a period of matriarchy, all bear the influence of works of 19th century scholars such as Gerhard and Bachofen in their desire to hark back to a supposed Great Goddess. The work of these scholars secured a place for Great Goddess discussion in ancient Germanic studies.

Outside of scant references in popular culture, the embers of the Great Goddess-focused work of Gimbutas and her contemporaries continued to glow for some time after her death, but they appear to have all but completely faded today. These theories never met with widespread acceptance in ancient Germanic studies and the subject is rarely mentioned among contemporary academics. Scarce examples include Icelandic scholar Ingunn Ásdísardóttir's rejection of the concept while addressing the potential of a common origin for Frigg and Freyja (2006: 417; see also Ingunn Ásdísardóttir 2007), and Danish scholar Karen Bek-Pedersen's note that she disagrees with Great Goddess theory while discussing folklore purportedly related to North Germanic goddesses in *RMN Newsletter*'s previous issue (Bek-Pedersen 2017: 29). Yet, while Great Goddess theory appears to play little to no role in ancient Germanic studies today, it still bears some influence in the field, perhaps most markedly in a scholarly tendency to view goddesses as extensions of one another – tentacles of a sort of female-focused monotheism lurking in the background (while not proposing the same for male entities, accepting them as numerous and conceptually distinct form one another).

From some of our earliest sources and into the relatively recent folklore record, Germanic goddesses appear to follow a general pattern of individually defined entities surrounded by throngs of less defined goddess-like figures associated with birth, fate and death. A tendency to seek to reduce the sheer volume of goddesses in the Germanic record in Germanic studies may be rooted in Victorian-era theories of a Great Goddess and an accompanying age of matriarchy. This approach seems to have reached its high point in the post-Gimbutas academic landscape of the 1990s but may continue in some avenues today.

The Germanic goddess record is certainly problematic – the glimpses it allows into the beliefs and customs of the ancient Germanic peoples are all too brief, for one. However, the incomplete and often mysterious nature of the corpus may in fact attest to its accuracy. Due to the large body of attestations of early Germanic deities and their apparent echoes later in the Germanic record, we know that a great plurality of female deities played an important role among the early Germanic peoples, a feature likely inherited from predecessors, whether they be a pre-Indo-European people or otherwise.

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Notes

1. This has been the topic of discussion in parts I, II and III of "Goddesses Unknown" (Hopkins 2012; 2014; 2017). As mentioned in the third installment (Hopkins 2017: 35), the present paper was originally conceived as an additional entry in that series.
2. While it is indeed indisputable that Freyja has historically received comparatively little attention in academia, works focused on the three additional goddesses that Näsström mentions – Frigg, Iðunn and Skaði – appear to be similarly uncommon.
3. Davidson acknowledges that "one reason for [the comparative lack of study regarding North Germanic goddesses] is the limited and confused nature of the evidence about female supernatural beings in early northern literature" (Davidson 1999: 9–10), implying that there are likely more reasons for the dearth of studies on this topic than simple disinterest in the topic of Germanic goddesses.
4. See, for example, Marvel Comics' *Thor* franchise, especially Kenneth Branagh's film *Thor* (2011), and Michael Hirst's television series *Vikings* (2013—present), both of which adapt elements of Norse mythology while almost entirely ignoring North Germanic goddesses. Scandinavia is a notable exception to this development, where, for example, derivatives of the theonym *Freyja* continue to flourish as female baby names, and media representations (such as Carlsen Comics's *Valhalla*) rarely shy away from featuring female entities from the Old Norse record.
5. The application of expressions such as *magna dea* or *Magna Mater*, used to refer to several goddesses in the Latin record, is beyond the scope of the present article.
6. Published in 1851 as *Über das Metroon zu Athen und über die Göttermutter der griechischen Mythologie* ['Regarding the Metroon of Athens and the Mother Goddess of Greek Mythology'].
7. On the works and life of Bachofen – including the development of *Das Mutterrecht* – see Eller 2011: 36–65. Eller (2011) additionally features relevant chapters focused on the use of matriarchal narratives in various social circles, particularly in Germany and in Britain.
8. On the topic of myth as charter, see e.g. Malinowski 1948 [1926]; on its use as such in particular "feminist matriarchist" circles, see Eller 2000: 175–178. See also related discussion on the topic of meta-mythology in Frog 2015: 100–108.
9. For biographical data regarding Gimbutas, see Marler 2004. The Kurgan hypothesis proposes that Proto-Indo-European spread from the Pontic–Caspian steppe area, and has recently received additional support from geneticists. See e.g. the recent overview in Jacobson 2018.
10. Gimbutas presents variations of this view in many instances (perhaps most notably in Gimbutas 2007 [1974]; 1981; 1991) but her approach to these topics is most extensively developed in her final book on the topic (Gimbutas 1999).
11. For first-hand experience and commentary regarding the development of these circles and their popularization within, for example, discourse in feminist circles, advertisements for tours of Turkey and even in Dan Brown's popular novel *The Da Vinci Code* (2003), see Eller 2000: 1–30; 2011:1–15.
12. Perhaps out of line with much of the text, in fact written here "Great Goddesses".
13. *The Concept of the Goddess*, a collection of goddess-focused papers, features a biographical sketch of Davidson's career and a then-current outline of her major publications (Billington 1996: xi–xiv).
14. However, Davidson may reference the concept as early as *Gods and Myths of Northern Europe* (1964), where she writes that the "Great Goddess of vegetation and harvest was a development of the Earth Mother [...] under such names as Isis, Demeter, and Cybele" (1990 [1964]: 21).
15. The 'Oriental Hypothesis' proposes that Freyja developed among the North Germanic peoples (or during or before the early Germanic period) under influence from Middle Eastern goddesses, such as Anatolian Cybele.
16. Near completion at the time of her death, the book was edited and supplemented by Mirriam Robbins Dexter (Gimbutas 1999: xi).
17. For example, among other notions that have no source in the Old Norse corpus, Gimbutas says that Vanaheimr is located "west of the world-tree" in something of a verdant paradise (Gimbutas 1999: 191), that Frigg is a "Swedish" goddess and that Fulla has "long golden hair" (Gimbutas 1999: 194).
18. According to Gimbutas, "When scholars have applied Georges Dumézil's tripartite division to Norse gods, the Vanir deities have traditionally belonged to the third category of 'fertility' gods. This classification is rather misleading. The Vanir do not represent a third and lesser class of Indo-European deities; they exemplify Old European deities whom the Indo-Europeans elaborately assimilated into the Germanic pantheon" (Gimbutas 1999: 196). For English

language discussion from Dumézil on the topic, see Dumézil 1973: 3–25.

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Runo Revisited: Borrowing and Semantic Development

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Abstract: The Finnish and Karelian word runo *['poem'] has been viewed as reflecting a loan from Proto-Germanic* *rūnō, *the ancestor of Old Norse* rún *['rune']. However, given its limited distribution in Finnic and the meanings attested in Germanic and Finnic languages, the word was more likely borrowed at a later stage, from Early Norse near the start of the Viking Age, probably in the meaning of 'incantation, verbal charm' and in connection with incantational magic.*

According to a long-accepted etymology, the Germanic word that became Old Norse *rún* ['charm; unit of mythic knowledge; message carved in runes; runic letter; confidante'], Gothic *runa* ['mystery'], etc., was borrowed into Finnic from a Germanic language in prehistoric times and appears in Modern Finnish as *runo* ['poem'], with a possible cognate in Karelian (*LägLoS* III: 178, s.v. 'runo'), although Häkkinen (2004: 1068, s.v. 'runo') regards the Karelian word as a borrowing from Finnish. When viewed in relation to the most familiar meaning of *rune* as 'runic letter', the borrowing seems surprising, inasmuch as Finland's relationship to Scandinavian runic culture otherwise appears tenuous. The number of runic inscriptions recovered from Finland is very small.[1] However, the meaning of 'runic letter' in Old Norse may postdate the borrowing. In both Germanic and Finnic languages, reflexes of Proto-Germanic *rūnō and analogues to Finnish *runo* are attested in a range of meanings and have undergone semantic changes, the details of which are not entirely clear. There is also disagreement on the etymology of both the Germanic word and the North Finnic borrowing.

Proposed etymologies for Germanic *rūnō variously emphasize the runes' physical form as scratch marks, their function as bearers of (possibly secret or ritual) information, or the idea of letters as part of a regular sequence. Debate over the etymology is associated with differing views on the connection between runes and magic (see e.g. Pierce 2003: 30; Liberman 2009: 253, 255). The literature focuses on how the word acquired the meaning 'runic letter'; some other aspects of the attested semantic range tend to be ignored in this discussion. Considering the Germanic and Finnic evidence in relation to each other can help shed light on the development.

Both borrowing and semantic changes are tied to cultural changes – transfer and adaptation of concepts and technologies – that further illuminate dynamics of cultural contacts between Germanic and Finnic speakers during the Iron Age. I suggest that Finnish and Karelian *runo* represents a later borrowing than has generally been assumed – not from Proto-Germanic into (Late) Proto-Finnic but from North Germanic or Early Norse into a North Finnic dialect – due to its limited spread in Finnic, some of which is due to borrowing. However, the word's phonological form in Finnic languages shows that it must be older than the medieval period. The word has undergone significant semantic changes in both Germanic and Finnic. The point of overlap between the meanings attested in Old Norse and in Finnic is 'magical charm', which may be the meaning in which it was borrowed. The borrowing may be connected with North Finnic incantation technology, associated with Germanic influence, which seems to have spread near the start of the Viking Age (Frog 2014: 452). This would be connected with the North Finnic languages' spread onto the Karelian Isthmus, from which Karelian emerged as a distinct language and ethnos (Frog & Saarikivi 2015: 89–90). Alternative etymologies that have been proposed for *runo* entail greater difficulties in explaining the semantic development. At the end of the paper, I briefly discuss the Finnish word *riimu* ['runic letter'], also a loan, which shows a different path of semantic development at a later time and in a different cultural context.

Research History and Alternative Etymologies

The correspondence between North Finnic *runo* and the Germanic word reflected in English *rune* and its cognates was noted already by Jacob Grimm (1865: 81; cf. Kylstra 1961: 34), and *runo* was established as a

Germanic loan in Vilhelm Thomsen's (1869: 145) pioneering study of loanwords in Finnish. Thomsen is not precise about the stage at which the borrowing occurred, but the North Finnic word is generally said to be a borrowing from Proto-Germanic *rūnō (e.g. Karsten 1915: 56). In his earlier work, Thomsen (1869: 145) also connects the word to Sámi ("sv.-l.") *rudn(a), runa*, translated "sermo, rumor" ['speech, rumor'], although he later (1890: 213–214) viewed the Sámi word as an independent borrowing from Swedish *runa*, defined as "tala i smyg, hviska, hemligt öfverlägga" ['to speak in secret, whisper, secretly contemplate']. The Sámi words are also regarded by *SKES* (IV: 865, *s.v.* 'runo 1') as an independent late borrowing from Scandinavian. A Finnish homophone *runo* ['(barren) reindeer cow'], with variants *ruuno* and *ruuna* in Finnish and *runno* in Viena (or White Sea) Karelian, is in turn a borrowing from Sámi *rodno* ['barren reindeer'] (*SKES* IV: 865, *s.v.* 'runo 2') and unrelated to the word in question. Thomsen's account has been generally accepted since. As summarized in *LägLoS*: "Die von Thomsen vorgelegte Deutung als germ. Lehnwort (germ. *rūnō) ist lautlich und semantisch plausibel und hat allgemeinen Beifall gefunden" (*LägLoS* III: 178, *s.v.* 'runo') ['The interpretation presented by Thomsen as a Germanic loanword (Gmc *rūnō) is phonologically and semantically plausible and has received general approval'].

T.E. Karsten (1915: 56) connects the borrowing and semantic development to the purported magical origin of the runes:

> Die germanische Bezeichnung 'Runen' für Schriftzeichen erklärt sich aus deren ursprünglicher Verwendung im geheimnisvollen Losen und Wahrsagen. Die finnische Bedeutung 'carmen, poëma' geht auf die ältere Nuance 'Zauberlied' zurück, wofür die Finnen jetzt die Zusammensetzung *loitsu-runo* gebrauchen. Auch bei den Römern wurde die Zauberformel singend hergesagt, das beweist u. a. lat. *cantare* 1) 'singen', 2) 'die Zauberformel hersagen', *incantatus* 'durch Zaubersprüche geweiht'. (Karsten 1915: 56.)

> The Germanic designation 'runes' for written characters is explained by their original use in arcane drawing of lots and prophesying. The Finnish meaning 'song, poem' is derived from the older sense 'magical song', for which the Finns now use the compound *loitsu-runo* 'charm-song'. Also among the Romans, incantations were recited singing, as seen from among other things Latin *cantare* 1) 'sing' 2) 'perform an incantation', *incantatus* 'hallowed by incantations'.

In the century since Karsten's publication, the connection between runes and magic has been much disputed. Alternative etymologies have been proposed for both the Finnic and Germanic words. The chronology of language stages and borrowing strata has been systematized and understandings of the nature of ritual performance and mythic knowledge in Finnic and Scandinavian cultures have evolved. There is thus reason to revisit the history of the word *runo*.

Wolfgang Krause (1969) proposes an alternative etymology for 'Finnish' *runo* (he does not mention other Finnic languages; however, it has been commonplace until relatively recently to use 'Finnish' as inclusive of Karelian and Ingrian, as well as sometimes other Finnic and Uralic languages, on which, see also Ahola & Lukin in this issue). He suggests that it has the same origin as Modern Icelandic *runa* ['sequence, row'], related to the verb *renna* ['to run'] (Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon 1989: 779, *s.v.* 'runa 1'), which may also be seen in names of meters such as *runhenda*.[2] Either a Proto-Germanic *ō-stem (*rūnō > rún) or *ōn-stem (*runōn > runa) could yield a final -o (Setälä 1906: 27–28; Fromm 1957–1958: 88–89). The significant property of both a metrical charm and a sequence of letters is the sequence of similar items one after another. Krause reiterates this view in his handbook on Early Norse (1971: 21).

LägLoS (III: 178, *s.v.* 'runo') assesses Krause's alternative etymology as possible but less likely than Thomsen's, on the grounds that the source word is only found in West Norse and the semantic fit is not as good. Anatoly Liberman (2009: 258) views the lack of cognates or early attestations for Icelandic *runa* ['sequence, row'] as a problem. He infers from Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon's (1989: 779, *s.v.* 'runa 1') silence that the word is not attested before the 20th century. Although the word does not appear in ONP, the Written Language Archive (*Ritmálssafn*) of the Árni

Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies contains 26 attestations starting from the 17th century. Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon (1989: 779, *s.v.* 'runa 1') also mentions an attestation in an early Norse inscription, perhaps referring to Björketorp (Krause & Jankuhn 1966 I: 214–218, #97). If this alternative etymology for *runo* is accepted, the picture of the borrowing and primary meanings is quite different. The point of overlap between the attested meanings in Germanic and Finnic languages is then something like 'rhythmical verbal sequence'. Liberman (2009: 272) suggests that the salient characteristic of an alphabet is the regular sequence, and further proposes that the "alphabet magic" that motivates carving a futhark sequence on a weapon is the idea that the weapon should pursue its target as inevitably as one letter follows another.

There have also been alternative proposals regarding the etymology of the Germanic word. Volkert F. Faltings (1994) suggests that Germanic **rūnō* is related to Germanic **rūnan* ['gelding'] (defined "verschnittener Hengst") and has the base meaning 'to cut', seen also in words for 'gelding, castrated' across the Germanic languages and borrowed into Finnic (*ruuna* ['gelding']) and Baltic (Latvian *rūnis* ['gelding'], from Middle High German). Similar suggestions had earlier been presented by Lorenz Diefenbach (1846–1851 II: 177, *s.v.* 'rûna'), Edmund Weber (1941) and Richard L. Morris (1985: 345). To support the idea that 'to cut' forms a plausible base, Morris (1985: 347) points out that in many languages "lexical items which denote writing were adapted from words whose original meanings designated how writing was first performed by these people," citing examples from Greek, Latin, Slavic, Semitic and Egyptian. This applies to the Germanic verbs **wreitanan* ['to scratch, incise'] and **faihijanan* ['to color, paint'], both used with runes (Morris 1985: 347–348). Under this view, the meaning of carving precedes verbal, let alone magical connotations. De Vries (1962: 453, *s.v.* 'rún') views Weber's proposal as "abzulehnen" ['to be rejected'] and it remains a minority view.

The alternative etymology for the Germanic word entails a different course for the borrowing of *runo*, and the semantic development becomes more difficult: phonologically *ruuna* looks like a younger borrowing, but semantically *runo* would match a later stage.

In yet another variant, Liberman (2009: 257) follows Jan de Vries' (1962: 453 *s.v.* 'rún') tentative suggestion connecting *rún* to Old Norse *raun* [n. 'trial; experiment; experience']. He proposes a development in Germanic from 'try; investigate; probe' > 'consultation; counsel; knowledge, private knowledge made public; council' with the equation of a group and the product of the group's activity, followed by a few semantic leaps:

> A governing body must have been looked upon as an ordered sequence [....] When the runic alphabet made its entry in medieval Scandinavia, the word *rúnar* was applied to the alphabet, an ordered sequence of letters. Only later did the singular form *rún* come to designate a separate unit of the alphabet. With the usual semantic nondiscrimination of the singular and the plural in such cases, *rún* (sg.) was also allowed to mean 'message', but the plural continued into Old Icelandic as the most common form. (Liberman 2009: 257.)

Liberman (2009: 258) sees 'sequence' as the base meaning of both Germanic **rūnō* and Finnish *runo,* although, accepting Krause's (1969) etymology for the latter, he views these as coincidental homonyms: "The paronomasia is astounding: Gmc. **rūnō* and Finn. *runo*, coming from different sources, seem to have identical meanings" (Liberman 2009: 258).

Germanic **rūnō* has also been connected with an Indo-European root ** reuH-* ['to dig'] (Morris 1985: 352); cf. Old Church Slavonic and Lithuanian *ryti* ['to dig'] (Pierce 2003: 31–32). Friedrich Kluge and Elmer Seebold (2002: 776, *s.v.* 'rune') regard Morris' (1985) etymology as "sicher richtiger" ['surely more correct'] than a connection with 'secret' or 'murmur'. However, no other reflexes of this root in the relevant meaning have been identified in Germanic; Old Norse words derived from the same root are *rýja* ['pluck the wool off sheep'] and *rǫgg* ['tuff, shagginess (of the fur of a cloak)'], reflecting the older meaning 'pull up' for PIE **reuH-* (Mees 2014: 528).

Latvian *runa* ['speech'] was (according to Thomsen 1890: 213) suggested by Otto Donner to be the source of the Finnish word, but Thomsen (1890: 213) viewed the Germanic

word as better semantic fit as a source. The Baltic word is regarded as reflecting either a borrowing from Germanic (Liberman 2009: 258–259) or separate evolution from Indo-European (Karulis 1992: 137, *s.v.* 'runāt'; Mees 2014: 531; Kallio et al. 2016–2017: 157n.22). Bernard Mees (2014: 533–534) argues that cognates to *rune* in Baltic and Celtic indicate an inherited meaning 'counsel', a Northwestern development of PIE *$h_3$reuH*- ['bellow, roar']. This emphasizes the function of runes in communication, rather than as physical marks.

The relationship between Germanic *$*rūnō$* and Celtic analogues such as Old Irish *rún* ['secret'] has been debated. Carl J.S. Marstrander (1928: 175–177) suggested that *rune* was a borrowing from Celtic into Germanic. Terrence H. Wilbur (1957: 16) proposed that the borrowing was in the opposite direction. De Vries (1960: 73) objected to Marstrander's hypothesis, citing the lack of related words in Celtic. Liberman (2009: 258) says that the idea of *rune* as a borrowing can be entertained only as long as the word appears etymologically isolated in Germanic, but not when it is connected to e.g. German *raunen* ['to murmur']. Harald Bjorvand and Fredrik Otto Lindeman (2007: 899, *s.v.* 'rune') and Adam Hyllested (2010: 110) note that there are no phonological or morphological indications as to whether the Germanic and Celtic words are cognate or reflect an early borrowing. Mees (2014: 530) views the Celtic words as cognates to Germanic. Sigmund Feist (1939: 401, *s.v.* 'rūna') makes a further connection to Greek ἐρέω ['I ask']. Liberman (2009: 256–257) expresses skepticism about reconstruction to an Indo-European root: "Root etymology is a dangerous tool of reconstruction under the best of circumstances, but in the area of sound imitative words it is altogether useless" (2009: 256); he goes so far as to assert that "[t]he verb *$*rū$*- 'give sound' is etymological fiction." Wilbur (1957: 14) summarizes: "The assiduous search for Indo-European cognates of Gmc. *$*rūna$*- has led to a great number of entries in etymological works from which it is very difficult to extract any clear-cut conceptions." The relations among Indo-European words outside Germanic are beyond the range of the present paper.

Debate over the etymology of *rune* is tied up with discussion of whether the association between runes and magic is primary and central or secondary and marginal (see e.g. Morris 1985: 344–346; Andersson 1997: 319; Pierce 2003: 30; Liberman 2009: 253.). It has frequently been suggested that writing with runes was a secret art viewed as akin to magic; this has been reiterated in the context of the etymology of Germanic *rūn*- since Wilhelm Grimm (1821: 69; cf. Morris 1985: 344). However, this argument has rarely been expanded in the context of runes, nor are comparanda systematically presented.

The debate over runes and magic in turn is connected with the image and definition of runology as a field. While many modern runologists since Bækstad (1952) have stressed that runes are simply letters, an interest in occult uses of runes has been part of runology throughout its history (Andersson 1997). "Realistic" runologists (Andersson 1997: 348–354) may tend to prefer etymologies that do not connect runes with magic or mystery (Liberman 2009: 255). Liberman (2009: 254) states categorically that "All etymologies of rune that use 'magic; charm, secret' as their starting point should, in my opinion, be abandoned."

A Later Borrowing

Loanwords from early Germanic are generally coeval with Late Proto-Finnic (Kallio 2015). However, it can be difficult to date loanwords precisely based on their sound structure (Häkkinen 2014); Aslak and Ante Aikio (2001: 19–21) list only 114 such loanwords that can confidently be dated early on phonological grounds (Kallio 2015: 26). As Petri Kallio (2015) observes, the bulk of the Germanic loans into Finnic are in fact later than Proto-Germanic, but come from North Germanic or Proto-Norse. The *terminus post quem* and *terminus ante quem* for a particular word may span more than one language stage, but the bulk seem to come from between ca. A.D. 200 and 600 (on methodological issues, see Schalin, this volume).

A narrower dialect distribution could point to a later borrowing date. Pekka Sammallahti (1977: 121) points out that *runo* is one of ca. 100 early Germanic loan words in Finnic

(around 1/3 of the total) that appear only in North Finnic. Kaarle Krohn (1904: 80) further reports that it is rare or a late introduction in southern Karelian dialects. While *LägLoS* (III: 178, *s.v.* 'runo') lists Karelian *runo* as cognate to the Finnish word, Kaisa Häkkinen (2004: 1068, *s.v.* 'runo') says that the Finnish word has no cognates in Finnic, but that both Karelian and Estonian *runo* are borrowed from Finnish. That the Estonian word is borrowed from Finnish is generally accepted (Mägiste 1982 VIII: 2556; *LägLoS* III: 178, *s.v.* 'runo') and seen in the final -*o* rather than -*u*. The narrow distribution of *runo* restricted to Finnish and Karelian would suggest a later date for the borrowing than Proto-Germanic – more likely from a variety of North Germanic or Early Scandinavian in the first millennium A.D.

The geographical spread of language groups around the Baltic in the first millennium A.D. was different from in modern times. Most of the inland areas of present-day Finland and Karelia were likely populated by Sámi speakers; some Paleo-European languages may have persisted in the north. Finnic languages had spread from what is now Estonia to the southern parts of Finland around the start of the Common Era and into the Karelian isthmus around the 8th century A.D. (Frog & Saarikivi 2015: 90). The 12th–13th-century migrations that yielded the modern Swedish-speaking population of Finland had yet to happen (Kallio 2014; Frog & Saarikivi 2015). The dramatic changes in the linguistic map of the Baltic Sea region over the period in question make it difficult to pin down where the contacts that would have led to the spread of the word would most likely have taken place. Candidates include areas near the coast of present-day Finland, in Åland or in present-day Sweden. As the word was borrowed into a North Finnic variety that became the ancestor of modern Finnish and perhaps Karelian, the contacts most likely occurred north of the Gulf of Finland.

Vowels and Vowel Length
Stressed vowel u
Although the Germanic word has a long [u:] in the stressed vowel and the second syllable [o:] would also have been long in Proto-Germanic,

both vowels in Finnish and Karelian *runo* are short. Many of the Germanicists who have written on this word have viewed the short *u* as a problem. De Vries (1962: 453, *s.v.* 'rún') says "das kurze *ŭ* ist befremdend" ['the short *ŭ* is peculiar'], citing Josef Weisweiler (1948: 289).[3] Liberman (2009: 258) mentions that "*Runo*, despite its deceptive Proto-Germanic appearance, has a short vowel," again citing Weisweiler (1948). Bjorvand and Lindeman (2007: 898, *s.v.* 'rune') call the short vowel "uforklart" ['unexplained']. Krause (1969: 91) notes the short vowel in *runo* corresponding to a Proto-Germanic long vowel as "auffallend" ['striking']. However, the examples that he gives to show preserved length are much younger loanwords from (Old) Swedish: *muuri* ['wall'], *ruuni* ['brown'], *suutari* ['shoemaker'].

The short vowels in *runo* suggest an early date of borrowing. Long vowels are rendered as long in most Germanic loan words in Finnic. However, some early loan words show a short vowel corresponding to a long Germanic one. Aikio and Aikio (2001: 19), as summarized by Kallio (2015: 26), give as one of their criteria for identifying the oldest stratum of Germanic loans "words where the Finnic short vowel was substituted for the Germanic long vowel for later obsolete phonotactic reasons." An example of a short vowel in Finnish derived from a long one in Germanic is seen in Fi. *rikas* ['rich'] ← PGmc **rīkiaz* ['powerful'] (Eng. *rich*, ON *ríkr*). Long vowels were impossible in Proto-Uralic, and, according to Aikio (2012), still in Proto-Finnic and later. They first appeared only in **e*-stems. Hence **ruuno* would be impossible as a borrowing from Proto-Germanic into Proto-Finnic. It is not clear precisely when this changed. Vowel shortening in a loan from Proto-North-Germanic into Proto-North-Finnic might still be possible (Petri Kallio, p.c.). However, by the time of Old Scandinavian, one would expect a long vowel in the source to be reflected as long in Finnish and Karelian.

Julius Mägiste (1982 VIII: 2556, *s.v.* 'runo') points out that long-vowel variants *ruunu*, *ruuno* also occur in Estonian. This could reflect a later borrowing, either from a Scandinavian or perhaps a North Finnic language. Lengthening within Estonian is also

a possibility; Lembit Vaba (1997: 415) observes that Latvian loanwords in Estonian sometimes show lengthening of /u/ before voiced consonants, giving an example of a dialect form (Lut) *ruunatuʔ* ['spoken'] < *runât* ['to speak'].

Second-syllable o
The Germanic word **rūnō* is an **ō*-stem, but it has undergone changes of inflectional class in some daughter languages. Modern Swedish shows the normal reflex -*a*, pl. -*or* of **ōn*-stems (weak feminine nouns). In Modern Icelandic, the word inflects as an *i*-stem (nom. pl. *rúnir*), but *rúnar* is the usual nom.pl. in Old Icelandic texts. Hence a borrowing could potentially reflect different stem classes in the source.

Germanic **ō*-stems borrowed into Finnic show a variety of stem vowels. As long vowels in non-initial syllables were not possible in Proto-Finnic, the vowel is necessarily shortened. Tette Hofstra (1985: 214) regards -*a* as the normal outcome in an older layer and -*o* in a younger layer. E.N. Setälä (1906: 3, 5–6, 27) treats a final -*o* in feminine nouns as a sign that the word is borrowed from Norse rather than Gothic. According to Juha Kuokkala (2012: 42) second-syllable -*o* (or by vowel harmony -*ö*) is the normal reflection of Proto-Germanic **-ō* and **-ōn* stems (e.g. Fi. *lieko* ['felled tree, log'] < Middle Proto-Finnic **lëëko* ← Proto-Germanic **lēgō* > Old Norse *lág* ['felled tree, log']: Kallio 2015: 27), but there are many exceptions. The second syllables of some **ō*- and **ōn*-stems are also rendered by -*u*, particularly in younger borrowings from Scandinavian.

Semantic Change in Germanic/Norse
The Germanic word reflected in English *rune* is attested in various meanings in Old Norse, Gothic, and Old English. The word fell out of use in most Germanic languages during the medieval period. It was revived in Scandinavian in the early modern period (Falk & Torp 1991: 662, *s.v.* 'rune') and in German based on Old Norse and Old English (Kluge & Seebold 2002: 776, *s.v.* 'Rune'), and Modern English *rune* ['runic letter'] was borrowed from Danish in the 17th century (Morris 1985: 352).

Change is observed over the recorded history of Icelandic: in eddic poetry, the word *rún* generally appears to refer to charms or units of mythic knowledge (*Hávamál*), not to carved symbols. The late eddic poem *Atlamál*, thought to stem from the 12th century, involves a carved runic message (stanzas 4–12; Neckel & Kuhn 1962: 248–249), replacing the indexical wolf's hair tied on a ring seen in the earlier version of the story in *Atlakviða* (stanza 8; Neckel & Kuhn 1962: 241). The version in *Vǫlsunga saga* combines both: "Guðrún rístr rúnar, ok hún tekr einn gullhring ok knýtti í vargshár ok fær þetta í hendr sendimönnum konungs" (Guðni Jónsson 1954: 199) ['Guðrún carves runes, and she takes a gold ring and ties to it wolf's hair and delivers it to the king's messengers']. In sagas of Icelanders, *rúnar* are carved symbols but are always associated with magic (e.g. *Egils saga Skallagrímssonar* ch. 44, 57, 72, 76; Sigurður Nordal 1933: 109, 171, 229–230, 238).

Both meanings are seen in *Vǫlsunga saga*: spells in chapter 20[4] (mainly in verse) (Guðni Jónsson 1954: 158–161), carved (magical) symbols in chapter 33 (1954: 199). Chapter 20 closely follows the eddic poem *Sigrdrífumál* (runes mentioned in stanzas 5–19, Neckel and Kuhn 1962: 189–197 at 190–194). In chapter 13 of *Vǫlsunga saga*, the young Sigurðr is said to learn runes along with chess and other skills: "Hann kenndi honum íþróttir, tafl ok rúnar ok tungur margar at mæla, sem þá var títt konungasonum, ok marga hluti aðra" (Guðni Jónsson 1954: 140) ['He [Reginn] taught him [Sigurðr] skills, chess and runes and to speak many languages, as was then common among kings' sons, and many other things']. The precise meaning of *rúnar* here is unclear.

Óláfr Þórðarson Hvítaskáld's so-called *Third Grammatical Treatise*, written in the mid-13th century, seems to take knowledge of the runic alphabet for granted (Óláfr Þórðarson Hvítaskáld 1998). Björn Magnússon Ólsen (1883: 44–89) discusses the 12th-century Þóroddr *rúnameistari* ['runemaster'], whose runic reform (1883: 80–89) is reflected in the treatise. According to Fabrizio D. Raschellà (2016: 156–157), runes were most likely used in Iceland from the beginning of settlement, although few inscriptions from the first centuries have survived.

The stem -*rún* is frequent as the second element in compound feminine names, the

most popular such in Iceland being *Guðrún* ['god-rune'], the name of Guðrún Gjúkadóttir in the Vǫlsung material who carves runes in *Vǫlsunga saga* 33 (Guðni Jónsson 1954: 199). The element is old in Germanic languages and known from the earliest sources. Guðrún Kvaran and Sigurður Jónsson frá Arnarvatni (1991: 466, *s.v.* 'Rún') connect the name element to OHG *runa*, OE *run*, defined "töfrar, leyndardómur" ['charms, secret'], and to the verb OHG *runen*, OE *runian*, defined as "tala í hálfum hljóðum" ['to speak in a low voice']. It is probably connected with the meaning 'confidante, trusted friend' attested in Old Norse poetry.

One possible path that has been suggested for the semantic development from Proto-Germanic to Old Norse is: 'utterance' > 'secret' > 'message written in runes' > 'runic letter'. This does not cover all the meanings attested in Old Norse. The precise sequences of semantic changes listed vary across etymological dictionaries. Bjorvand and Lindeman (2007: 898, *s.v.* 'rune') suggest that the development was 'secret message presented orally' > 'secret, religious knowledge'; 'secret, whispering discussion' > 'runic symbol'; de Vries (1962: 453, *s.v.* 'rún') proposes an original meaning of '(magical) investigation of divine purpose or fate' as one of several possibilities. Elof Hellquist (1939 II: 852–853 *s.v.* 'runa') summarizes the range of meanings and inferred development:

> bokstäver, runor, magiska tecken och formler, litteratur, kunskap, got *rûna*, hemlighet, mlty., mhty. *rûne*, hemlig viskning el. överläggning, i mlty. även: runa, ags. *rún* ds. som i mlty., även: hemlighet, av germ. **rūnō-* = finska lånordet *runo*, sång (varifrån sv. *runa* även fått bet. 'finsk dikt'). Bruket av runor har sannol. sitt ursprung i magien. Den magiska bet. ingår f. ö. i t. ex. ä. nsv. *runobok*, trollbok, *-karl*, trollkarl (= no. *runekall,* spåman), folkvisans *runaslag*, trollsång, o. no. *runa*, spå, trolla. Besl. med sv. dial. *runa*, locka, tubba, fsv. *rūna*, viska, väl lån från mlty. *rûnen* ds., av fsax. *rûnôn*, motsv. fhty. *runên* (ty. *raunen*), ags. *rúnian* (eng. *roun*) ds.; jfr isl. *rýna*, tala förtroligt. Förhållandet till fir. *rún*, hemlighet, är oklart; ettdera av orden har sannol. lånats. (Hellquist 1939 II: 852.)

letters, runes, magical symbols and formulae, literature, knowledge, Gothic *rûna*, secret, Middle Low German and Middle High German *rûne*, secret whisper or consultation, in Middle Low German also rune, Old English *rún* with same meaning as in Middle Low German, also secret, from Germanic **rūnō-* = Finnish loanword *runo*, song (from which Swedish *runa* has also acquired the meaning 'Finnish poem'). The use of runes probably has its origin in magic. The magical meaning is also a part of e.g. Modern Swedish *runobok*, book of magic, *-karl*, magician (= Norwegian *runekall*, seer, prophet), in folk poetry *runaslag*, magical song, older Norwegian *runa*, predict, conjure. Related to Swedish dialect *runa*, attract, wheedle, Old Swedish *rūna*, whisper, likely a loan from Middle Low German *rûnen* 'id', from Old Saxon *rûnôn*, corresponding to Old High German *runên* (German *raunen*), Old English *rúnian* (English *roun*) 'id'; cf. Icelandic *rýna*, to speak intimately. The relationship to Old Irish *rún*, secret, is unclear; one of the two words has probably been borrowed.

The meaning 'confidante, trusted female friend' (sense 6 in ONP, *s.v.* 'rún') is presumably derived from 'consultation'.

Others (e.g. Moltke 1985: 77, Harris 2008: 344) regard the meaning 'magical charm' in Old Norse as secondary to the meaning 'letter'. In Gothic and Old English, *runa/rune* appears as a gloss of *mysterium* in the sense of Christian mystery or revealed knowledge. The meaning 'mystery' in the Christian sense becomes dominant in Old English with the consolidation of Christian culture. The development to 'mystery' would presumably have occurred separately in Gothic and Old English. At the time of Wulfila's New Testament translation, the runic alphabet was only a few centuries old. A posited semantic development 'message written in runes' > 'secret or magical message' > 'mystery' seems at odds with the insistence that the runes were mainly secular in nature. Morris (1985: 349–350) views the word meaning 'mystery' as an unrelated homonym, but Liberman (2009: 253) criticizes the practice of reconstructing proto-homonyms unless a semantic connection is impossible.

In some eddic poems and early runic inscriptions, the singular form *rún* is used to

refer to the whole utterance or inscription or what might be called a unit of mythic knowledge. Runic examples of *rún* include the inscriptions from Einang (Krause & Jankuhn 1966 I: 142–144, #63) and the Noleby inscription (Krause & Jankuhn 1966 I: 148–151, #67), both acc.sg. objects of *faihidō* ['I painted'], cf. Old Norse *fá* ['to paint'] (see discussion of verb in Krause & Jankuhn 1966 I: 138 in connection with the Vetteland stone #60). Wolfgang Krause and Herbert Jankuhn (1966 I: 149) characterize this as "*rūnō*: wohl A.Sg. in kollektivem Sinn 'geheimnisvolle Kunde'" ['*rūnō* presumably acc.sg. in a collective meaning of 'secret knowledge''].

Ottar Grønvik (1987: 106–109) argues that this singular use in the Noleby inscription is an archaic pattern. He views it as having the meaning "hemmelig formular (av magisk-religiøst innhold)" (1987: 106) ['secret formula (of magical-religious content)'], which he regards as the oldest attested meaning in Old Norse, appearing either with the singular *rūnō* or *plurale tantum rūnōR* interchangeably in the same meaning:

> Det ligger nær å tro at den betydning ordet *rūnō* (akk.sg.) har i Nolebyinnskriften: 'hemmelig formular (av magisk-religiøst innhold)', er ordets eldste betydning i nordisk, og at ordet opprinnelig bare ble brukt i denne meget spesielle betydning. Vi må da anta at ordet senere ble tatt i bruk i en videre betydning, slik at det også kunne betegne andre utsagn eller meddelelser som angikk eller var rettet til den døde, og som da kunne bli risset inn på et smykke eller annet gravgods og lagt ved den døde (Eikeland), eller skrevet på gravsteinen over grava (Einang). Til slutt er ordet så kommet i bruk også om profane meddelelser, slik at det kunne betegne ethvert budskap skrevet med de hjemlige skrifttegn, uansett adressat og innhold. (Grønvik 1987: 108.)

> It is easy to believe that the meaning that the word *rūnō* (acc.sg.) has in the Noleby inscription 'secret formula (with magical-religious content)', is the oldest meaning of the word in Norse, and that the word was originally only used in this very specific meaning. We must then assume that the word later came to be used in a broader meaning, so that it could also denote other statements or messages that pertained or were addressed to the dead and that could be carved on a piece of jewelry or other grave goods and laid beside the dead (Eikeland) or written on the grave stone over the grave (Einang). Finally the word also came to be used for secular messages, so that it could denote a message written with the secret writing symbols regardless of addressee and content.

Morris (1985: 349–350) also argues that in early times the word refers to a message and not to a single letter. However, references in 13th-century Icelandic sagas to carved runes consistently use the plural and Liberman (2009: 255, 257) views the plural use as primary. According to Grønvik (1987: 109), the first use of *rún* to refer to letters appears in the *First Grammatical Treatise* (ca. A.D. 1150); he suggests that this represents a learned semantic extension. The *First Grammatical Treatise* uses the term to refer, not to runic, but to Latin letters: "Eigi er þat rvnanna koſtr þo at þv leſer vel eða raðir vel að likindvm þar ſem rvnar viſa o ſkyrt" ['It is not the virtue of the letters if you can read well or make a good guess (in cases) where the letters are unclear'] (manuscript 85: 4–5; Hreinn Benediktsson 1972: 214–215, translation HB).

Semantic Change in Finnic

The Finnish word *runo* acquired its modern meaning of 'poem' quite late, in connection with the spread of common European forms of poetry and 'high culture'. In earlier Finnish and Karelian sources, the word refers to poems and songs in traditional North Finnic forms and sometimes specifically to magical performance. The meaning of 'poet, singer' is also attested early, in Jacobus Finno's 16th-century hymnal and in folk poetry, and meaning of 'musical instrument' is found as a specifically Karelian development. Krohn (1904: 81) shows that *runo* appears in folk poetry in parallel with *laulaja* ['singer'] and *tietäjä* ['knower'] rather than with e.g. *laulu* ['song'], *virsi* ['verse, song'] or *sana* ['word']. The lack of derivational suffixes (such as agentive *-jA*, instrumental *-in*) in these uses might indicate that the agentive meaning is basic or older. The Forest Finns of Sweden have only the agentive use and a verb *runoa* for magical performance. It is possible that there is a connection with the meaning 'confidante' attested for *rún* in Old Norse. A form *runoi* is also attested early, in a publication of Olaus Georgii Suomalaenius

Hvittensis from 1611, and appears in folk poetry both as 'singer' and 'song' (Krohn 1904: 86–87; *SKES* IV: 863, *s.v.* 'runo'). In Estonian, the word, borrowed from Finnish, has only the meaning "das altfinnisch-estnische Volkslied" (Mägiste 1982 VIII: 2256, *s.v.* 'runo') ['the old Finnish-Estonian folk song'].

The institution of the *tietäjä* type of magic specialist and the associated incantation technology spread in Finnic culture during the Iron Age (Siikala 2002: 335–337; Frog 2014: 451). There was a shift from a shamanic practice of visiting the otherworld to a use of verbal magic as a primary medium to interact with beings in remote otherworld locations. This entailed substantial shifts in the conceptualization of the body and the world. This shift has been connected with influences from Christian or Slavic culture and is "heavily indebted to Germanic models" (Frog 2014: 451). If Germanic **rūnō* or its North Germanic or Early Norse reflex had a meaning of 'incantation' or 'charm' at the relevant time, the word may have been borrowed specifically in connection with this technology, in the meaning of 'incantation' and/or an agentive meaning for a practitioner.

Anna-Leena Siikala (1990) seems to equate *tietäjä* practice with Old Norse accounts of *seiðr*, a type of magic associated with Óðinn and Freyja that has often been argued to have been influenced by Sámi shamanism (see literature review in von Schnurbein 2003).

> The original meaning of the word *runo* (which today means a poem) was 'magic sign, incantation'. Originally rune singing thus literally meant the singing of incantations. It appears that, like epic poems, incantations were sung with an assistant. Thus the delivery of both the epic and the incantation would have common roots that ultimately lead back to the shamanic séance. (Siikala 1990: 203.)

> I came to the same conclusion as Kaarle Krohn: incantations delivered in a speaking voice are part of the tradition that became established in the Middle Ages. Short incantations were presumably used even before this, but in the pre-Christian era the singing of incantations demanding an ecstatic delivery was among the *tietäjä*'s tools. In function, this resembled the ancient Scandinavian *galdr*. On the other hand, the *tietäjä*'s requisites, the chants summoning the spirit and his ecstatic behaviour call to mind the ancient Scandinavian *seið* institution, even though the trance technique of the *tietäjä* differed from the events of the *seið*. (Siikala 1990: 201.)

Siikala (1990: 193) also appears to identify the *tietäjä* practice with Old Norse pagan magic when she states, "It also appears that the Eastern Finnish and Karelian *tietäjä* institution in particular retained elements of the pre-Christian, Scandinavian belief tradition longer than any other." This presumption of equivalence could be questioned, although there were likely many shared traits and mutual influences between these practices in the Viking Age.

Riimu *and* riimi

The semantic development of *runo* can also be compared to that of other words used to denote runic letters in Finnish and Old Norse. The word for 'rune' in Finnish, *riimu*, is a younger loanword. *SSA* (III: 74, *s.v.* 'riimu 2') does not list corresponding nouns in other Uralic languages (though related verbs are found on the Karelian Isthmus and in Ingrian). The word *riimu* ['stroke, scratch, carved decoration on ski; crack, infraction; rune'] is first attested in the meaning 'runic letter' in Christfrid Ganander's dictionary of 1787 (Ganander 1997: 790, *s.v.* 'rijmut'; cf. Ganander 1938 II: 479). It also occurs in variants with initial consonant clusters: *priimu* (Ganander; Ostrobothnian dialects) and *kriimu* (Muurla). Its etymology is uncertain; it may reflect bricolage from *riimusauva* ['rune-stick'] ← Sw. *primstav* ['rune-stick'], where *prim-* refers to the new moon.[5] It may also be connected to *(k)riimu* ['harness'], which has been traced to Old Norse *gríma* ['mask'] (Thomsen 1869: 144), although *SSA* (III: 74, *s.v.* 'riimu 1', 'riimu 2') treats these words as homonyms. Thomsen (1869: 144) also connects the word with Sámi ("sv.-l.") *krimo* defined "vitta, mitra mulierum" ['headband, garland; women's headdress']). The first part of the compound was given a specialized meaning 'stroke mark, scratch' > 'runic letter'. Another possible source is Sw. *strimma*, ON *stríma* ['streak, line'] (*SKES* III: 785, *s.v.* 'riimu 1'). Lauri Hakulinen (1968: 293) lists *riimu* among "Ruotsalais-

peräisiä (tai yleensä skandinaavisperäisiä)" (1968: 292) ['[words] of Swedish (or in general Scandinavian) origin']. This ambiguous formulation avoids taking a stand on when the word was borrowed.

The oldest known runic calendar from Finland is from 1566 (Oja 2015: 84). According to Nordling (1938: 40), the oldest runic calendars in Finland represent Upplandic types; the runic calendar practice was imported from Sweden and does not show evident connections to any earlier runic practice in Finland. The lexical borrowing may also stem from around the Reformation.

Karsten (1943/1944 II: 457–458) suggests that *riimu* could also be related to *riimi* ['rhyme'], which appears in Finnish writings in the 16th century, via *riimisauva = riimusauva* ['runic calendar stick'] and the meaning for Old Norse *rím* ['calendar, reckoning']. This meaning is found widely in Germanic languages, where the connection to similar words meaning 'rhyme' is debated (de Vries 1962: 446, *s.v.* 'rím 1', 'rím 2').

The Finnish word *riimi* ['rhyme'] is a relatively recent loan (that it must postdate the transition to Late Proto-Finnic, ca. 200 A.D., is seen from the non-alternating stem consonant *-i*). It is first attested in a Finnish text in Jacobus Finno's hymnal of 1583. Häkkinen (2004: 1047, *s.v.* 'riimi') traces it to Late Old Swedish. The first documented evidence for end-rhyme in Finnish appears during the 16th century in connection with hymn singing and attempts to popularize this (Kallio et al. 2017: 35, 37). Some Finnic speakers would likely have encountered end-rhymed verse in Swedish during the Middle Ages (Kallio et al. 2017: 38). While only the meaning 'end-rhyme' is standard in Modern Finnish, the 16th century attestation – "Se sama Rimixi techty" (VKS) ['The same made into rhyme'] – is compatible with an older meaning of 'verse' also found in Germanic languages. The word is in general a *Wanderwort*. It is believed to have come into Finnish from Late Old Swedish (*SSA* III: 73, *s.v.* 'riimi 1').[6]

Hellquist (1939 II: 836, *s.v.* 'rim') views Swedish *rim*, likely the proximate source for Finnish *riimi*, as a borrowing from Middle Low German *rîm*, but says that it is "av omstritt urspr." ['of debated origin']. A presumed

homonym is connected with calculation, order and in particular with calendars; it has also been suggested (de Vries 1962: 446, *s.v.* 'rím 1', 'rím 2', , citing Trier 1942: 254–264) that the 'rhyme' and 'calculation' words may have a common origin:

> Vanl. o. väl med rätta betraktat som lån från provenç. *rim*, som då härledes från ä. fra. *ritme*, av lat. *rhytmus* (se *rytm*); se särsk. Braune Reim u. Vers (1916). Men denna förklaring av fra. *rime* är formellt betänklig, varför man också uppfattat ordet som urspr. germ. I senare fallet möta inga hinder att identifiera rim med fhty. *rîm* m., rad, tal, ags. *rím*, tal, osv., besl. med grek. *arithmós*, tal, vilket f. ö. också kan betyda 'rytm, vers' (jfr *ritual*). (Hellquist 1939 II: 836)

Normally and probably correctly viewed as a loan from Provençal *rim*, which in turn stems from Old French *ritme*, from Latin *rhytmus* (see *rytm*); see in particular Braune *Reim u. Vers* (1916). But this explanation of French *rime* is formally dubious, for which reason the word has also been regarded as originally Germanic. In the latter case there are no barriers to identifying *rim* with Old High German *rîm* m. row, number, Old English *rím*, number, etc., related to Greek *arithmós*, number, which incidentally can also mean 'rhythm, verse' (cf. *ritual*).

The 'calculation' word also appears borrowed into Finnish:

> riimi [...] 2) ordning, förteckning, kladd, räkning. Jfr isl. Fr.[2] *rím* n., 'Regning, Beregning', särsk. kalender, sv. dial. Estl. (VII) *rīmir* n.pl., runkalender, fhty. *rîm* m. 'Zahl, Reihe, Reihenfolge', fsax. *unrîm* 'Unzahl', ags. *rím* m. 'Zahl, Menge'- På denna *a*-stam återgår fi. *riima* 2, medan fi. *riimi* återger det nsv. *rim*, dial. *rīm*. (Karsten 1943/1944 II: 457.)

> riimi [...] 2) order, register, draft, account. Cf. Ice. Fr.[2] *rím* n. 'account, calculation', esp. calendar, Sw. dial. of Estonia (VII) *rīmir* n.pl., runic calendar, OHG *rîm* 'numeral, number, sequence', Old Saxon *unrîm* 'myriad', OE *rím* m. 'number, amount'. Fi. *riima* 2 goes back to this *a*-stem, while Fi. *riimi* reflects MnSw. *rim*, dial. *rīm*.

This meaning of *riimi* denoting a regular, orderly sequence is close to Krause's (1969) proposed source for *runo*. A meaning of regular sequence can shift between a physical

domain (marks or scratches), an oral domain (sounds) and an abstract meaning (numbers). Karsten's suggestion that *riimi* and *riimu* were variants seems possible.

Stafr

Another word that is used for both runic and Latin letters in Old Norse and later Scandinavian languages is *stafr*, cognate with English *staff* (cf. MnIce. *bókstafur*, Sw. *bokstav*, etc.), which has been connected to the appearance of runic letters mainly based on a long vertical stroke. The acc.pl. *staba* appeared in the lost Gummarp inscription (Krause & Jankuhn 1966: 205–209, #95). *Stafir* are carved in *Vǫlsunga saga* chapter 32: "í því horni váru ristnir hvers kyns stafir ok roðnir með blóði" (Guðni Jónsson 1954: 196) ['on that horn were carved all kinds of letters and reddened with blood'].

Harris emphasizes that semantic change between meanings related to physical items and speech can go in both directions:

> A 'staff' is etymologically a physical thing that comes to be used for letters, then words and verbal constructs; in 'rune', on the other hand, semantic development apparently moves from an oral act (as in German *raunen*) to the non-literate idea 'secret' and on to physical letters, but the further development from 'letter' to '(magical) utterance' parallels that of 'staff'. In both cases a speech act is conceived in terms of chirographic things, letters. (Harris 2008: 344.)

Harris (2008: 342–344) argues that conceptualization of (pieces of) language as physical, concrete entities as seen in skaldic poetry is a literate trait that became established in the predominantly oral early Norse society partly through awareness of runic writing. Hence "rjóðum spjǫll" ['I redden speech'] in *Egils saga* chapter 44, verse 9 (Sigurður Nordal 1933: 109), a scene in which he smears blood over runes carved on a drinking-horn:

> must have had a force like 'paint a song red'. Here a word for speech stands for material signifiers; so there must be a sense of the interchangeability of speech and its signs. (Harris 2008: 342.)

However, literacy is not necessary for chunks of language or knowledge encoded in language to be conceived as concrete objects (on 'text objects' and 'knowledge objects', see Frog 2019).

Conclusions

I think it is likely that the word that became Finnish and Karelian *runo* was not borrowed from Proto-Germanic into Proto-Finnic in the first millennium B.C., but from a North Germanic dialect into a North Finnic language in the first millennium A.D. The contact point between the attested meanings of the Finnic and Germanic words is in the meaning of an incantation or unit of mythical knowledge. This is likely to be the meaning in which it was borrowed, perhaps as part of a package of influences connected with the technology of incantational magic that spread in Finnic cultures before and during the Viking Age. An agent meaning may also have been part of the loan complex. Alternative etymologies for the Germanic word present difficulties in accounting for the semantic development in Finnic.

The semantic changes seen in *runo* and *riimu* and their Germanic sources, both within each language family and in conjunction with borrowing, show how terms for charged or 'special' kinds of language, units of knowledge and technologies or techniques relating to language use can shift and exchange meanings. As seen in the contrasting developments of Germanic *rune* and *staff* and Finnish *riimu*, words can approach the meaning 'rune' or 'letter' from different directions.

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Notes

1. Around a dozen runic inscriptions from the Viking Age and medieval period have been found in Finland, not counting ca. 200 post-medieval runic calendar sticks (Oja 2015: 61) and some house marks (Fi. *puumerkki*, Sw. *bomärke*) that may be based on runes (Dahl 1994: 9; Ekko 1984: 44–49). To date, no runic inscription has a secure interpretation in a Uralic language (for discussion, see Willson 2012; 2019).

2. The vowel length in and etymology of the first part of *runhenda* is unclear. Medieval Icelandic manuscripts rarely marked vowel length. ONP spells it with a short *u* (*s.v.* 'runhenda'); of the five attestations listed there, four come from *Háttatal* and one from the *Third Grammatical Treatise*. Richard Cleasby and Guðbrandur Vigfússon (1874: 504, *s.v.* 'rúnhenda') list it with a long *ú* but suggest that Codex Regius' *rún* is corrupted from the similar-

looking *rím*. The first Old Norse poem to use end-rhyme is supposed to be Egill Skallagrímsson's *Hǫfuðlausn* from the 10th century, but it did not become common until much later. According to Tranter (2000: 149–150), the end-rhymed meters in this class constitute a category in which "the commentator seems to enjoy free rein" (2000: 150) in *Háttatal.* Tranter suggests that this is because there is less of an established tradition than with other meters. At any rate, the meter must postdate the loan on phonological grounds.

3. The views of Weisweiler (1948) are actually found to be a long quotation in a monograph of Franz Altheim (1948).
4. Chapter numbering in *Vǫlsunga saga* varies slightly across editions. The chapter division in Guðni Jónsson's edition of 1954 is followed here.
5. Such rune sticks circulated as a type of calendar, rather than being inscribed, for example, for sending messages.
6. Hakulinen (1968: 298–299) counts *riimi* among words that are "ranskalaisperäisiä" ['of French origin'] borrowed indirectly via Swedish, noting that the French word may in turn be borrowed from Ancient Greek.

Linguistic Abbreviations

acc. – accusative
dial. – dialect
Eng. – English
Est. – Estonian
Fi. – Finnish
m. – masculine
MnIce. – Modern Icelandic
MnSw. – Modern Swedish
n. – neuter
nom. – nominative
OE – Old English
OHG – Old High German
ON – Old Norse
PGmc – Proto-Germanic
PIE – Proto-Indo-European
pl. – plural
sg. – singular
Sw. – Swedish

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On the Analogical Comparison of Performance Environments:
Lament Poetry's Soundscape as a Case Study

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Abstract: This paper confronts the research tendency to treat a performance tradition as a semiotic phenomenon in isolation from its performance environment. Karelian funeral lament offers an example of a tradition with a customary soundscape that contextualizes and reinforces the performance arena, while performance participates in the soundscapes of additional ritual activities. The case's analogical value is illustrated through comparison with Old Norse examples.

Folklore research on oral traditions has a long history of evolution. Research initially isolated tradition as text, only gradually bringing performers into focus, and slowly progressing to consider performance as situated, embodied and interactive (whether as interaction with other people, unseen agents and/or reflexively with oneself). It has become increasingly common for researchers working with traditions of the past, traditions approached through archive materials and perhaps descriptions in travelogues or in some cases known only through medieval manuscripts, to approach them through the concept of performance. Such traditions are preserved primarily as text-scripts, sometimes already edited by collectors or scribes, or they may be little more than heavily abbreviated field notes of song text or even just a brief comment on a performance that highlights the features most striking to its author's romantic ideas. The concept of performance (e.g. Bauman 1975) has been crucial in resituating such limited and fragmentary source information in relation to embodied practices and their settings. Central concerns have been: *a)* to understand, on the one hand, the social significance of the practice and the meaning production it enabled or actualized in particular performances (e.g. Tarkka 2013); and *b)* the more general operation of continuity and variation in a tradition as a platform for approaching meaning production (e.g. Frog 2016). What has been brought into focus is encapsulated by John Miles Foley's (1995: 47–49) concept of *performance arena* as an experienced-based semiotic framework for producing and receiving expressions of a particular tradition.

The present paper extends the field of vision of these types of approaches from semiotic and participation frameworks to what we call the *(customary) performance environment*, an abstraction of the conventional environment of a performance practice as constituted of customary features that reciprocally become predictable. This is distinguished from the *situation-specific environment* as the setting of any particular performance. Performance environment is a broad concept that may include anything from spaces, places or temporal settings to social situations or emotional atmosphere. Whereas performance arena is an experience-based semiotic framework that can be engaged irrespective of the actual situation, performance environment is a complementary concept for features customary to the settings or situations and surroundings of a performance practice, whether or not these become pregnant with meanings through the performance arena. In this paper, soundscape is a feature of a performance environment or situation-specific environment that is brought into central focus, although discussion could easily be extended to other features as well.

Foley's performance arena is here extended from concerning only semiosis to also include emotional engagement, with potential for its activation to vary by degree. This concept is placed in relation to the performance environment, with particular attention to its soundscape as the feature spotlighted by the present discussion for the illustration of analogical comparison. We propose that performance arena and performance environment are linked through conventions of practice. When considering this connection in relation to particular cases, we consider parameters of *alignment* versus *disalignment* and *reinforcement* versus *contrast*. A situation-specific environment generally, or some of its particular features, may align or disalign with the customary performance environment. In other words, the situation-specific environment may converge with what is customary and potentially

expected (i.e. the customary performance environment) or diverge from it. Where conditions align with the performance environment, they may reinforce engagement with a performance arena, augmenting it (though reinforcement might likewise occur through other situation-specific factors). The present article has developed with particular interest in the potential for features of the performance environment to reinforce engagement with the performance arena as something built into the tradition. Specific features of a situation-specific environment may also contrast with it, making the performance arena more difficult to engage or generating strategic rhetorical effects, like performing a stand-up comedy routine at a funeral. An example of contrast will be discussed in an analogical comparison with a description from an Old Norse saga. The parameters of alignment/disalignment and reinforcement/contrast offer a framework for the analysis of particular situations and what unfolds within them.

Karelian funerary laments, focusing on traditions of the Seesjärvi region, are here taken as an example in order to briefly explore a performance environment that augments a tradition's performance arena through the manifestation of a dynamic soundscape. The focus on soundscape as a feature of a perform-ance environment is because, in addition to broader theoretical interest, concern is with potential for analogical comparison. A customary performance environment will be tradition-dependent and may vary considerably from culture to culture. Lament is a widely found type of tradition that is characterized by the social expression of a basic human emotion (e.g. Urban 1988; Feld & Fox 1994), which produces predictable features of the soundscape of performance cross-culturally. Analogical comparison is thus not simply at an abstract level of social situations and instead extends to particular perceivable features of the environment itself. In the present context, this aspect of lament traditions is relevant because those features can reinforce engagement with the performance arena. Analogical comparison is thus fairly straightforward across lament traditions without advancing to the level of abstraction required for applying the model of performance environment developed here to

traditions of shamanic healing rituals or improvisational rap battles.

The case has additional interest because lamenting itself contributes to the soundscape of performance environments of the rituals with which it co-occurs. The perspectives offered by this case include metadiscourse on lamenting – i.e. comments by lamenters about what makes a lament a lament rather than something else. The discussion introduces the tradition to an unfamiliar reader with emphasis on features that contribute to the soundscape of performance and an orientation to the interests of the Retrospective Methods Network. Much of the paper is devoted to introducing the tradition in order to discuss the soundscape and its significance, and also to offer a more nuanced perspective on the contribution of lament itself to the predictable soundscape of a broader funerary event. The analogical potential of perspectives gained on the soundscape of this tradition is then discussed and illustrated through examples from Old Norse eddic poetry and saga literature.

Background
The focus on embodied meaningful expression and its reception in performance has considerably expanded researchers' views, yielding profound insights. At the same time, the more formalized a performance tradition is, or the more similarly structured performances are by convention, the more that researchers tend to focus entirely on the production and reception of meaningful signs. This tendency leads the performance tradition to get constructed in a bubble of expression or interaction isolated from its environment. Put another way, the more fluidly a tradition can be embedded in everyday conversational discourse, the greater researchers' inclination to consider an extended range of situational factors in analysis; in contrast, the more a tradition is formally set apart from conversational speech, the greater researchers' tendency to treat it as a self-contained system. The result of modelling a performance tradition in such a bubble is comparable to the isolation of verbal text from performance. The bubble has simply expanded from libretto-like text-scripts to performances imagined as participation-based events that operate in studio-like isolation from the world

around them. A central point of the present discussion is that, just as performance is more than a set of factors affecting 'text', predictable features of a performance environment can be more than a set of factors affecting a performance event.

Traditions' customary performance environments are widely acknowledged and addressed. With more formalized traditions, they nevertheless easily drop out of discussion as the verbal art is brought into focus. Although views have been changing, the performance environment tends to become a backdrop for performance rather than considered as an integrated part of it. When introducing the traditions of South Slavic epic singers, for example, Albert Bates Lord (1960: 13–17) stresses that the singers were hired to perform in cafés, at weddings and so on: they were rather like the bands that play at bars and weddings in many Western cultures today, albeit without the enhanced volume of amplifiers. Ethnographic fieldwork will often give attention to the performance environment of a tradition, especially social settings of what people are customarily doing in the surroundings and their interaction with a performance (Siikala & Siikala 2005). However, these tend to be viewed as situated *in relation to* performance and secondary to it except where they form some sort of participatory interaction framework (Blackburn 1988). The customary performance environment may be relevant to interpreting variation of a performance in relation to its situation-specific circumstances (Başgöz 1975). It may also be relevant to discussion of the historical development of a tradition (Siikala 1990: 14–19; 2002b: 28) or its disappearance under social change (Dégh 1995: 97). The performance environment may be important when exploring the social significance and meanings of a practice and register of verbal art (Stepanova 2015: 270–271). It may also naturally enter discussion where features of the performance environment have semiotic and perhaps physical relevance, as when objects or spatial relations receive symbolic meaning as an integrated or essential part of a performance (Frog 2017: 607). The integration of the performance environment or its features does receive a place in different discussions, but this is almost exclusively either to add to understandings of why a tradition or single performance is the way it is, why it means what it means, or because particular features become meaningful in relation to performance.

The tendency to engage performance as integrated with a tradition only in connection with meanings or its explanatory power for understanding the development of a tradition's meaning-making resources can be brought into focus in connection with the turn from viewing 'text' specifically as a thing made of language to reconceptualizing 'text' in terms of "any coherent complex of signs" (Bakhtin 1986: 103). This turn made it possible to approach all meaningful expression and thus all culture as text, as reflected in the description by Michael Silverstein and Greg Urban in their introduction to *The Natural History of Discourse*:

> The text idea allows the analyst of culture to extract a portion of ongoing social action [...] from its infinitely rich, exquisitely detailed context, and draw a boundary around it, inquiring into its structure and meaning. This textual fragment of culture can then be re-embedded by asking how it relates to its 'context', where context is understood as nonreadable surround [*sic*] or background (or if the context is regarded as readable, by asking how it relates to its 'co-text'). (Silverstein & Urban 1996: 1.)

This turn extended the scope of consideration substantially from the earlier conception of text as a thing made of language, yet this type of approach remains predicated on encapsulating the more broadly conceived semiotic 'text'. Particularly where continuities seem to supersede variation in relation to contextual factors, a bubble rapidly forms around a performance practice. The bubble that had earlier formed around a linguistic text no longer isolates what is verbally expressed from a performer and embodied performance, but its expansion to encompass, for instance, the South Slavic epic singer nevertheless immediately eclipses the café from our field of vision, a context into which performance is only 're-embedded' when this relates to particular questions or research aims.

Recent decades have seen a sharp rise in attention to verbal, musical and non-verbal aspects of performance traditions that were

seen in two-dimensional terms of text-scripts a century ago. Interactions of language and melody or music in performance seem to be receiving more and more attention, such as recontextualizing oral poetry as sung verbal art (e.g. Reichl 2012; Kallio 2013), and the perspectives on their interaction has been enriched by the growing dialogue between insights from different disciplines (e.g. Agha & Frog 2015). Generally speaking, however, where traditions are relatively well-documented, comparatively little attention has been given to the integration of the performance environment. The current article advances consideration beyond the perceived meaningfulness of elements in the performance environment as signs to the customary performance environment's potential to augment those signs and their rhetorical force.

The orientation of the present discussion has been shaped by the entry of laments into discussions of modelling historical performance environments in the Baltic Sea region. The possibility of lament as a women's practice in Iron-Age Scandinavian funerary contexts has been long discussed (e.g. Helgason 1944; Clover 1986; Mundal 2013), as has use of Finnic lament and more wide-ranging cross-cultural comparisons for interpreting medieval sources that could reflect such traditions (Mustanoja 1967; Clover 1986). More generally, the exceptionally rich medieval Scandinavian sources for vernacular poetry, mythology and practices have been increasingly resituated as performance through heavy reliance on analogy and imaginative construal. Although the written sources are mainly from the 13th century or later, they are close enough in time to the Scandinavian Viking Age (ca. AD 800–1050) that they are commonly brought into dialogue with archaeological evidence from that era. This has led to rich discussions about the interaction of performance of particular poems with the hall as a space and its audience there as a probable predictable setting (Gunnell 2011), as well as relations between stories and performed mortuary drama observable through its archaeological outcomes (Price 2012) and how performance settings may be crucial to understanding the symbolism of certain artefacts.[1] Lament has only quite recently entered into imagining scenes of funerary

drama reflected in the archaeological record.[2] In tandem with these developments, there has been a rising awareness of the Baltic Sea region as a contact zone for diverse cultures, and a renewed interest in looking across Baltic, Finnic, Germanic, Sámi and Slavic cultures in a comparative light (Bertell et al. 2019).[3] These trends and changing interests, which have been prominent in the venue of *RMN Newsletter*, form a backdrop for the current discussion. This work on the soundscape of Karelian laments aims to be of analogical interest not only for considering other living traditions of lament but also for comparison with evidence of other cultures in the remote past.

Soundscape

A soundscape is a perceivable acoustic environment within which one is immersed, an environment of hearing. Although the same word can be used for a particular genre of musical composition, its use in this sense was developed by R. Murray Schafer in the 1960s and 1970s in what would become The World Soundscape Project (https://www.sfu.ca/~truax/wsp.html). The concept was initially built on Schafer's (1994: ch. 1) concern for noise pollution in contemporary society, but it has given rise to approaches like 'acoustic ethnography' and a basic idea that "[s]oundscapes are critical to the constitution of spaces and places" (Kheshti 2009: 15). The term's definition and use vary, but the analogy to *landscape* brings into focus the relationships between 'sound' and 'place' as perceivable through human experience (cf. Farina 2014: ch. 1). Nevertheless, soundscapes vary in relation to other factors, such as that of a forest during day or night, winter or summer, or a shopping mall when open or closed. It may be conceived as the totality of perceivable sounds independent of an observer, but naturally extends to how sounds produced by people interact with the environment, ranging from the resounding echo of footsteps against silence or shouting to be heard over music blaring at a rave. Although it is possible to explore potentially unique soundscapes of particular places, it is equally possible to explore and abstract characteristic soundscapes of types of places and of types of recurrent events. The latter approach is taken here to consider soundscapes characteristic of

Karelian funeral laments' performance environment.

Karelian Laments

Laments are considered to be among the most archaic genres of verbal art and can be generally defined as:

> sung poetry of varying degrees of improvisation, which nonetheless follow conventionalized rules of traditional verbal and non-verbal expression, most often performed by women in ritual contexts and potentially also on non-ritual grievous occasions. (Stepanova E. 2015: 258.)

Karelian lament is a form of verbal art that deviates markedly from other forms of Karelian speech behaviour as improvised sung poetry with its own organizational restrictions. This speech behaviour is an unambiguously gendered practice emblematic of 'lamenter' as a woman's role (Stepanova E. 2015: 270–271). This lament tradition has been more or less systematically documented since 1835 by Finnish and Russian Karelian scholars (see further e.g. Honko 1974; Nenola 1982; Stepanova A. 1985). Thus far, the last documented Karelian lament was recorded on video in 2010 by a journalist of the Finnish National Broadcasting Company. It is possible that additional laments may be documented from this tradition in the future, but the tradition has been in decline for generations and will likely soon disappear entirely from oral practice. As with any tradition no longer being documented, the materials available for research are limited. In most cases, the source for a particular lament is only an archival text without notations of melody. Since the 1960s, laments have been recorded on audio tape, which makes it possible to study melodies and relations between verbal and musical expression (Niemi 2002; Silvonen 2020). Video recordings have also been made of lament performances, but these are very rare. It is nevertheless possible to reconstruct a general soundscape of funeral laments by using different sources, such as audio recordings, photographs and the comments of lamenters and other people that are available.

The system of formal elements and organizational principles constitutive of Karelian laments can be described as a conventionalized traditional register that is simultaneously a resource for expression and internalized as a framework for interpreting and assessing expressions as laments (Stepanova E. 2015; on register, see Foley 1995; Agha 2001; 2007; Frog 2015). This traditional lament register includes:

- Special grammar, with distinctive use especially of diminutive and plural forms
- Special syntax, including inverted word order and distinct syntax of parallelism
- Special stylistic features, with alliteration and parallelism as organizing principles of discourse
- A special lexicon, rich in circumlocutions, epithets and formulaic expressions
- Vocal features, including melody and 'icons of crying' (on which, see Urban 1988)
- Embodied behaviour, including body language, touch, use of space and materials relevant to performance, etc.
  (See further Stepanova E. 2012; 2015; 2017b; Wilce 2005; 2009; Wilce & Fenigsen 2015.)

Laments were not simply poetry: they were a form of speech behaviour customary to particular situations and integrated into certain ritual contexts, even if women might express themselves through lament in other contexts as well. The most central and historically enduring context was in connection with funerary and remembrance rituals, but, like other lament traditions in the Baltic Sea region, Karelian laments were also used in other rituals of separation where a person is preparing to depart to become a member of another community. The main additional contexts were weddings, in connection with the bride's departure to the household of the groom, and ceremonies for men conscripted into military service, both of which were conceived as symbolically parallel to death (Stepanova & Frog 2015).

The modern conception of death based on biology does not correspond to ways of thinking in pre-modern cultures (e.g. Hodne 1980: 96). Before modern understandings spread through Karelian societies, death was conceived as a transition from one community to another, and the cemetery was organized and understood as an inhabited, neighbouring village with which ongoing social relations were maintained (Siikala 2002a: 138; Tarkka 2013: 399–402; Frog 2019: §5.1). The movement of the bride was similarly to a new community where she

would initially have the lowest status among adults with little or no contact with her birth family, while military service would be for many years, and a young man might not return, or would not return as the person who left: in vernacular imagination, these movements were equivalent to movements between worlds (Stepanova E. 2014a; Stepanova & Frog 2015).

More generally, lament was a versatile resource at the disposal of skilled performers. Its most common non-ritual use was as a medium for grievous expression, lamenting, for example, about personal sorrows or hardships. However, it was also an honorific register: the use of language and its conventions of reference and representation consistently elevate the addressee while devaluing the speaker, placing them in an asymmetrical social relation (Stepanova E. 2015; Wilce & Fenigson 2015). In this respect, it is unsurprising that the lament register could also be used as a mode of elevated and respectful speech outside of grievous situations, for example, to express thanks and appreciation to folklore collectors for their interest and attention (Pentikäinen 1978: ch. 32; Stepanova E. 2014a: 172–176). In addition, a distinctive type of use is found connected to the ritual power of laments in managing a movement between worlds. These are laments used in a ritual for banishing bedbugs, rarely attested for Karelian laments (e.g. *SKVR* I$_4$ 1957), but also known in North Russian and Komi lament traditions (Mišarina 2012). Laments were thus not only a medium of communication: they had power to affect the world.

Karelian laments were tightly linked to the traditional worldview. The lament register, rich in circumlocutions, was believed to be the only language that the dead could understand (Stepanova A. 2003: 186). Laments were a way of speaking that provided a crucial medium of communication with a deceased person or ancestors, for which alternatives were not available. Lamenters understood that the dead could reciprocally communicate through dreams (Järvinen 2004: 189–205) or return in the form of birds or butterflies (Söderholm 1980: 141–148; see also Stepanova E. 2011: 138–139). Lament was additionally used for communication with other supernatural beings, where the potential for use of other

registers of communication is less clear (Stepanova E. 2012). As a specialist in an exclusive medium for interaction with certain otherworld agents and communities, the lamenter became an authoritative mediator representing the living. Laments were understood as crucial for a deceased person's successful journey to the otherworld. A lamenter awakened the ancestors, prompted them to open their gates, to quiet the dog guarding their realm and to receive the newly deceased with candles: through her performance, the lamenter actualized the events unfolding in the unseen world, from the deceased's journey along otherworld roads to his or her integration into the otherworld community (Stepanova E. 2014a; 2017b). Karelian laments were thus supernaturally empowered. In an oft-cited but otherwise unusual observation, Elias Lönnrot has said, *Vaan vieläpä on naiselta itkuvirsi kirjotettava, jos lähtenee, kun pelkää pahaa siitä itselleen tulevan* (Lönnrot 1902: 238) ['In addition, I would like to write down a lament from a woman, if only it would work, but they are afraid that something bad will happen to them because of it']. The potential for laments to affect the world and their significance for both transition rituals and maintaining open channels of communication with deceased kin structured their significance in society. That significance also changed along generational gaps as well as with changes in society that affected perspectives on ritual uses of lament (Stepanova E. 2014a).

Entextualized Poetry as a Product of Performance

Karelian lament is extremely distinctive in both lexicon and poetic form, contrasting sharply with the trochaic tetrameter of the so-called Kalevala-meter, which was otherwise used across a wide range of Finnic poetic genres. There are some supra-registral expressions – words or formulae used across different registers – such as *kantajani* ['my carrier' or 'dear carrier'], common in both lament and kalevalaic poetry (Stepanova E. 2012: 281; cf. Nenola-Kallio 1982: 79–95). Nevertheless, the lexicon and poetic form were generally exclusive to lament, except in the northern region of Viena Karelia, where it was also used in singing Karelian yoiks, a genre not

otherwise found in Finnic languages (Kallberg 2004; Frog & Stepanova 2011: 206–208). Both lament and kalevalaic poetry were organized through alliteration and parallelism, but the poetic form of Karelian lament was an independent system for verbal art.

To illustrate what the poetry of lament is like, a short funeral lament performed by a mother to her deceased daughter is offered here with a translation that reflects how the language of the poetry works. Circumlocutions like *vualimaiseni* ['my dear cherished-one'], meaning 'daughter', are rendered literally. Diminutive forms are indicated by preceding words with 'dear'. The use of plural forms in the place of singulars is not indicated, although some plurals in the translation might be interpreted as singular (e.g. 'dear sky-windows' can be interpreted as 'window'). There is no attempt to reflect alliteration in the translation, which is transparent from a glance at the Karelian text. Rather than 'verses', Karelian laments are better described as composed in poetic 'strings': the poetic form does not have regular meter and is instead composed in flexible sequences conventionally distinguished by musical features, syntax, alliteration and semantic parallelism between strings as these are organized into larger themes (Frog & Stepanova 2011: 204–209; Niemi 2002; Silvonen 2020). This lament was recorded in the northern region of Viena, where expletive words could be introduced within a string to augment the density of alliteration; these words are left untranslated:

(1) Valkualkua vualimaiseni valtajoučcenuisien valkevuisikse valkeih šyntysih, jotta valkeih luatusih valkeih šyntysih vaštualtais valkiet omakuntaset.
Kukkahien kummalintusien kujillisikse kuvašvetysillä kujin luajitelkua ta kuklasien kuvallisiksi työ kujin ašetelkua kuvuamaistani kulu šyntysih. Häntä kun kukkahih luatusih kulu šyntysih kujin ašeteltais.
Ihaloijen ilmajoučcenuisien innollisikse innon armaš itvomaiseni innon luajitelkua ihaloih šyntysih ihaloilla enovetysillä.
Tulkua valkeista šyntysistä valmistelomah vaškivajosuisie, kuita myöten valkeih šyntysih vallan kualelou vallan pikkaraini vualimaiseni.
Ettäkö vois tuuvehista šyntysistä, tunnon armahat tuuvehet omakuntaseni, tulituo-

hukšuisie tunnon luajitella, hiän niitä myöte tiän turvasih tunnon kualelis tuuvehih šyntysih tuuvittamaiseni?
Etkö še vois ni, vallan pikkaraini vualimaiseni, valkeista syntysistä varpu-lintusina vallan ylenekšennellä vaimalon vartuvoni esih?
Ta ihaloijen ilmalintusien innollisina ilmaikkunaisien aluštaisilla. Niistä innon šilmittelisin inhu vartuvon innon pikkaraista itvomaistani...
(Stepanova A. & Koski 1976: 84.)

Whiten my dear cherished-one (= daughter) to the whiteness of white dear swans for the departure to the white dear ancestors, so that in [their] white dear ways, to the white dear ancestors (= otherworld), white dear own-communities (= relatives) will come to meet [her].
Like the beautiful weird dear birds, with see-through dear waters, *kujin*, make [her], and like dear dolls you, *kujin*, dress my dear pictured-one (= daughter) [for going] to the honorable dear ancestors (= otherworld). So that her, in beautiful dear ways, into the honorable dear ancestors (= otherworld), *kujin*, [one] will place.
Like miraculous free dear swans, *innon*, my precious dear sprouted-one (= daughter), *innon*, make, for the miraculous dear ancestors (= otherworld), with miraculous moving dear waters.
Come from the white dear ancestors (= otherworld) to prepare copper dear stairs, by which, to the white dear ancestors (= otherworld), *vallan*, will step, *vallan*, my small dear cherished-one (= daughter).
Could you not, from the precious dear ancestors (= otherworld), *tunnon*, precious dear own-communities (= relatives), burning dear candles, *tunnon*, prepare, that she, with those, to your dear protections, *tunnon*, will come to the precious dear ancestors (= otherworld), my dear rocked-one (= daughter)?
Could you not, *vallan*, my small dear cherished-one (= daughter), from the white dear ancestors (= otherworld), as small dear sparrow-birds, *vallan*, fly up in front of the wilting body (= lamenter)?
And, as beautiful dear sky-birds, [fly] in front of dear sky-windows. So from these, *innon*, [I] could eye the pitiful body's (= lamenter), *innon*, small sprouted dear one (= daughter)...
(Adapted from Stepanova E. 2011: 129–130.)

Although this example may illustrate the poetry of laments, it must be remembered that it remains only a text-script, just one aspect of a single performance, which would also involve music, movement, embodied expression with icons of crying and so on. On the one hand, Karelian laments were improvised situationally. They were not memorized texts: even a lament for the same person and addressing the same topics will vary between performances, with variation only increasing from lamenter to lamenter, from village to village and from region to region.

Music and Text

The entextualization process of laments is a dynamic interplay between verbal and musical selection and formulation. The lamenter simultaneously produces both melody and poetry, which together form an improvisational whole. The primary organizational principles of Finnic lament language are alliteration and parallelism in relation to syntax; without a periodic meter, the length of each string may vary considerably, as in the example above (see also Stepanova E. 2014a; 2015). The main characteristics of lament music are a descending melodic movement similar to natural crying, an isosyllabic structure (one syllable corresponds to one tone), a clear melodic opening and cadence with tradition-governed improvisation between (see further e.g. Gomon 1976; Väisänen 1990 [1926]; Niemi 2002; Laitinen 2003; Silvonen 2020). Verbal poetic formulae and strings could themselves vary in length, which affects the rhythm and length of the musical phrase as well (Rounakari 2005: 31). The interplay of language and music was thus much more flexible than in many other forms of sung poetry and allowed for variation at many levels. According to Jarkko Niemi:

> [...] the most stable rule of lament style appears to be natural variation arising from expressions of controlled emotion [....] For this reason, the rules appear to escape the lamenter's grasp, just as the lamenter cannot be controlled by the rules. (Niemi 2002: 722.)

Niemi concludes his article on "Musical Structures of Ingrian Laments" by stressing:

> This sort of natural structure expressed as variation at many levels is perhaps one of the basic elements of the lament tradition in the Balto-Finnic linguistic area. (Niemi 2002: 722.)

Conventions of isosyllabism bind music closely to language. Language and melody can be seen as in a symbiotic relationship comparable to that of language and meter in other oral-poetic traditions (cf. Foley 1996: 14–19). Nevertheless, linguistic structures like stress patterns and poetic principles of alliteration and parallelism have likely been predominant driving factors in the evolution of melodic structures and conventions rather than vice versa (cf. Niemi 2002). Within a performance, there is an interplay between language and music, with processes of selection and adaptation on both sides, but that relationship is not necessarily symmetrical (Niemi 2002: 711).

The interplay of language and music is often most marked at the onsets and endings of strings, where formal cuing devices converge at the boundaries of the unit of utterance (see also Silvonen 2020). Interjections are stable linguistic elements that can show the reactions of the speaker regarding particular events. The most common interjection in Karelian laments is the affective interjection *oi*, deployed to express the emotional state of the lamenter. Interjections may mark phrases and clauses within a phrase, as do the expletives in example (1), but they are particularly pronounced as markers of the beginnings of new textual and musical phrases, as *oi* is most often used, like in example (2):

(2) En äijiä, kaksi-kolme sanua sanon, en voi enämbi, piädä kivistäy:

Oi olovilla ilmazilla piäl'ä oznuaččija olova hyväzeni, oboidi n'ämä jäl'gimäzet i posledn'oit kerdazet miun kaunehie kana-liemenözie riiččimäh.
Oi valgeila ilmoila piälä azettaja valgiene hyväzene, tule jo omassah ozakkahembih ozazih n'ämä jäl'gimäzet kerdazet, posl'edn'oit kerdazet miun kaunehet kana-liemenözet vet kataičen.
Oi valgeila muailmoila piälä azettaja valgiene hyväzene, lähemmä kačo uširookoimbie uuliččapihazie myöte valgeidago kana-liemenözie kataimah n'ämä jäl'gimäzetti posl'edn'oit kerdazet.

No, en voi enämbi. (Fon. 2059/77.)

I will not say much, two-three words, I cannot [lament] more, I have a headache:

Oh, in-the-great-world adjuster my great good-one (= father), come at these last and final times to take down my beautiful chicken-hairs (= to open the bride's braid).

Oh, in-the-white-world adjuster my white good-one, come with your better luck at these last times, final times to take apart my beautiful chicken-hairs.

Oh, in-the-white-world adjuster my white good-one, let's go, look, into the wide yard-yards to take apart white chicken-hairs at these last, final times.

There, I cannot do any more.
(Stepanova E. 2017b: 496.)

Oi most commonly appears in sung laments, whereas it is not so prominent in laments dictated to folklore collectors. This interjection, sung as the first note in a melodic line, connects verbal and musical elements and is also a marker in the rhythmic structure of performance. It simultaneously indicates the beginning of a new unit of utterance while expressing the lamenter's pain and grief towards the object of her lament, stressing and foregrounding its affective meaning as the opening of her expression. The melodic line usually ends on a prolonged low tone of the melody, stressing the last word of the verbal phrase, most often a verb. Whereas the uniting of language and melody at the onset of a string easily foregrounds emotional expression, the cadence tends to weight the semantics of the verb. Between the opening and cadence of a string, the lamenter has a frame of performance within which she is free to improvise. Among lamenters of the Seesjärvi region, for example, the pitch, tempo, melismatic features or vocal breaks could vary greatly. Melodies and the length of strings also varied from region to region. Nevertheless, the range of variation generally remained within the conventions of local tradition.

Embodied Performance
Karelian lamenters themselves had quite strong opinions about how the performance of lament should sound. Women from the Seesjärvi region generally stressed that, when lamenting, the person had to *abeudua* ['become sad']. This aspect of the tradition seems to be one of the most important when an audience was 'reviewing' a lament. A lament performed without getting sad is commonly compared to 'singing' or conceived as 'singing'. For example, Fedosja Fedotova (born 1912, Prokkol'a), made the following comment about a woman who did not become sad:

(3) [...] Hiän ei ollun slaaboj, hiän kuin-to ollou krepkoi ollun; ku rubei viržittämää, ni viržitti hot' čoassun, ni hiän ku pajattau rounos. A myö emmä ole semmoi [...] (Fon. 2397/26.)

[...] She was not weak, she was somehow strong; when she started lamenting, she could lament for an hour, so it was like she was singing a song. We are not like this [...] (Stepanova E. 2014b: 176.)

Maria Nesterova (born 1909, Kums'arvi) also stressed the necessity of showing one's grief:

(4) Karpovna ni ku pajattau, kačo vai ku oli väyn kuolennalla nii... ni ku pajattau, eigo hiän abeudu eigo mid'ä – siid' on viržittiä prosto. A kui it'kömää rubiet niin etgo muissa ni midä. Ei sua itkömättä... (Fon. 2020/18.)

Karpovna, she's like she is singing, there she was at her son-in-law's funeral, like... like she was singing, she doesn't became sad – it's easy for her to lament. But if you really start to lament, then you don't remember anything. One cannot lament without crying... (Stepanova E. 2014b: 176.)

Maria Mihailova (b. 1896, Voijärvi) urged herself to get sad in the beginning of her lament:

(5) Oi kargijan iččeni kana-alli kandamaženi...
– *Abeuduo pidäy, abeuduo...* –
karuloilda rannoilda karun keškizih kainalo puoluzih kabouduo
en udra kandaja rodiit'el'a-rukka, uččimoine, duumainun
uččimien luohizilla randazilla näinä päiväzinä andoa [...] (Fon. 1727/5.)

Oh, my sweet chicken-long-tale-duck-carried-one of my miserable self (= daughter)...
– *I should get sad, get sad...* –
while from barren shores (= foreign places) into each other's barren armpit-spaces cuddling (= hugging),
Miserable bearer, poor parent (= I, mother) did not think, my taught-one (= daughter),
[that I would] give [you] to the shores of taught-ones (= strangers) in these days [...] (Stepanova E. 2014b: 176–177.)

Such metadiscourse of lamenters about laments reveals that 'becoming sad' or going deeper into the emotional state was seen as an essential criterion that distinguished a 'right' from a 'wrong' way of lamenting. In this case, Maria lamented the first line of her lament, and then said, as though to herself, 'I should get sad, get sad,' and continued lamenting about her daughter. Similarly, when Irinja Pahomova was performing in 1972 for Karelian and Finnish researchers, one of the local listeners can be heard on the recording saying:

(6) It'e, it'e vähäni, it'e, elä niin sanoilla sano. Abeuvu vähäne, niin šiula lienöy kebiembi. (Fon. 2043/37.)

Cry, cry a little bit, don't just say it with words. Get a little bit sad, so it will bring a relief to you.

Important here is that 'becoming sad' was not conceived in terms of a lamenter's subjective feelings *per se*: the lamenter should embody grief as a dimension of her performance through weeping.

The connection of the verbal art to embodied weeping is encoded in the vernacular term for lamenting: *äänellä itkeä* ['to cry with voice']. Above, lament is emphasized as a medium of communication, but lamenting as practice was more broadly significant in ritual contexts for the expression and communication of a community's grief, as also reflected in a term for a lamenter: *itkettäjä* ['one who makes (others) cry']. This function in the community mandated that the lamenter be emotionally engaged in a perceivable way.

Indicators of embodied grief are what Greg Urban (1988) calls the 'icons of crying', including 'cry breaks', voiced inhalation, creaky voice and falsetto vowels. As Steven Feld and Aaron A. Fox (1994: 40) have put it, "'icons of crying' [...] are linked indexically to the emotional states and affective projection of lament performance." In Karelian lament performance, these audible indicators of sadness often get stronger as lamenting progresses (see further Tolbert 1990; see also Väisänen 1990 [1926]: 127–128). The emotional engagement and degree to which icons of crying impact performance may also vary between ritually required sections within a lament and more personal sections that elaborate on relationships,

connect with specific memories and so forth (Silvonen 2020; Silvonen & Stepanova forthcoming). The lamenter's embodiment of emotion nevertheless remains controlled, with ideas that one should also not lament or grieve too much. Numerous examples of this belief, taking various forms, are recorded (cf. Jauhiainen 1998: type C456). For example:

(7) Määrätyt sakonavirret pitäisi itkie vainajalle, mutta ei ylitse määrästä. Mitä ylitse itketäh, ne tuloo painoksi vainajalle. Itkemätön kuolija jos pannah hautah, on yhtä kun nakrehen kuoppais. (SKS KRA. Samuli ja Jenny Paulaharju 17786. 1932. Vuonninen. < Anni Lehtonen, born 1868.)

Certain required laments should be performed for the deceased, but not an excessive amount. Whatever is lamented over the requirement becomes a burden on the deceased. When burying someone without laments, it is the same as dumping a turnip into a hole.

Lamenting as ritual practice was thus regulated and the position of embodying grief in this tradition can be considered as linked to the role of the lamenter as an icon of the community's grief.

Elizabeth Tolbert (1990) has highlighted the contrast between harmonic singing and the instability and variability of lament, proposing that these qualities of lament performance were crucial for successful ritual communication and for the conduct of the ritual more generally. However, Tolbert has developed this idea based on the interpretation of the complicated musical expression and indirect, complicated verbal expression as forming a type of symbolic inversion that is the opposite of everyday activity. From this perspective, the embodiment of grief becomes identified as a type of exceptional deed required when communicating with the otherworld (Tolbert 1990: 87). Lament can be reasonably considered to have been distinguished through a language ideology built on contrasts (cf. Irvine & Gal 2000), and icons of crying are connected with the fundamentals of human expression of grief and characteristic of lament around the world (Urban 1988), so their impacts as producing potentially emblematic features of difference is unsurprising. Construing an oral-poetic register as a 'language' of otherworld agents is comparable to other traditions in which are

found a 'language of gods' (Toporov 1981; Watkins 1995; Hull 2017; on more general conceptions of poetry as originating from the otherworld, see also Tolley 2019). Interpreting these types of difference as 'inversions', on the other hand, seems to be driven by Tolbert's theory of ritual, rather than by comparative evidence or lamenters' metadiscourse on lamenting.

In addition to verbal expression of sadness, the most important aspect of lament performance is to display emotions and make them audible. Icons of crying symbolically transmit an intense emotional participation in the ritual event, a close connection to the object of the lament and also the weakness and physical suffering of the lamenter. Emotional engagement is displayed or communicated through lament performance in four ways: *a*) audibly, through icons of crying; *b*) through verbal expressions (circumlocutions and themes of laments); *c*) with the help of grammatical features, such as diminutive forms; and *d*) visually through body language, such as leaning toward the object of the lament or rocking back and forth while lamenting.

In practice, the degree of embodied emotional expression varied by lamenter. Such variation should not be confused with potential for variation between performances within a funerary context versus one elicited by folklorists. The Estonian researchers Ingrid Rüütel and Mart Remmel (1980) have stressed the difference between melodic expressions and structures of laments performed in what they consider a 'natural' situation like a funeral, when a lamenter shows her grief, as opposed to those in 'unnatural' situations like an interview with a folklore collector. Construing a strict dichotomy between 'natural' and 'unnatural' laments seems to reflect ideologies and assumptions of researchers about 'authenticity' (cf. Bendix 1997) more than a fundamental difference between these as categories of lament performance. This opposition is further complicated by the fact that a skilled lamenter could be asked to perform at a ritual in a different community (cf. Stepanova & Frog 2017: 6), and thus the funerary context might be seen as 'natural' although the lamenter would not necessarily have any personal ties to the deceased. In

Seesjärvi Karelia, for example, many very emotional laments are found performed at the request of a collector (e.g. by Praskovja Saveljeva and Irinja Pahomova). On the other hand, some women can lament remaining vocally smooth in spite of becoming sad and upset (e.g. Anni Toloshinova); others did not seem to get sad at all, even when lamenting in a 'natural' ritual situation (Stepanava E. 2014: 98). The degree of emotional engagement and physicality of weeping varies by lamenter rather than forming a simple equation linked to the performance situation or personal connection to the one lamented. (Stepanova E. 2015.)

The Soundscape of Funeral Lament
In Karelia, laments were associated with all of the different parts of a funeral ritual, from building the coffin and preparing the corpse to receiving people coming from outside the community, the journey to the cemetery and the burial itself. The performance environments of lament with their associated soundscapes were therefore multiple, varying by context. Some were inside the home, some in the open yard and some in the cemetery. In Karelia, a cemetery would be a wooded area on an island, peninsula or perhaps on a river, where it was prohibited to cut or pick anything, and things should be left where they lay. It was thus a cultural space as an ordered arrangement of graves conceived as dwellings forming a village of the dead, but simultaneously as a cultural space in which the living should not interfere – it was essentially forest, with small trails formed in the undergrowth where people walked when visiting relatives. In terms of soundscape, the different performance environments constructed backdrops for lamenting and affected how a lamenter's voice would carry.

In performance, a lamenter uses the lament register holistically to embody and communicate grief on multiple levels simultaneously (Feld 1982; Urban 1988; Tolbert 1990: 81). The soundscape becomes constituted of the lament's music, the relationship between the verbal and musical parts of the lament, the paralinguistic features used by the lamenter, and the reactions of the audience. Heikki Laitinen and Jarkko Niemi have pointed out that the role of alliteration and its euphony, its

harmony, is important from the point of view of the lament's tonal expression. The phonic features of lament poetics affect how lament is orally transmitted and received by hearing it. Euphony and harmony created by alliteration become part of what makes the soundscape of lament performance distinctive. (Laitinen 2003 [1994]: 298–299; Niemi 2002: 711.) These features of musicality and poetics are augmented by the embodiment of grief, both affecting performance, as already noted, and also punctuating it with sobbing and voiced inhalations (Rüütel & Remmel 1980: 179; Urban 1988; Niemi 2002: 711; Silvonen 2020). These features construct the acoustic environment within the particular setting, which is not simply the soundscape of lamenting, but also of other activities in the funeral context, as the lamenter moves from space to space, positioning her performance in relation to certain activities rather than others, but remaining an emblematic feature of the funerary setting.

While studying the soundscape of laments, one has to take into consideration the audience of a lament performance. Lamenting does not happen in an environment of silence as at a concert today. On ritual occasions, such as at funerals and weddings, the interaction between a lamenter and her audience is salient. The lamenter visibly, verbally and audibly expresses her intense emotional state, and participants in the ritual engage with her sadness. Crying and even wailing are natural parts of the funeral ritual. From these grievous emotions, a lamenter's voice rises up and leads the ritual process, orchestrating emotions of the community and their orientation. The special language of laments is predominantly directed to the deceased and to the dead members of the family in the otherworld, but the soundscape supports this communication and is integrated into understandings of what constitutes effective lamenting, which, in its turn, guarantees the successful outcome of the ritual events – getting the deceased to the otherworld and satisfying him or her concerning making this transition from the community of the living to that of the ancestors.

Although one lamenter would customarily be responsible for orchestrating ritually required performance, other women could also lament within the broader ritual framework, engaging personally with the deceased or expressing their own feelings. Within the soundscape formed by expressions of grief amid activities of the funeral, different voices could come into focus, contributing to the totality of the sound environment. Moreover, a central lamenter's ritual role could also include the performance of additional genres. For instance, a lamenter might sing Russian-language Orthodox prayers (for examples, see Stepanova E. 2017a). The soundscape of lament would vary by setting across different portions of the funeral ritual against the backdrop of other people's audible grief. Different lamenting voices could come into focus within a particular soundscape, and lamenting could also be punctuated and contrasted by alternations with other forms of verbal performance across the course of the ritual.

Soundscape and Performance Arena

A register of verbal art like lament is characterized by ways of using language and performative expression that considerably diverge from everyday speech. Within a community, people internalize the register as the expressive medium appropriate to, and required for, the type of speech behaviour, to which conversational language would be no less alien and marked than the use of a lament circumlocution in informal conversation like saying *igizetti iskolivečnoit kodizet* ['eternal everlasting homes'] to refer to a singular coffin (see also Foley 1996: 25–26, 30). Those who have become naturalized to a register of verbal art intuitively shift their frame of reference to either express themselves in it or, on hearing it, to interpret what is expressed. This internalized understanding is at the basis of expectations reflected in evaluations like describing someone as 'singing' rather than 'lamenting' above. Foley (1995: 47–49) developed the concept of *performance arena* to describe this virtual framework for understanding and producing expressions connected with a particular tradition of verbal art, conceiving it not as a physical space but rather as an intersubjective semiotic frame of reference that develops through exposure to, and participation in, the particular tradition.

In developing this concept, Foley's central interest was in the semantics of phraseology

and narrative elements, their indexicality (i.e. connotations and associations) as well as the meaningfulness of a register itself. However, the performance arena also entails language ideologies (on which, see e.g. Kroskrity 2001), which are normally discussed in terms of social identities and value hierarchies within living societies, such as conceiving the lament register as gendered and implications of social relations connected with its use (Stepanova E. 2015: 270–271). Nevertheless, these ideologies extend into emic understandings of the world, such as the register as a language for communicating with the dead, its power to affect people in the living world as reflected in taboos, as well as its significance in actualizing the deceased's journey to the otherworld (e.g. Keane 2003: 419; see also Stepanova E. 2011). Ideologies about how the empirical, unseen and social worlds work and may be influenced become active in connection with the performance arena, affecting not only interpretations but also emotional engagement and responses (Frog 2017: 599–603). When this is recognized, the level of interpretable meanings of texts produced and received in communication operates at the surface of communication.

The situation-specific environment can align or disalign with the activation of the performance arena, and contextual factors may reinforce engagement with the performance arena or contrast with it. Rüütel and Remmel's (1980) distinction between 'natural' and 'unnatural' performances attempted to describe a disalignment between conventional settings for the performance arena's activation and the situation-specific circumstances of recording laments in interviews. The contrast of conventional versus unconventional settings and circumstances warrants distinction from situation-specific factors, like an interview situation where others present are laughing and joking, contrasting with the lamenter's attempt to engage an emotional state of grief. Rather than the situation simply being unconventional, the immediate soundscape of the interview becomes characterized by features of voices and laughter iconic of emotional states that are the opposite of that of lament. Conversely, conventional settings of funeral lament are characterized by icons of crying expressed by others present, forming a soundscape of

community grief. The emotions of the lamenter and of the audience have a crucial impact on the soundscape of laments. This soundscape supports and reinforces lament performance in constructing an atmosphere saturated with emotion with implications of collectivity, which the lamenter brings into focus through predictable articulations characteristic of cultural models of grieving.

Current scholarship is inclined to encapsulate a performance tradition like Karelian lament, focusing on the performer, her verbal art, bodily expression, activities, social significance and so forth, yet treated in a bubble that isolates performance from its environment. The approach here takes up Foley's performance arena, extending it from concern for communicated meanings to ideologies and emotional engagement. By situating customary performance environments with which the performance arena is bound in relation to situation-specific environments and types of settings, it becomes possible to bring into focus alignments and disalignments between these. More importantly, alignments and disalignments can be distinguished from factors that contrast with the performance arena or reinforce it, and may thus inhibit the depth of engagement with it, so that engagement remains only at a level of sign systems and their interpretation, or the environment or situation-specific factors within it may augment activation of the performance arena for a swifter or deeper emotional engagement.

In this regard, lament is particularly relevant because it is a mode for the expression of extreme grief. The relationship to customary performance environments is easily taken for granted with forms of expression that are more emotionally neutral or characterized by positive emotions. With lament, the relation of emotion and the situational environment of a performance becomes salient in interview contexts. The emotional state of grief can be perceived as an unambiguous shift from what precedes or follows it, and is not always easy for a lamenter to accomplish, as reflected in examples (5) and (6) above. In a funerary context, the relationship between lamenting by the lamenter as *itkettäjä* ['one who makes (others) cry'] and community grief is also readily brought into focus. The salience in both

cases is connected to performed grief as markedly set apart from other expression in daily life, where performed expression of positive emotions like smiling and laughter are more commonly integrated and may even be valorized. Significantly, 'icons of crying' have been established in discussions of lament for several decades, which makes them easy to turn into a tool for discussing features of the soundscape produced by people other than the performer. A corresponding concept of, for example, 'icons of celebration' has not been developed as a collective term for features of embodied behaviour characteristic and recognized as expressive of a state of elevated, positive, excited emotion. Lament can therefore be taken as an illustrative case in relation to which traditions with other sorts of emotional orientation can be considered.

Implementing Analogy for Old Norse

The perspective developed here on the soundscape(s) of Karelian lament performance and its operation on the one hand, and how Karelian lament may become part of a broader ritual soundscape on the other, can be adapted analogically to consider performance environments of traditions where evidence is otherwise more limited. For such use, it is necessary to distinguish tradition-specific features and what is relevant for analogical comparison. Of course, soundscape is only one aspect of any tradition's performance environment, and analogical comparison could bring any number of aspects into focus, from the connotative meanings or emotive potential of the register of verbal art to participation frameworks of interaction. The emphasis of the current article is on soundscape as an element of a performance environment of funerary lament with sufficiently predictable features for developed analogical comparison. Soundscape is therefore brought into particular focus here without attempting comparisons between all of the other aspects of the tradition or its performance environment that might be explored.

Returning to the definition above, lament can be broadly considered as "sung poetry of varying degrees of improvisation, which nonetheless follow conventionalized rules of traditional verbal and non-verbal expression, most often performed by women in ritual contexts and potentially also on non-ritual grievous occasions" (Stepanova E. 2015: 258). This model of lament is as a socially distinguished genre of practice rather than including any type of expression of grief or any genre of memorial poetry (as is sometimes done in Old Norse studies: e.g. Sävborg 2013). Feld and Fox (1994: 40) stress that lament traditions "often produc[e] highly specific local discourses on abandonment, transition, and renewal that are aesthetically central to distinct social constructions of memory." In this type of approach, the poetic principles of lament as verbal art and its idiom of language can be assumed to vary from language to language. Although language ideologies will often conceive of lamenting as a gendered practice, there are traditions in which men may also lament (e.g. Udmurt: Honko et al. 1993: 569; in Bangladesh: Wilce 2002; in Indonesia: Pellu 2008). Whether or not lamenting operates at a mythic level of actualizing or affecting unseen or empirical realities, the cosmology, mythic images and so forth with which it is connected will all be dependent on the particular tradition. The central value for analogical comparison is in considering the operation of laments and features of their ritual contexts' customary performance environments, such as their soundscapes. The potential for analogical value is increased because of the fundamental quality of icons of crying to human expression and the predictable position of expressed or performed grief in funeral contexts, which allow reasonable inferences about performance environments.

For comparison with Old Norse traditions, we are faced with very limited source materials and a historical tendency in scholarship to blur poetic genres for the expression of grief. The situation is further complicated by central representations of women's poetic expression of grief in eddic poems on heroic subjects, which properly belong to the genre of heroic poetry. There is no reason to doubt that there was an Old Norse genre of women's lament. Lament is considered one of the most fundamental genres of folklore (e.g. Honko 1974), and it has been reconstructed as a genre of the Proto-Indo-European poetic ecology (Bossone 2016). A variety of evidence points to common Germanic traditions of women's performance

of grief (e.g. Neckel 1935; see also Clover 1986). The Baltic Sea region seems to have formed a macro-region of lament traditions, where lament traditions influenced one another and where Scandinavian cultures seem likely to have participated (Stepanova E. 2011; cf. also Juoste and Jugai in this volume), and lamenters are even described in 19th-century Norway (Welhaven 1842). It seems probable that scattered medieval evidence refers to such traditions (Clover 1986; Mundal 2013; see also Sävborg 1997; 2013).

It is not necessary to reconstruct the form of verbal art to consider how the performance environment's soundscape operates, but a few quite general inferences can be considered probable. As a tradition of speech behaviour, it can be inferred to have an established register (Frog 2015). As a form of verbal art, it can be inferred to have distinguishable forms of intonation or melody and elocution (cf. Tsur 1992) that could be described as 'sung', even if it might sound more like, for example, chanting to a listener today (Reichl 2012: 9; see also Feld & Fox 1994). Lament is so commonly characterized by embodied expressions of grief that icons of crying can be assumed as an integrated aspect of performance. As with the Karelian tradition, the musical features and aspects of musical structure may have varied considerably between local and regional traditions and even potentially between individual lamenters. In addition, formulaic expressions in Germanic epic identify women as doing some sort of striking with their hands (clapping?) as emblematic of expressing grief (Neckel 1935; Sävborg 2013: 90), a performance feature absent from Karelian tradition but known from Irish keening and that would also contribute to the soundscape where grief was performed. Although the features may remain extremely vague, they nevertheless offer some sort of frame of reference for the soundscape of performance.

An Example of Performance with Intent?
Drawing the performance environment into focus creates a frame of reference against which the operation of soundscape can be considered. Some archaeologists, for example, may be interested in developing the most sophisticated possible model of Iron-Age funerary environments, particularly when it is difficult to predict

what piece of information may ultimately prove crucial to the interpretation of a particular find or pattern in a corpus of evidence. Similarly, gaining perspective on how the soundscape of lament operates may offer insight into aspects of what is happening in textual sources. For example, the Old Norse eddic poem *Guðrúnar-kviða I* opens with a description of Guðrún sitting over her dead husband Sigurðr: *gerðit hon hiúfra / né hǫndom slá // né qveina um / sem konor aðrar* (*Gðr I* 1.5–8) ['she did not sigh / nor strike her hands together // nor wail about [it] / as other women']. First, warriors come and try to ease her grief, but that does not help (st. 2). Then women come, sit beside her, and *hver sagði þeira sinn oftrega* ['each told of her own great grief']:

(8) Þá qvað Giaflaug   Giúca systir
 "Mic veit ec á moldo   munar lausasta
 hefi ec fimm vera   forspell beðit
 þriggia dotra   þriggia systra
 átta broðra   þó ec ein lif"

 Þeygi Guðrún   gráti mátti
 svá var hon móðug   at mǫg dauðan
 oc harðhuguð   um hrer fylkis

 Þá qvað þat Herborg, Húnalanz drótning
 "Hefi ec harðara   harm at segia
 mínir siau synir   sunnan lanz
 verr inn átti,   í val fello
 faðir oc móðir,   fiórir broðr
 þau á vági   vindr of léc
 barði bára   við borðþili

 Siálf scylda ec gǫfga, siálf scylda ec gǫtva
 siálf scylda ec hǫndla   helfor þeira
 þat ec alt um beið   ein misseri
 svá at mér maðr engi   munar leitaði

 Þá varð ec hapta   oc hernuma
 sams misseris   síðan verða
 scylda ec screyta   oc scúa binda
 hersis qván   hverian morgin

 Hon ogði mér   af afbrýði,
 oc hǫrðom mic   hǫggom keyrði
 fann ec húsguma   hvergi in betra
 enn húsfreyio   hvergi verri"
 (*Guðrúnarkviða I* 4–10, line-end punctuation removed.)

 Then said Gjaflaug   sister of Gjúki
 "I know that on the earth   I'm most joyless
 I have had of five   husbands the heavy loss
 three daughters   three sisters
 eight brothers   though I alone live"

Guðrún was silent   could not cry/lament
so severe was she   at the dead man
and hard of spirit   about the prince's corpse

Then said that Herborg   Hun-land's queen
"I have harder   suffering to tell of
my seven sons   in southern lands
my husband the eighth   in battle fell
father and mother   four brothers
with them on the waves   the wind indeed
                                                    played
the waves beat   against the gunwale

I myself had to bury   I myself had to inter
I myself had to arrange   their Hel-journey
all of it I endured   in one season
so that me no man   could comfort

Then was I fettered   and a war prisoner
in the same season   at that time befell
I should dress her up   and bind her shoes
the commander's wife   every morning

She raged at me   from jealousy
and me with hard   blows lashed
found I a master of a household   never one
                                                       better
but a mistress of a household   never one worse

For a reader today, this passage easily seems simply like a conversation. Recognizing lament as a performance genre characteristic of women in the situation of the death of a loved one adds a number of dimensions to the scene. Formulaic expressions underscore Guðrún's inability to perform grief according to cultural norms of striking hands and the volume of vocalization. When other women come and sit with her, expressing their own sorrows, their speech of comparable loss can be understood in terms of lament performance. Herborg's lament extends from the loss of male kinsmen to being taken and enslaved by conquerors, a theme of concern also expressed by the lamenter at Beowulf's funeral (*Beowulf* 3150–3155a; on which see Mustanoja 1967). This can be considered to belong to the "highly specific local discourses" (Feld & Fox 1994: 40) linked to threats faced by women in the Iron Age Germanic milieu. As the performance environment is brought into focus, probable participation frameworks can be inferred for which comparison with Karelian lamenters becomes an interesting point of reference as one who orchestrates grief and 'who makes (others) cry'. Of course, recognizing lamenting as a frame of reference is itself an activation of the performance arena.

Here, however, the multivocal soundscape constructed by the laments would saturate the atmosphere with grief, augmenting engagement of the performance arena and thus should, in principle, facilitate Guðrún's own ability to lament.

Relevant to note is that this is a narrative representation rather than actual social experience. Old Norse narrative genres place emphasis on representations and associated social expectations as they would be perceived by an observer. Recognition of lament performance activates the customary performance environment, filling in the narrated scene. For a contemporary audience, this would most likely be imagined through empirically observable features – the soundscape in particular – in accordance with conventions of narration. In their discussion of language ideologies, Irvine and Gal (2000: 37–38) introduce the concept of *iconicization* to refer to the process whereby linguistic features or language varieties become construed as iconic of the social identities or relations with which they are associated. This concept is also useful when considering how a register of verbal art or performance environment is construed as operating in the contemporary society. Basically, effects that a researcher would attribute to social situational factors would more likely be bundled with the empirically perceivable features of performance and of the performance environment through iconization. In other words, effects that might be analyzed in terms of participation frameworks would presumably be identified with lamenting itself and, what is proposed here, the soundscape of the performance environment, which can be distinguished from individual laments and associated language ideologies. If this is correct, then the individual laments and soundscape these construct would be construed by contemporary audiences as what is (or rather should be) effective in the scene.

The representation of women lamenting in this poem is unusual, particularly in its presentation of multiple women verbalizing their sorrows in turn. Rather than an arbitrary or incidental description, the representation of these two women lamenting appears to be an integrated part of the narrative strategy of the poem. Just as the men had failed to console Guðrún, the women's attempt to prompt her to

express her grief by lamenting is unsuccessful. The narration of their lamenting augments this failure presumably through its contrast to social expectations of women's performances of grief for the recently deceased. These implicit expectations can be viewed against the model above as a situation that aligns with convention and the creation of a soundscape that reinforces engagement with the performance arena, inclining other women to embodied performances of grief. In narration, however, these women's laments emphasize that Guðrún fails to grieve (with what seems to be an ideologically charged implication that this is a serious problem), and only begins to express her grief when the shroud is removed from her husband's face and she looks at him and the blood from his murder (*Guðrúnarkviða I* 13–16). The presentation of the lamenters is one of three stages in building tension in the scene, which is interesting from a narratological perspective, but is also important for understanding why women lamenting is described here but not commonly elsewhere.

Contrastive Disalignment?

Once the performance environment of lament comes into focus, it becomes possible to consider alignments and disalignments with convention that may produce contrasts with or reinforcements of the engagement with the performance arena. A potential, or we would say probable, example of lament performance discussed at length by Carol Clover (1986) is found in *Njáls saga* ch. 116. The saga tells that Hildigunnr hosts a kinsman Flosi at a feast, sits and speaks with him privately for some time. Once the feasting is underway, Hildigunnr makes a dramatic entrance into the hall with a strategic performance of grief for her murdered husband: *Þá kom Hildigunnr í stofuna ok gekk fyrir Flosa ok greiddi hárit frá augum sér ok grét* ['Then came Hildigunnr into the room and goes up to Flosi and pulled the hair back from her eyes and wept (lamented)']. The narrative then moves immediately into dialogue goading Flosi to take responsibility for avenging Hildigunnr's husband, following a common motif or theme in which a woman goads a kinsman to avenge her husband or son (see further Clover 1986). Verbal expression is not mentioned in connection with Hildigunnr's entrance, but the representation is clearly a strategic (and thus presumably controlled) public expression of grief, contrasting sharply with her preceding interaction with Flósi. The fact that Hildigunnr's hair is loose (it would be tied back in other circumstances) is a feature associated with women's expressions of grief, notably only apparent when she pulls it back from her face, a potential indicator of an original audience's implicit knowledge of women's performance practices.

If we accept this as an example of lament, soundscape becomes particularly interesting. Irrespective of whether lament was performed inside the hall during a funeral (or e.g. during a wedding), the situation of a feast is celebratory, contrasting sharply with the customary performance environment of lament. Hildigunnr began her performance of grief by entering into that contrasting soundscape. She is the hostess and mistress of the gathering – an authority of the household. It seems reasonable to infer that an original audience would understand her dramatic performance as redefining the soundscape of the celebration, since presumably all of the people would fall silent. Although laments as verbal art could have also been performed to express personal grief or sadness outside of a ritual context, the situation that has been organized positions Hildigunnr as grieving for her husband and asking for action, emphasizing the contrast between her embodiment of grief, with which the household and guests would align at a funeral, and their silence at an interrupted celebration.

People's co-participation in the environment is a prominent factor in the construction of the emotional environment of a soundscape. Where the laughter and joking of those co-present contrast with the customary performance environment, this would presumably interfere with a lamenter's attempt to perform by inhibiting full engagement with the performance arena because of the tension created with the target emotional state of 'becoming sad' (cf. Siikala 1978: ch. 3). In the case of Hildegunnr, this situation is reversed (according to the narrative). Hildigunnr accomplishes the shift to the performance of embodied emotion and aggressively asserts it in her strategic entrance to the environment of the hall, where it contrasts with the soundscape of celebration,

which it presumably supersedes with powerful rhetorical effect on those present. Recognizing the soundscape adds both perspective and depth to what is described in narration.

Perspectives

The present study challenges the current tendency to treat performance traditions as encapsulated activities in isolation from their conventional contexts except insofar as these exhibit transparent semiotic engagement. Karelian lament in funeral contexts is taken as an illustrative example of the potential relevance of considering the relationship between performance and its customary environment through soundscape as one of its features. Foley's concept of performance arena is introduced and extended from its development for considering meanings to emotional engagement. Performance environment is developed as a complementary concept with which a performance arena, and thereby its activation and engagement, becomes linked. In the case of funerary laments, the relationship between a situation-specific environment and the (customary) performance environment are addressed as aligning or disaligning and as contrasting with or reinforcing engagement with the performance arena, which affects performance and its engagement by others. This framework of distinctions is introduced in relation to examples of Karelian lament, offering a way around, among other things, ideologies of 'authenticity' that haunted earlier approaches to performances in folklore collection. The Karelian case study illustrates that the performance environment of funeral practice is characterized by a soundscape that considerably augments the performance arena of lament as a semiotic space and people's engagement with it. The impacts of the soundscape are salient in the case of lament, not only because the performance tradition is characterized by a heightened emotional state, but also because the heightened emotional state disaligns and contrasts with expectations for most other contexts, including interviews. The insights gained from this case can be used as a platform for exploring the relationship between performance arena and a performance environment in traditions characterized by, for example, positive emotions, which do not necessarily disalign or contrast with the same

contexts, and where such relationships have thus not been brought into focus.

Part of the aim of the current article has been to develop the Karelian case as a model that can be used for analogical comparison, especially for historically remote cultures. This potential is illustrated through comparison with Old Norse traditions, beginning with general observations concerning how to think about a performance environment for such a tradition, bringing its soundscape into focus. The model developed for Karelian lament is then applied to two Old Norse examples. The first looks at how the soundscape aligns with the situation and reinforces engagement with the performance arena, which has been used as a device in narration. The second looks at a disalignment and contrast, which is also presented with functions in narration. Although both cases are constructs of narrative worlds rather than anything approximating ethnographic description, they appear to be built on familiar practices that allowed the customary performance environment and its soundscape to be activated as meaningful to contemporary audiences and as having potential for meaning production. Use of Karelian lament and its soundscape as an analogical frame of reference helps to elucidate the dynamics of significance encoded in these narrative representations.

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Notes

1. For example, Neil Price & Paul Mortimer (2014) have argued that modifications of the eye-piece of a helmet would affect its appearance worn in a firelit hall by

preventing reflection from one 'eye' and thereby activating an image of the one-eyed god Óðinn.

2. Earlier discussions of lament in connection with Viking-Age and medieval Scandinavian cultures have generally been concerned with whether there was such a practice. Full discussion of the possibility of lament practices in connection with archaeology was at the Austmarr Network's 2016 Workshop on Late Iron Age Mortuary Behaviours (Helsinki, Finland). There, Eila Stepanova led a session on ritual practices that may leave no traces in the archaeological record, which was illustrated through more recently documented lament traditions and discussed in relation to Old Norse and other medieval sources organized by Frog. Since that time, Stepanova has presented on the topic at the 99th Early Northern European Seminar of the University of Uppsala in 2018 and Frog and Stepanova presented on the possibility of Scandinavian lamenters at The Feminine in Old Norse Mythology (Uppsala, 15th–16th November 2018).

3. These multicultural discussions have been especially stimulated by the Austmarr Network, which has been holding annual symposia since 2011.

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Scandinavian–Finnic Language Contact and Problems of Periodisation

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Abstract: This paper explores the periodisation of pre-documentary Scandinavian language and its synchronisation with that of Finnic, the era in focus being the first millennium CE. Stratification of loanwords is discussed both as a means to refine periodisation and as an aim in itself. The problems as concerns the latter half of the first millennium are highlighted. The account is built on dissertation research defended in September 2018.

In this paper the interrelation between the stratification of Scandinavian loanwords in Finnic and the periodisation of Scandinavian source language and Finnic target language is reviewed. It is shown that, while stratification has been a useful means to synchronise the periodisation of the two language families during the former half of the first millennium, this is much less the case for the latter half. During the latter period, language contact dropped in intensity and the chronologies for Scandinavian and Finnic are better attuned by the historical-comparative method, internal reconstruction and some known absolute chronologies arrived at by extra-linguistic methodologies; knowledge acquired in this way may in turn help to outline some elements useful for a stratification. The paper is selectively abstracted from dissertation research defended at the University of Helsinki in September 2018: *Preliterary Scandinavian Sound Change Viewed from the East: Umlaut Remodelled and Language Contact Revisited* (Schalin 2018).

To the extent that the borrowings in Finnic from Paleo-, Proto- and Northwest Germanic as well as Proto-Scandinavian are datable in the first place, they appear to have increased in number over time. This seems to be valid up to a critical 5th or 6th century period, which happens to coincide with the beginning of Post-Proto-Scandinavian umlaut and syncope, after which few borrowings are reliably dateable until much later dates may be fixed with reference to the Nordic Christianisation. In fact, a fair share of the several hundred Pre-Swedish borrowings in Finnic may have to be dated to an interval between the 2nd and 6th centuries, with emphasis on the second quarter of the first millennium. This coincides with an interval between the breakup of Northwest Germanic and the Post-Proto-Scandinavian umlaut and syncope.[1] This stratum of borrowings includes relayed Vulgar Latin words, such as Fi *kattila* ['kettle'] < **kattila* ← PSc **katila-* and Fi *kauppa* ['trade'] < **kauppa* ← PSc **kaupa-*. The *terminus post quem* of these loans is plausibly the expansion of Vulgar Latin at the expense of Celtic to the northern Roman Limes, the frontier of the Empire. Finnic language contact with Proto-Scandinavian also became more intimate towards these later times. In addition to household utilities like *kattila* and Fi *saippua* ['soap'] < **saippu-* ← PSc **saipwōn-* (Kroonen 2013: *s.v.* 'saipwōn-'), also words for body-parts and kinship terms, like *hartia-* ['shoulder'] < **hartia-* ← PSc **harðijō-* and Fi *äiti* (dial. *äitee*) ['mother'] < **äitei* ← PSc **aiðijōn-* (or ← PSc **aiþī-*), show indications of being relatively late, i.e. clearly later than Northwest Germanic (Kallio 2015: 26; Schalin 2016: 251–252). Thus both quantitative and qualitative indicators point to a trend of growing language contact, which culminates before an interruption in the 6th century.

In contrast to what may be concluded for the pre-syncope period, there is very little borrowed lexical material that must be seen as concurrent with the umlaut or syncope processes, which have to be postulated by means of phonological reconstruction for
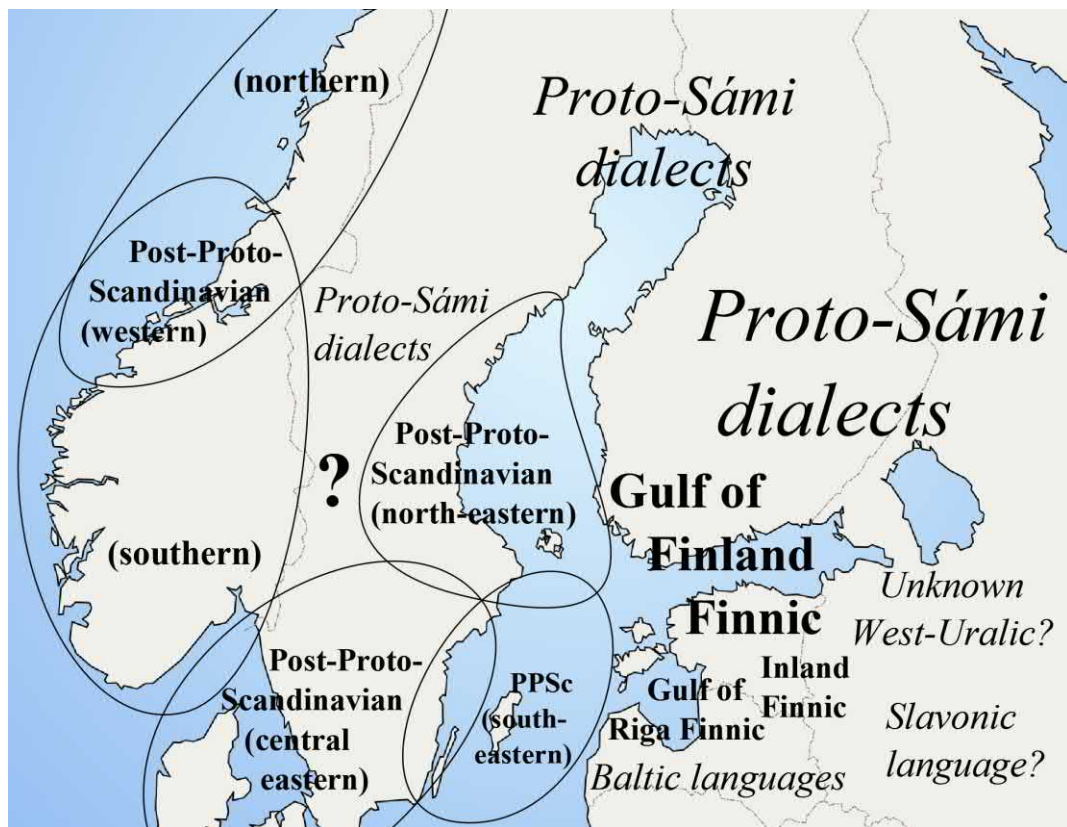
Map 1. Roughly estimated locations of Scandinavian and neighbouring language communities in the Baltic Sea area around 500 CE.

'Transitional' Scandinavian. These stage(s) of development transformed the Proto-Scandinavian vowel system into that of the later Old Scandinavian, which was constituted by roughly double the number of phonemes. Even 'young' Proto-Scandinavian loan etymologies, such as the ones mentioned above, or indeed Fi *patja-* ['matress'] < **patja-* ← PSc **baðja-* ['bed'] or Fi *lattia* ['floor'] < **latti(j)a* ← PSc **flatja*, precede this transition as they do not show traces of either regressive diphthong assimilation or other forms of umlaut, or vowel deletion or mora loss (Kallio 2012: 232; 2015: 26). Since the earliest syncope is datable by runic inscriptions to the 6th century CE, the period of the most intense borrowing seems to have been wrapped up by that time. This apparent plunge in the intensity of lexical borrowings may also, curiously enough, coincide with the great climatic disaster occurring in 536 CE (on impacts of this event in the relevant language contact areas, see Löwenborg 2012; Tvauri 2014).

Map 1 offers a cartographic representation of the roughly estimated locations where Scandinavian and other languages were spoken by local communities. The map does not aspire to be as precise as drawings might be thought to imply. The areas are rather approximate outer limits of core settlement areas identified with particular language forms, but the areas should not be considered either exclusive to particular language groups or to exclude the presence of languages outside of the roughly-sketched areas (one such possibility is represented by the question mark for an extinct substrate language in Southern Scandinavia). Actual language distribution might be better visualised as strings of pearls and enclaves in the midst of sparsely inhabited or roamed backwoods (cf. Frog & Saarikivi 2015: 67). Furthermore, the map is not intended as a statement on any disputed aspect of settlement. Instead the map serves to illustrate that, by the end of the period of intense borrowing from PPSc, Late Proto-Finnic had already diversified into three incipient branches. It also gives a possible spatial interpretation to a tentative conclusion in the dissertation on which the present discussion is based, suggesting that the ancestor of Övdalian (north-eastern PPSc) may have been closer related to that of Gutnish (south-eastern PPSc) than to that of Old Swedish (central eastern PPSc), and that the
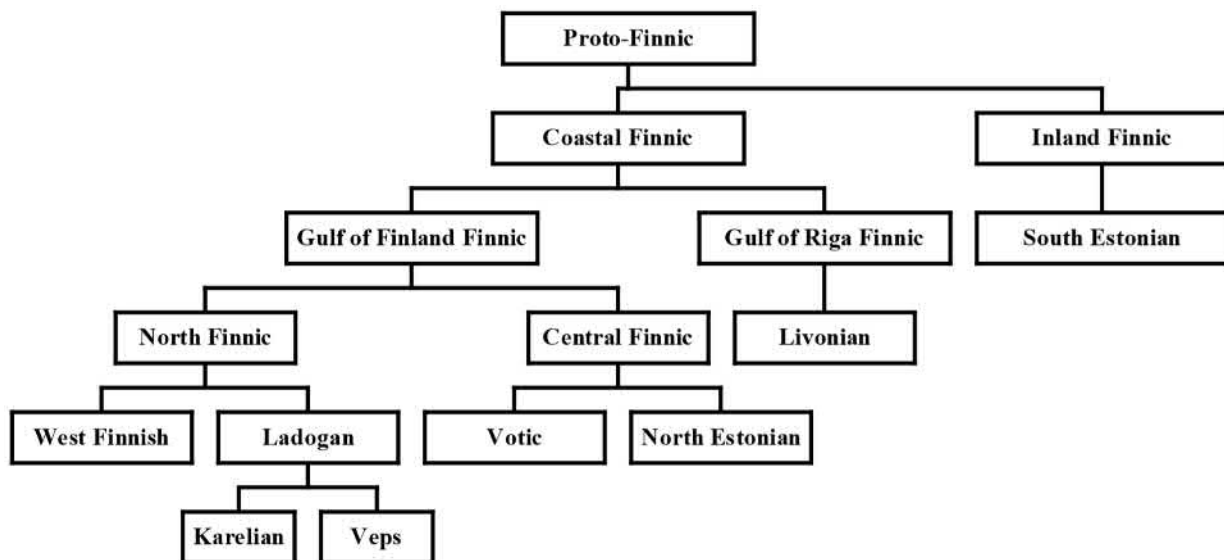
Proto-Finnic

Coastal Finnic — Inland Finnic

Gulf of Finland Finnic — Gulf of Riga Finnic — South Estonian

North Finnic — Central Finnic — Livonian

West Finnish — Ladogan — Votic — North Estonian

Karelian — Veps

Figure 1. The Diversification of Proto-Finnic (according to Kallio 2014: 163).

ancestor of Old Swedish may have absorbed the transitory dialects between the former two after the time depicted here.

Pre-Christian Borrowings from Scandinavian of the Transitional Era and Pitfalls of Circular Reasoning

The question arises whether there exist sufficiently good criteria to date some borrowings to the second half of the first millennium. In the process of my dissertation, the intention was to make the most out of the data in order to organise and stratify the Scandinavian borrowings in Finnic that may originate from the period in question. It seemed reasonable to presume that umlaut and syncope should have left traces in the rich North Finnic vowel system, traces that might facilitate stratification. In the course of the research process, however, it became increasingly clear how difficult it is to formulate reliable criteria for stratification on the basis of umlaut and syncope, and opened the question of at what intensity lexical borrowing actually occurred during this period.

Part of the problem is methodological. Even in general this area of scholarship struggles with the fluid interrelation between relative chronologies of source and target languages, their synchronisation and the assumed sound substitution practices presumed valid for certain limited intervals. Very easily the logic becomes circular, because, in order to determine any of the unknowns, it is difficult to avoid relying on *prima facie* assumptions of the other unknowns.

For pre-documentary times, sound change is reconstructible mostly by relative chronologies with only few means for attributing absolute dates. In order to make meaningful statements on the sound substitution practises, the sound changes in the source language must be synchronised with the sound changes in the target language. For the purpose of conducting such synchronisation, there is no way to avoid a certain amount of abstraction and homogenisation for the pertinent language phases, since this is what the historical-comparative method and internal reconstructive procedures always generate. This stands at variance with what we know about social realities in synchronically described languages, which suggest that variation within and across speech communities is to a high degree the norm. Moreover, phonemic correspondences between source and target languages are hardly ever straightforward and thus the sounds are not transplanted from source to target language in neat, one-to-one phonetic correspondences. Target language phonology, as opposed to obvious phonetics, comes into play when perceived sounds or 'phones' are reinterpreted as lexical phonological representations or 'phonemes' against the background of the synchronic phonological rules operating in the target language. Therefore, substitution practices may be quite ambiguous and unstable

and may even change for more sociolinguistic than phonological reasons.[2]

Difficulties of this type are one of the reasons why I have not, in my dissertation, conclusively stratified many pre-documentary Scandinavian loanwords in North Finnic, even if this was originally a key aspiration. While the approximate or probable dating of some loanwords is discussed, these conclusions do not constitute the most important findings. Instead, more tangible advances were made in reconstructing pre-documentary Scandinavian and synchronising its relative chronology with Finnic.

Periodisation of Finnic

The research in Finnic historical phonology has advanced over the years and there is an emerging consensus about the relative order in which the dialect splits have occurred that resulted in surviving Finnic daughter languages (Kallio 2014). The very first split into Inland Finnic (in present day South Estonia, North-Eastern Latvia and in Seto areas in Russia) and Coastal Finnic (in the coastal areas of the Gulf of Riga and the Gulf of Finland) may be shown to be roughly concurrent with, or at least not earlier than, the branching of Northwest Germanic into West and North Germanic respectively during the Roman Iron Age. It is also possible to date the incipient diversification of the North Finnic group to the eighth century when, according to archaeologists, eastward North Finnic settlement occurred along the Neva-Ladoga-Volga trade route of the Vikings (Kallio 2014; Frog & Saarikivi 2015).

The intermediate diversifications must have occurred in between those dates at separate intervals. Unfortunately, sound changes were few in Finnic that might help to date borrowings more precisely around the middle centuries of the first millennium. In addition, lexical distribution of loanwords in the Finnic branches is at best of indicative value for the purpose of stratification. Their distribution does not predict dates due to later interchange and natural turn-over of vocabulary, as well as possible dependence on extra-linguistic factors (see Willson, this volume). As Kallio (2014: 164) points out, loanwords could, up until the Viking Age, reach the whole family of Finnic sister languages and become phonologically nativised, meaning that vocabulary passed between dialects with adjustments in phonology predicted by speakers. This suggests the existence of functioning social and regional contact networks.

Periodisation of Pre-Documentary Scandinavian

In facing the challenges of stratification, I gradually became discomforted by the deficient internal reconstruction of Transitional Scandinavian and specifically by the lack of any reliable relative chronologies for all forms of umlaut. Thus, I came to invest great effort in improving the diachronic phonological description and relative chronologies for what I define as Transitional and Ancient Scandinavian. This of course constitutes an exceedingly significant undertaking in its own right, especially against the background of how much research effort has been spent on the topic over the last two centuries. Therefore, despite the fact that this line of research originated as a digression from the creative process of my dissertation research, it must in retrospect be viewed as the most ambitious endeavour.

In consulting the literature, I found stagnant dispute and dissent. In some quarters, there is talk about an existing scholarly *status quo* on umlaut, but, on closer inspection, there is none, since the available reference works are meagre in self-sustaining phonological analysis and merely recount obsolete handbooks. The most-used handbooks, such as Noreen's (1923 [1884], 1904), Heusler's (1967 [1913]), Gordon & Taylor's (1981 [1927]) and Wessén's (1968 [1941]), are hopelessly outdated in terms of phonological theory. Descriptions in more recent works, such as those of Pamp (1971), E. Haugen (1976; 1982), Voyles (1992) or O.E. Haugen (2012), tend to obscure the fact that specific research on umlaut[3] reflects utter disagreement rather than any kind of convergence towards consensus. The research in early Scandinavian vowel history is indeed not in a state of *status quo*, but rather between a state of confusion and one of resignation. The lack of common analysis inescapably also entails a lack of consensus on relative chronologies.

Approximate dates, CE	North American traditional			Attempts towards more fine-tuned periodisation				Danish/Swedish traditional	
	Voyles 1992	Antonsen 1975	E.Haugen 1976	Grønvik 1998	Schalin [P4] [P5]	O.E.Haugen 2012	Rischel 2008	N.Å.Nielsen 1985 [1966]; Katlev 2000	Wessén 1968[1941] (cf.Pettersson 2005)
ca. 200 – 300	Early Northwest Germanic	Northwest Germanic	Proto-Scandinavian	Urnordisch	Proto Scandinavian	eldre urnordisk	Early Ancient Nordic	urnordisk (Nielsen), fællesnordisk (PEO)	urnordiska
ca. 300 – 400									
ca. 400 – 475	Proto Norse								
ca. 475 – 525		Northwest Germanic / North Germanic		Nachurnordisch I	Post-Proto-Scandinavian		Late Ancient Nordic		
ca. 500 – 550				Nachurnordisch IIa		yngre urnordisk			
ca. 525 – 575	?	North Germanic	Common Scandinavian	Nachurnordisch IIb	Transitional Scandinavian				
ca. 550 – 700		East/West Germanic		Nachurnordisch III					
ca. 700 – 800/850					Ancient Scandinavian	eldre norrønt			
ca. 800/850 – 1050/1100				Sprachstufe IV	Old Scandinavian		Old Nordic	olddansk (Nielsen also "runedansk")	runsvenska
ca. 1050/ 1100 – 1225	Old Icelandic		Old Scandinavian			yngre norrønt		Nielsen: gammeldansk	
ca. 1225 – 1350/1375								PEO: ældre middeldansk	klassisk fornsvenska

Table 1. Differences in periodisation by particular scholars, with their chronologies and the periods overlapping with the transitional era shaded in grey, both as interpreted by the author; the middle column represents a periodisation arrived at in Schalin 2017a and 2017b.

The failure to establish a relative chronology of sound change is also well reflected in conflicting suggestions of periodisation, many of which are vague and do not even pretend to be based on historical phonology. Table 1 illustrates how periodisation differs and how differences mainly correlate with national research traditions. Western Scandinavian and North American scholars, who are primarily attached to the archaic and grammatically rich language in Old Norse texts, imply unity of Old Scandinavian or the primacy of West Norse by the use of terms such as 'Common Scandinavian' or 'Eldre Norrønt' ['Older Norse'] for it. At the same time, Swedish and Danish scholars project their later national language history onto the pre-documentary runic era and anachronistically denote the East Scandinavian Viking-Age vernacular as 'Ancient/Old Danish' and 'Ancient/Runic Swedish', respectively.

In Table 1, the central column labelled 'Attempts toward a more fine-tuned periodis-ation' shows a periodisation arrived at in Schalin 2017a and 2017b, and which is also used for synthesis of the synchronisation with Finnic in the thesis (for which, see Table 2

below). This chronology is primarily relative and its absolute dates are open to further refinement by runology. It serves here as a reference timeline to compare the periodisations of other authors. The names of the periods used by other scholars are faithfully recorded while the absolute dates and precise transitions from one era to another are hard to infer from some of the respective presentations. Therefore, Table 1 does not do proper justice to all sources and should exclusively be used for indicative comparison. For proper reference, the primary sources must be consulted. I have extended the shading in gray to mark the respective period(s) relevant to the transition from Proto-to Old Scandinavian.

Reconstruction of Post-Proto-Scandinavian and Transitional Scandinavian
Essentially, only Ottar Grønvik and myself (in Schalin 2017a; 2017b) have even aspired to base a precise sub-periodisation on sound change. The methodological hierarchy is, however, different: Grønvik (1998: 13–26) based his chronology primarily on runic evidence, while, in my dissertation, I establish a periodisation based on reconstructed contrast
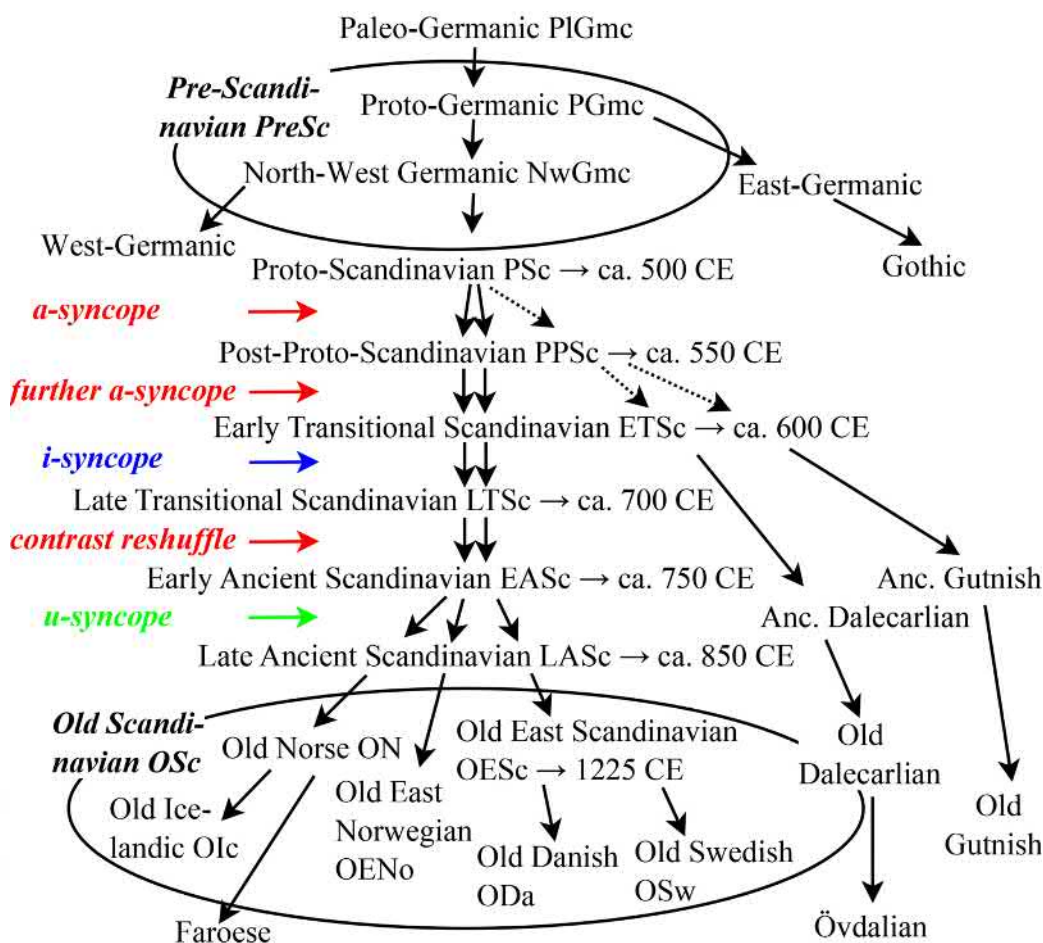
Figure 2: Internal reconstruction of the pre-documentary Scandinavian languages.

shifts in the vowel system. In my journal articles, I have challenged the scholarly community with a comprehensive umlaut analysis based on comparison of Old East and Old West Scandinavian, using the historical-comparative method, as well as a stringent use of internal reconstruction based on the Contrastive Hierarchy Theory (Dresher 2009).

My assumption is that the traces of umlaut do reflect phonologically regular sound change to a much greater extent than generally assumed rather than reflecting analogical change or morphological generalisations. A more exceptionless analysis is achieved by reverse-engineering vowel-systems from natural phonological developments: I do not, as has been the practice until now, undermine the rules by formulating unnatural morphological exceptions (and exceptions to the exceptions) and thus twisting the regularities to fit preconceived vowel systems. Instead, I assume *a priori* that rules were far more neatly exceptionless and instead attempt to refine the analysis of the vowel systems. This is done by

inferring the precise contrastive feature specifications of the triggers and targets from the traces preserved in umlauted and un-umlauted target vowels.

One implication of the analysis is that Old Gutnish and Övdalian share an important innovation of very high age, namely a back-umlaut of a high coronal vowel /i/ > /ɨ/, which made it contrastive with /u/ by means of rounding and inalterable by rounding umlaut and breaking, as in *singa* ['to sing'] < *sɨngwan < *seng^{w}an- as opposed to Old Swedish *siunga* < *singwan (Schalin 2017b: 208, 213–214).

Synchronising Periodisation
There are three fixed points for Scandinavian absolute chronology. At the late end of the timeline, the appearance of large runic corpora around the turn of the millennium, and soon thereafter of full-fledged texts in the Latin alphabet, provides absolute chronological reference points for Old Scandinavian. At the early end, the contacts with the Celtic and

Scandinavian	Years	Finnic
Paleo-Germanic ~ *äldre urgermanska*	–250 BCE	Middle Proto-Finnic ~ *medelurfinska* ~ keskikantasuomi
Proto-Germanic ~ *urgermanska*	250–100 BCE	
Northwest Germanic ~ *nordvästgermanska*	100 BCE – 50 CE	
	50–160 CE	Late Proto-Finnic ~ *sen urfinska* ~ myöhäiskantasuomi
Proto-Scandinavian ~ *urnordiska*	160–250	
	250–400	Coastal Finnic ~ *litoral urfinska* ~ rannikkokantasuomi
	400–500	Gulf of Finland Finnic ~ *Finska viken urfinska* ~ Suomenlahden kantasuomi
Post-Proto-Scandinavian ~ *yngre urnordiska*	500–550	
Early Transitional Scandinavian ~ *tidig övergångsnordiska*	550–600	North Finnic ~ *nordurfinska* ~ pohjoiskantasuomi
Late Transitional Scandinavian ~ *sen övergångsnordiska*	600–700	
Early Ancient Scandinavian ~ *tidig förfornnordiska*	700–750	
Late Ancient Scandinavian ~ *sen förfornnordiska*	750–850	
Old East Scandinavian ~ *fornöstnordiska*	850–1225	Early Finnish ~ *tidig finska* ~ varhaissuomi
Old Swedish ~ *klassisk/äldre fornsvenska*	1225–1375	Medieval Finnish ~ *medeltida finska* ~ keskiajan suomi
Old Swedish ~ *yngre fornsvenska*	1375–1521/1540	
Early New Swedish ~ *äldre nysvenska*	1521/1540–1732	Old Finnish ~ *gammalfinska* ~ vanha suomi

Table 2: Periodisations to synchronise preliterary Scandinavian chronology with that of Finnic (years for Early New Swedish 1521 and Old Finnish 1540 are exact publishing dates of the New Testament, thus different).

Latin language communities provide some possibilities to synchronise absolute chronologies (Stifter 2009; Kallio 2012: 232–233; 2015: 28). In addition, the sound changes that separated Northwest Germanic from Proto-Germanic are traceable in Finnic loanword data (Heikkilä 2014[4]: 61–62). In the middle of the timeline, the progression of syncope in Transitional and Ancient Scandinavian may, with some margin of precision, be followed in the transitional runic inscriptions (Riad 1992; Grønvik 1998). Conclusions are not easily established because one of the principal criteria used by runologists to date inscriptions is the progression of syncope, as assumed by philologists, rendering the argument vulnerable to circularity. With a more reliable relative chronology, the scope of this problem may be narrowed down. In my dissertation (Schalin 2017a: 8; 2017b: 193), I have estimated the margin of error to be approximately three generations of language learners, i.e. less than one century.

For Proto-Finnic, as already mentioned, it is possible with the help of Germanic loanword data to nail down the last sound changes before

the break-up of the Late Proto-Finnic dialect continuum. This procedure, based on quite conclusive research in loanword substitutions, is recounted in the summary chapter of my dissertation (Schalin 2018: §2.2). As a further point that can be fixed on a chronology, consider the following: the break-up of the northern group cannot be much later than the 8th century, when the rapid expansion of North Finnic settlement eastward occurred and scattered the daughter languages over a wide area.[5] By that time, North Finnic must have already been distinct from Central Finnic, although it remains unclear when they advanced from distinct dialects into distinct languages. This is as close to an absolute chronology as one can get.

Early Transitional Scandinavian Borrowings

It seems quite clear that the number of etymologies that can, with a reasonable probability, be dated within the period of Scandinavian umlaut and syncope is rather small. A quite clear exception is constituted by three etymologies that display traces of rounding umlaut, while, at the same time, they contain reliable indicators of being very early. In Schalin 2017b, I postulate, by means of internal reconstruction, a primary rounding umlaut, triggered by early *a*-syncope, which was earlier than even the oldest front umlaut. I argue that the Finnic words *rohkeda* (cf. Fi *rohkea* ['brave, diligent, tall, etc.'], Est *rohke* ['abundant, ample']) and *olut* (cf. Fi *olut* ['beer, ale'], Est ['ibid.']) are probative of a corresponding early sound substitution practice, which reflected the rounding of the Scandinavian vowel. I believe that Mikko Heikkilä (2014: 117) is right to claim that *louhi* ['thunderbolt'] ← *lo̯ugiz < *laugiz ['flame, flash, thunderbolt'] (cf. later *leygr*) is a further probative example, if taken for granted that the labialising diphthong assimilation *au > *o̯u indeed was concurrent with primary rounding umlaut, which is plausible. According to my reconstructed chronology, the same dating would apply to the borrowing *kari ← *skari < *skarja (later > *sker* ['skerry, rock, islet']). It would have been borrowed after 5th-century *a*-syncope but before 6th-/7th-century front umlaut.[6]

Diphthong Assimilation and Ancient Scandinavian Borrowings

Let us return to the issue of possible borrowings to be dated in between the typical Proto-Scandinavian and Old Swedish strata. In the initial stages of my research, I identified a corpus of borrowings that contained a follower of the Proto-Germanic diphthong -*ai*-. The most common reflex in Finnic typical for Proto-Scandinavian borrowings is -*ai*- but, in addition, the later Finnish reflexes include -*ei*- and -*äi*- and moreover a Proto-Finnic reflex *-*ëi*- may be reconstructed. This corpus could potentially have recorded traces of so-called palatal diphthong assimilation in Scandinavian, a development which changed PSc -*ai*- over ASc -*æi*- to ON -*ei*- in parallel with front umlaut. However, upon closer scrutiny, the results turned out mainly negative: it is not possible to use the Finnic descendants to trace the diphthong assimilation because many of these later reflexes are the results of sound changes that happened in Finnic and have occurred after PSc *ai* was substituted with Finnic *ai*. The one diphthong that truly seems to reflect a different substitution, namely *-*ëi*-, is clearly earlier than front umlaut and thus bears no phonetic testimony of it (Schalin 2016).

The four 6th-century borrowings already discussed above, being either Post-Proto-Scandinavian or Early Ancient Scandinavian, are so early that they may be stratified as belonging to an immediate 6th century extension of the Proto-Scandinavian language contact. Looking at the interval from the other end, there are indeed some items that show signs of being older than medieval Old Swedish. I have in two papers (Schalin with Frog 2014; Schalin 2016) discussed some reasons for dating the Finnish word *reitti* ['route' < 'sea route'] to the Viking Age. The Finnish word for 'town' (< 'market place') is *kaupunki* and contains the diphthong -*au*-, which is unlikely to be a reflex of standard Old Swedish -*ō*- in *køpungęr*. Furthermore, owing to its semantic content, it is unlikely to have been borrowed from medieval local rural Finland-Swedish settler dialects with a primary diphthong *køupung*-. On the other hand, it cannot be significantly older because the loan original, if it had existed in Proto-Scandinavian, would have had the shape
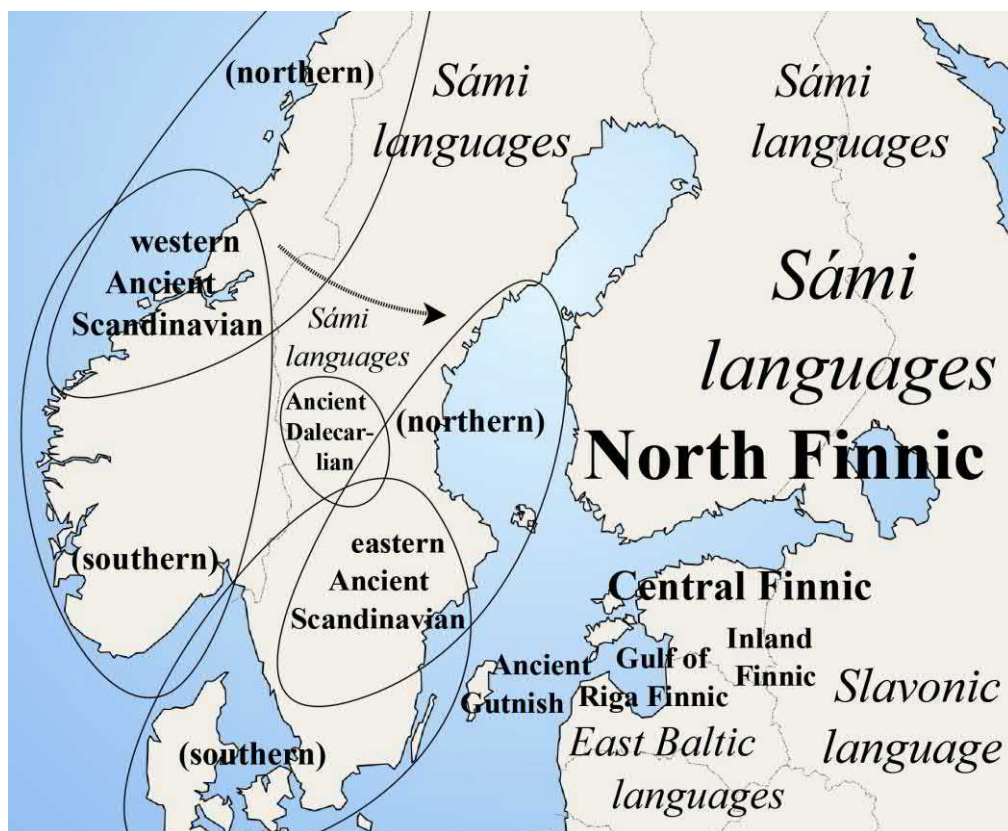
Map 2. Approximate locations of language communities around 700 CE.

*kaupa-angra- and would consequently not serve as a source for the borrowing.

The Finnish word *äyri < *äyri* ← ASc n. **œyrī* is a further word belonging to the sphere of trade, which displays a sound substitution not expected for Old Swedish. Curiously enough, there are numerous borrowings in the sphere of maritime trade that have unexpected reflexes of stem vowels. The words do not represent *i*-stems, most typical for Old Swedish borrowings when the loan original ended in a consonant, but, on the other hand, they do not show regular reflexes of a Proto-Scandinavian stem-vowel either. This would apply to the words *vaaka* ← f. **vāgu* and *markka* ← f. **markz* or ← f. **marku*. For an isolated word, this would not be remarkable or probative, but for two words neatly fitting into the pattern with *reitti*, *kaupunki* and *äyri*, the temptation to postulate an Ancient Scandinavian stratum is great, especially as the 8th century is known to be the time of break-through for maritime trade in the Baltic Sea area.

In Map 2, the approximate locations of language communities around 700 CE are illustrated. All reservations on the encircled areas flagged in the discussion of Map 1 apply here too. Map 2, as compared to Map 1, serves to illustrate an implication of the analysis in Schalin 2017b, according to which the central dialect of eastern Scandinavian expanded to the Swedish east coast approximately between the years 500 and 700 CE at the expense of the ancestors of Dalecarlian and Gutnish. The arrow symbolises that western Scandinavian may have spread eastward in the north. Further, Gulf of Finland Finnic had split into a northern and a central dialect. The map is not intended as a statement on the extension of Sámi or Slavonic, but only as a reflection of existing mainstream views.

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, the improvement of internal relative chronologies of Scandinavian and Finnic respectively may be of some help for future efforts to stratify Transitional and Ancient Scandinavian borrowings in the different branches of Finnic. The number of etymologies, however, remains unclear, and criteria for exact dating are challenging to establish. As for Transitional Scandinavian, it is not certain that the source language of the borrowings was a direct ancestor of Old

Swedish, but it may also have been more closely related to the contemporary ancestors of Old Gutnish and Övdalian.

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Notes

1. 'Syncope' here means loss of vowels in weak positions, whether in medial or word-final syllables.
2. Here, I knowingly place myself at variance with the methodological assumptions invoked by Mikko K. Heikkilä (2014), which result in chronologies at a precision of one generation of language learners. He achieves this alleged precision by projecting most variation spotted in the data onto a timeline by resorting invariably to chronological explanation of the kind that X must have occurred before A and after B. Thus the congestion on his timeline, which he uses to fine-tune even absolute dates, flows logically from his initial assumptions and his disinclination to attribute any ambiguity to his data. With special attention to his problematic treatment of borrowed toponyms, Heikkilä's dissertation has already been censured critically by Kaisa Häkkinen (2015) and Janne Saarikivi (2015). See further scrutiny in Schalin (2018).
3. E.g. Braroe 1979; Hreinn Benediktsson 1982; Voyles 1982; 2005; Widmark 1991: 118–137; Grønvik 1998: 48–65; Schulte 1998; Rischel 2008; Kiparsky 2009a; 2009b; Iverson & Salmons 2004; 2012.
4. Here, as well as in my dissertation, I use Heikkilä (2014) only sparingly for reference, and always critically, for reasons spelled out in note 2 above. As concerns the matter at hand here, I accept his argument, which to the best of my knowledge is original (Kallio 2014: 163). This equally applies to one more reference below in this text.
5. At the dawn of historical times, as best recorded in Russian sources, these Vepsian, Karelian, Bjarmian, Ingrian, Chud, Tavastian and Finnish language communities were referred to as separate (see also Frog & Saarikivi 2015: 83–102).
6. My umlaut hypothesis also provides an explanation for why umlaut occurs in these *ja*-stems in the first place, as opposed to masculine *i*-stems, such as *staði*-, where no fronting occurs. The hypothesis allows for a loan original *skari*-, with an equal target vowel but a different trigger vowel from *staði*-.

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Archaeological and Lexical Relevant Indicators of South Sámi Prehistory

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Abstract: This paper complements my model for combining archaeological and lexical material with relevant indicators, a discipline-neutral tool that provides information on cultural processes enabling comparison of research results of different disciplines. It shows how the model is applied to South Sámi material, and how relevant indicators should be used in the data. I suggest that a degree of probability be added to the concept, distinguishing strong and weak relevant indicators.

In this article, I place my linguistic-archaeological study on South Sámi prehistory in dialogue with relevant indicators, a discipline-neutral concept for cross-disciplinary use developed in the Viking Age in Finland project (Ahola & Frog 2014a; 2014b). In my study (Piha 2018), I have sketched a theoretical model for combining archaeological and lexical data. The aim of the model is to get a fuller and more detailed picture of prehistory than a single discipline can give alone. Potential relevant indicators in lexical data are defined in less detail by Joonas Ahola and Frog (2014a–b). As the relevant indicator is a concept that has similar goals to those of my theoretical model, it will be fruitful to see how these two models work together. In this article, I address the nature of relevant indicators in historical lexicology and examine the dialogue between the models with examples from the South Sámi lexical and archaeological data along with the results I obtained when I applied my theoretical model to the data (Piha 2018). Bringing the models into dialogue augments the tool set of my theoretical model. It also develops and refines how relevant indicators can be used in historical lexicology and archaeology by applying them within categorical systems with hierarchies of relations.

In my research project, which is part of my PhD thesis, I have examined about 180 Proto-Scandinavian loanwords in South Sámi language, which is spoken in the central parts of Scandinavia, and about 160 excavated archaeological remains from the Early Iron Age (200 BCE – 550 CE) potentially connected to the Southern Proto-Sámi speakers in the same area. After analyzing both sets of data separately, I applied the model to combine the datasets in order to see how the lexical and archaeological material coordinated. In this article, I will consider whether these confluences can be seen as relevant indicators of South Sámi prehistory[1] and contacts between relevant Southern Proto-Sámi and Proto-Scandinavian speakers.

First, I will introduce the reader to my theoretical model for combining archaeological and lexical material. Then I will discuss the use of relevant indicators in historical lexicology as well as in the combination of archaeology and historical lexicology. In the conclusion, I will consider the use of relevant indicators in multidisciplinary research. As I will state, it might be necessary to divide the concept into weak and strong relevant indicators to indicate how definite the indicator is in a multidisciplinary study of the past.

The Theoretical Model

In this section, I will give a short overview of the theoretical model for combining archaeological and lexical data (introduced in more detail in Piha 2018). The timeframe for the study is determined by a methodological principle for correlating linguistic and archaeological evidence: the dating of the Proto-Scandinavian language offers a temporal window that can be aligned in relation to the absolute chronology of the archaeological record. Old runic inscriptions date this language form to the period from ca. 200 CE to 550 CE (e.g. J. Häkkinen 2010: 55; see also Schalin in this issue).[2] Prior to this, Proto-Sámi speakers had had contacts with Proto-Germanic that took place in the southern parts of Finland and Karelia around the Late Bronze Age or the Early Iron Age (Aikio 2006: 42). From there, the protolanguage spread to the area of the modern Saepmie (South Sámi ~ North Sámi *Sápmi*) and disintegrated first into dialects ca. 1–500 (Aikio 2006: 43). The proto-form of the southernmost Sámi languages (South Sámi and Ume Sámi, perhaps also Pite Sámi), here called Southern Proto-Sámi, was perhaps the first to separate from Common Proto-Sámi when the dialect spread to the

central parts of Scandinavia around 200–400 CE (Piha & Häkkinen forthcoming).

The theoretical model applied here has four central concepts: lexical 'finds', semantic (lexical) categories, archaeological find groups, and archaeological categories (Figure 1). It should be remembered that, when using the model, there needs to be a regional and temporal connection between the two datasets for them to be suitable for comparison.
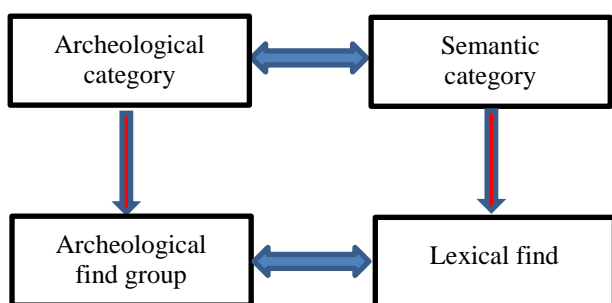
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        ▼                          ▼
┌─────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────┐
│  Archeological  │◄──────►│  Lexical find   │
│   find group    │        │                 │
└─────────────────┘        └─────────────────┘
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Figure 1. The theoretical model to combine archaeological and lexical material (source: Piha 2018 fortcoming).

Lexical 'finds' are the actual words in the data. In the Proto-Scandinavian loanword strata in South Sámi, lexical finds are, for example, *gaajhtse* ['goat'], *saavtje* ['sheep'], *laampe* ['lamb'], *vïerhtse* ['ram'], *govse* ['cow'], *galpie* ['calf of a cow'] and *svijnie* ['swine']. The lexical finds group into semantic categories according to their meaning. These meanings viewed through their relations that link and group the categories. Each of these words refers to a category of animal, and the animals to which they each refer all fall within a broader category of 'livestock'. That category, in turn, falls within a still broader categories of 'domesticated animals' (including also words such as 'dog' that does not belong to 'livestock'), 'animals', 'living things' in a hierarchy. Looking at lexical finds within a categorical system makes it possible to bring into focus semantic categories within the hierarchy to which groups of words belong. The words *gaajhtse* ['goat'], *saavtje* ['sheep'], *laampe* ['lamb'] and *vïerhtse* ['ram'] reflect one category of livestock and *govse* ['cow'] and *galpie* ['calf of a cow'] reflect another. It is also possible to examine all these words collectively as reflecting a category of 'livestock' which is, in turn, a relevant indicator of a category of 'domestic animal husbandry'.[3]

Archaeological find groups are the actual artefacts, structures or other archaeological material found in the ground. They are not individual finds but finds that can be grouped together, for example, bones of sheep or goat or bones of swine. These archaeological find groups form archaeological categories such as domestic animal bones.

It should also be noted that a specific type of an artefact, such as the celt axe, forms an archaeological find group, but all artefacts that can be interpreted as axes despite the type can also be considered as an archaeological find group. It is research-specific to determine how precisely the find groups should be defined: if there are, in the lexicon under scrutiny, many different words for axes, it is relevant to consider whether they refer, or have referred, to the different types of axes in the archaeological material. If there are many different kinds of axes in the archaeological data, it might also be relevant to create a find group for each type and examine what this means from the perspective of lexical data.

Figure 1 presents how these four concepts are connected. Usually, a lexical find corresponds to an archaeological find group: bones of sheep or goat in archaeological material indicate real sheep or goats and can thus be connected with the words referring to these animals. Also, archaeological and semantic categories can be connected: the archaeological category of domestic animal bones coincides with the semantic category of domestic animal husbandry, as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1 also draws attention to what cannot be found: the archaeological material does not contain bones of cattle. Because there is a word for cow in the lexical material, it is probable that the Southern Proto-Sámi speakers of that time did have cows, or at least they were sufficiently familiar with them to motivate borrowing a word for a cow's calf in addition to a word for a word for cow.

It should be noted that there are often many categories that do not coincide across the types of data at all, and many lexical finds have no counterpart in archaeological find groups and vice versa (see further Piha 2018). Here, I have introduced only a small sample of the data –

Archaeological category	Archaeological find group	Lexical find	Semantic category
Domestic animal bones	Bones of sheep and goat	*gaajhtse* ['goat']	Domestic animal husbandry
		laampe ['lamb']	
		saavtje ['sheep']	
		galpie ['calf of a cow']	
		govse ['cow']	
	Bones of swine	*svijnie* ['swine']	

Table 1. Archaeological and lexical material combined.

indeed, only one semantic and archaeological category – in order to very briefly illustrate the principles of the methodology.

Within this sort of methodological analysis, it does not make a crucial difference whether the spread of Southern Proto-Sámi was one of migration, language shift or a combination of thereof. Thus, the linguistic data, even combined with the archaeological data, is a relevant indicator of Southern Proto-Sámi language use. However, it does not state whether Southern Proto-Sámi was a primary language of all relevant groups at the time or whether it was operating as sort of *lingua franca* among groups that subsequently underwent language shifts.

Relevant Indicators

A relevant indicator is evidence of cultural processes and practices as well as human activity. It is always an indicator *of* something and could be an indicator of many things simultaneously. Approaching data of any one discipline as indicators-of places them in relation to particular processes, practices or fields of human activity to which data of other disciplines may also relate as indicators-of. The relevant indicator "is essentially an indexing tool for organizing data" from diverse disciplines in multidisciplinary research. (Ahola & Frog 2014a: 34.) Collectively, the correlation of such multidisciplinary data has the potential to produce synthetic perspectives on elements of human culture in particular, including perspectives on continuity and change from earlier to later eras (Frog 2014: 447–448). A relevant indicator is a tool with which it should be possible to compare or perhaps even combine the results of different disciplines: relevant indicators may be able to indicate corresponding phenomena reflected in the primary data of different disciplines for studying the past.

Ahola and Frog (2014a: 34–35) illustrate that a single item or category of data can be an indicator of multiple things simultaneously through an example of the custom of burying weapons in Viking-Age graves of Southwest Finland in the archaeological record. These weapons can be a relevant indicator of many phenomena: burial practices, weapons as status symbols, cultural contacts or beliefs connected to the afterlife. Relevant indicator thus allows multiple indexing, which Ahola and Frog brought into focus in terms of how the same find or find category may be connected with multiple domains of culture and assessed in relation to each. Thus, the word *saavtje* ['sheep'] correlates with other vocabulary and archaeological finds as relevant indicators of animal husbandry, but it is also a potential relevant indicator of things that might be done with sheep, like spinning and textile production. Assessing that potential requires bringing it into comparison with very different lexical and archaeological finds than those for indicators of animal husbandry. In the Proto-Scandinavian loanword data of South Sámi, there are words *vaanhtse* ['mitten'], *vaarjoeh* ['clothes'] and *vaarese* ['homespun fabric']. These might all refer to items made of wool. In the archaeological data, a spindle whorl and remains of fabric have been found. Unfortunately, the quality of fabric has not been analyzed, and thus it is unclear whether the fabric is wool. It is, however, a possibility, and together the archaeological and lexical finds may be relevant indicators of sheep, how sheep were used and, indirectly, animal husbandry.

Using Relevant Indicators in Historical Lexicology

The application of the relevant indicator as a tool in historical lexicology remains undeveloped. Its use can be significantly

advanced by calibrating its application in relation to the hierarchies of semantic categories to which particular words belong and into which they become grouped. When handled in this way, the concept becomes fitted into my model of lexical finds and semantic categories.

Words are always indicators of the concepts they refer to. When studying historical lexicology – the origin and age of words – it is often, but not always, possible to find out how, when and from where the words came into a language. Sometimes the appearance of a new word in a certain period is an indicator of a new concept as well, but sometimes the concept is already there and what it is called changes for one reason or another. Words can be relevant indicators of linguistic (and cultural) contacts, the appearance of new concepts, as well as of the already familiar phenomena and concepts the words refer to. They can also indicate the time when the phenomena and concepts arrived in the language community.

All the individual words identified here as lexical finds can be viewed as relevant indicators of the concepts to which they refer. Sometimes a single word might be of utmost importance as a relevant indicator. Ahola and Frog (2014b: 13) present the example of the Germanic loan in Finnish for 'hop' as an indicator not only of the period when the word was borrowed but also an indicator of the adoption of brewing beer with hops as an ingredient (see also Häkkinen 2014: 394–395).

Part of the methodological interest in relevant indicators for historical research is that indicators remain only potential when viewed in isolation, whereas correlation with additional indicators can increase their relative probability and/or allow greater specification. Within the Viking Age in Finland project, correlation with linguistic data was focused on linking it to data from different disciplines. My proposal here is that lexical finds etymologically identifiable as loans of a certain period can be viewed within hierarchies of semantic categories. This allows the lexical set identified with a broader category to be collectively considered as a relative indicator.

A set of lexical finds belonging to the same semantic category should be considered collectively as a stronger relevant indicator of the phenomenon to which they all refer than the individual words (see also Frog 2013: 114). For example, Proto-Scandinavian loanword strata in South Sámi includes many names for domestic animals and, in addition, other words that can be connected to agriculture and animal husbandry (Piha 2018). Each of these words is an independent relevant indicator of domestic animal husbandry but together they become a stronger relevant indicator of the semantic category; if there were only one word referring to domestic animals, it would be quite a weak relevant indicator. It would indicate that the Southern Proto-Sámi speakers likely knew of the particular animal that had been domesticated, but would it be an indicator of domestic animal husbandry among the Southern Proto-Sámi speakers? The more words there are referring to the phenomenon, the more certain it is that Proto-Scandinavian contacts have played an intensive role in that area of culture within the Southern Proto-Sámi speaking community. As with the archaeological material where weapons in a great number of graves can be called a relevant indicator (see Ahola & Frog 2014a: 34–35), an abundant number of loanwords in one semantic category is a relevant indicator of a link between the phenomenon that the semantic category represents and language contacts.

Whether it is an individual lexical find or a semantic category with several words, it is necessary to know the etymology of the word(s) in question. The etymology provides the context of the word and (ideally) tells roughly when and from what language it came. We know, for example, that the word *gaajhtse* ['goat'] is a relevant indicator of goats. In addition, we know that it is a loanword that was borrowed from Proto-Scandinavian sometime around 200–550 CE. Thus, the word becomes a relevant indicator of both early Iron Age contacts between Southern Proto-Sámi and Proto-Scandinavian speakers, and also an indicator that, in these language contacts, goats were somehow relevant and perhaps significant, although it is unclear in what capacity. When an abundant number of loanwords from a common semantic category is traceable to contacts during a particular language phase, they are collectively of

sufficient scope to infer cultural influence. The etymology of *gaajhtse* is complemented by the Proto-Scandinavian etymologies of several other words that form a central nominal lexicon for domesticated animals, suggesting that contacts likely extended to influences in the area of domesticated animal husbandry.

### Relevant Indicators and the Combination of Archaeology and Historical Lexicology

My research relates the data of two disciplines that offer complementary perspectives on the past: archaeology and historical linguistics. These disciplines are very different in nature, with very different kinds of data and, accordingly, different kinds of relevant indicators. In this section, I shall discuss the results of my study of combining archaeological and lexical data as relevant indicators of the South Sámi past. This work is similar to what was done with the example of 'hop' above. The loanword's etymology identifies the loan with a particular language phase while the cultural implications of the loan remain only potential. The potential linguistic indicator becomes stronger when it is correlated with palaeoecological indicators of the archaeological record of when hops was adopted into beer-brewing practices in Finland. Thus, the archaeological indicators connect with the linguistic indicators, both narrowing the probable period of the loan and collectively becoming an indicator of cultural impact pointing to the adoption of brewing beer with hops as an ingredient.

As for archaeological material, the domestic animal bones found in the hunting ground graves in southern Norrland and Dalarna, Sweden, tell about the significance of domestic animal husbandry for the grave-makers. This find group can be seen as a relevant indicator of, for example, livelihood, burial customs and beliefs connected to the afterlife. However, the find group alone cannot tell about the ethnic identity of those people, or the language they spoke. There are features in the graves that archaeologists have connected to the Sámi people (see e.g. Ambrosiani et al. 1984; Zachrisson et al. 1997), but these are archaeologists' interpretations of material culture only. The ambiguity of the archaeological material regarding language or ethnic

affiliations has led to divergent interpretations and opinions among archaeologists about the grave-makers' (or the interred's) ethnic and linguistic identity (Fossum 2006: 89; see also Piha 2018). This ambiguity has also often led linguists and archaeologists to argue that the Southern Proto-Sámi language was not spoken in inland Scandinavia before the Viking Age or even the Middle Ages. In other words, the finds are seen as potential relevant indicators of the South Sámi past, but they could also be relevant indicators of Scandinavian language speakers' past or perhaps of some other linguistic or ethnic group.

The lexical material presented above is, as we have seen, a relevant indicator of language contacts and possibly cultural contacts between Proto-Sámi and Proto-Scandinavian speakers that was related to livelihood. The words cannot tell us about the ethnic identity of the people who used the Southern Proto-Sámi language but, obviously, they do tell about the language(s) spoken at that time.

When combined, the archaeological and linguistic datasets may become stronger proof of the presence of the Southern Proto-Sámi dialect (and later, language) in southern Norrland during 200–550 CE than evidence from either discipline alone. As has been suggested earlier (e.g. Häkkinen 2010: 60; Aikio 2012: 78–79; Piha 2018; Piha & Häkkinen forthcoming), there is linguistic evidence to prove that Southern Proto-Sámi was spoken in central Scandinavia by 200–400 CE. There are not only Proto-Scandinavian loanwords in South Sámi that cannot be found in any other Sámi languages but also Proto-Scandinavian loanwords with phonological differences found only in South Sámi. Aikio (2012: 77–79) interprets these differences as indicative of dialectal variation across the Proto-Sámi language area during the Early Iron Age (on phonological peculiarities in southern Sámi languages, see Aikio 2012: 77–79, 110–111; Piha & Häkkinen forthcoming). They suggest also that Southern Proto-Sámi was already a distinct variety of Proto-Sámi when it borrowed words from Proto-Scandinavian (Aikio 2012: 78, 110). It is likely that this happened in central Scandinavia where the South Sámi is spoken even today.

127
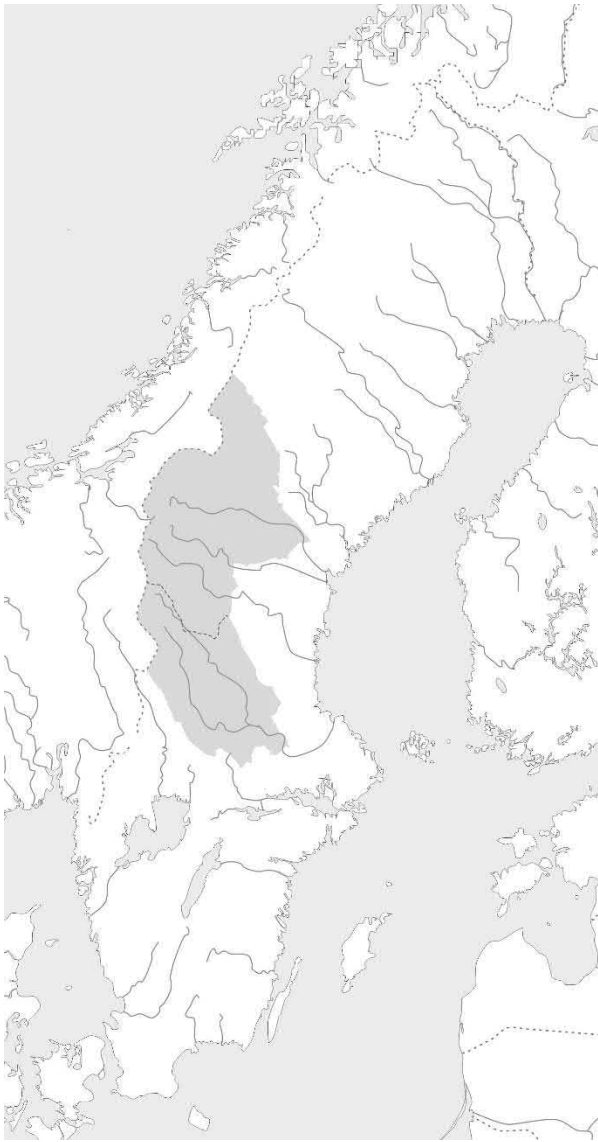
Map 1. The research area in Jämtland, Härjedalen and Dalarna (shaded).

If there were Southern Proto-Sámi speakers, then there would be archaeological remains that can be connected to them. The graves in the hunting ground areas[4] of central Scandinavia differ from those that have traditionally been connected to the Scandinavians not only in geographical area but also in grave goods and even, to some extent, grave structures (see Map 1). These grave types should be seen as an indicator of the presence of someone other than Scandinavians. There are loanwords in South Sámi that fall effortlessly within the time frame of the graves, and they also refer to the phenomena seen in the graves, like remains of domestic animals, spinning and fabric. It is a strong possibility that the words and archaeological remains can be connected.

It is true that the words referring to domestic animals are borrowed from Proto-Scandinavian. Therefore, the archaeological remains in the inland areas of southern Norrland and Dalarna could, in theory, be of Scandinavian origin. It is not likely, however, because the remains of the graves differ from those traditionally connected to Scandinavian culture as stated above. The words borrowed indicate that domestic animal husbandry connected the Southern Proto-Sámi speakers to the Scandinavians in some way. There are many archaeological remains connected to iron manufacture in the hunting ground areas in southern Norrland (see e.g. Magnusson 1986). Unfortunately, there are no Proto-Scandinavian loanwords in South Sámi that connect to iron manufacture. However, as the remains are in the same area as the graves, they are most likely connected to those who are buried in the graves and who made them. Birgitta Fossum suggests that the Southern Proto-Sámi speakers likely traded iron with the Scandinavians, and, as iron manufacture took a lot of work, the traditional livelihood of hunting and gathering became too time-consuming alongside it. Fossum argues that, in order to support their role in the iron trade, they adopted a new, additional form of livelihood from the Scandinavians in the form of domestic animals to support the iron trade. Domestic animal herding enabled a more settled lifestyle near the iron manufacture sites unlike hunting and gathering, which requires seasonal migration. (Fossum 2006: 143; on iron manufacture among the Southern Proto-Sámi, see also Piha 2018.) It should be noted, though, that not all the Southern Proto Sámi speakers adopted the new livelihood of iron manufacture and animal husbandry. This diversity of culture among speakers of the same language, as among speakers of Skolt Sámi today (Saarikivi & Lavento 2012: 200), is also reflected in the data of my research: iron manufacture seems to be a rather weak indicator of the South Sámi past as there is no evidence of it in the lexical material. Iron was indeed known to Southern Proto-Sámi speakers long before contacts with Proto-Scandinavian, as the South Sámi word *ruevtie* 'iron' is a Proto-Germanic loanword (e.g. Koivulehto 1976: 247; Sammallahti 1998:

128). However, the datasets are strong indicators of domestic animal husbandry as material referring to it can be found in both sets of data. This hypothesis about iron manufacture among the Southern Proto-Sámi provides a plausible reason for the adoption of domestic animal husbandry.

Each archaeological find group and lexical find in my data can be organized within a system of semantic and archaeological categories that should be seen as relevant indicators of changing technologies and livelihoods of societies among which Southern Proto Sámi was spoken in the Early Iron Age in southern Norrland and Dalarna. However, the relevant indicators of either type of data are quite weak when addressed alone. Only when combined can they be strong relevant indicators of the Southern Sámi Iron Age. Whereas in the Viking Age in Finland project, the ambiguity of any single relevant indicator was handled by treating it as only a *potential relevant indicator* until it is corroborated by others (Ahola & Frog 2014a: 35), my suggestion for using the concept of relevant indicators in future studies is to incorporate a degree of probability. Within the context of the methodology above, *weak(er) relevant indicators* are those seen only in results of a single discipline; *strong(er) relevant indicators* are those seen in two or more disciplines.

Conclusions

Relevant indicator is a useful tool that can be used in combination with the above model for combining archaeological and lexical material. However, the concept of relevant indicator itself is somewhat ambiguous, which is quite natural as it is a cross-disciplinary and discipline-neutral tool. When doing multidisciplinary research with the model for combining archaeology and historical lexicology, more specific terms are needed to indicate what kind of relevant indicators one is dealing with: archaeological find groups or broader and more abstract archaeological categories; individual lexical finds or ample semantic categories.

The lexical finds and archaeological find groups can be categorized according to the aims of the research. If the aim is to examine the visibility of livestock within the data, livestock vocabulary and archaeological finds should be classified in a carefully defined category of livestock. Vocabulary and archaeological material referring to other animals than livestock can be classified more ambiguously within a categorical system, for example in a general category of animals or broad category of wild animals. Thus, the theoretical model enables focus on categories of different degrees of breadth and abstraction that is dependent on the perspective of research.

After the combination of archaeological and lexical data is done by applying the model, the results may be distinguished as strong or weak relevant indicators of the past. The relevant indicator is strong when archaeological and lexical finds correlate and weak when they do not correlate. Naturally, there are also stronger and weaker potential relevant indicators within one discipline according to the number of indicators and complexity of their relations, as we have seen in the section above handling historical lexicology (e.g. words for both 'cow' and 'calf', both 'sheep' and 'ram', indicating relevance to more sensitive distinctions of examples of a species). It will remain discipline-specific how to distinguish data in terms of weaker and stronger relevant indicators of prehistoric phenomena within a study.

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Notes

1. Technically, I am not looking at South Sámi prehistory alone but South and Ume Sámi prehistory. However, my focus here is on the South Sámi language and area and therefore I speak only of the South Sámi. I do acknowledge that Southern Proto-Sámi speakers were also ancestors of the Ume Sámi and therefore the South Sámi history and past should extend to the Ume Sámi as well.
2. I expanded the time frame for the archaeological data to 200 BCE to discuss the linguistic correlates of some early remains that have been proposed to be Sámi (see further Piha 2018).
3. Although etymology affirms that each lexical find was present in Southern Proto-Sámi in a remote historical period, it is necessary to remain aware that the categorical system in which they are situated is an etic one applied to the data rather than an emic system of the speakers of the language in the relevant period. The etic categorical system is thus itself a tool of research, and even if it may seem probable

that Southern Proto-Sámi speakers recognized a category of 'domestic livestock', the emic category cannot be assumed to fully correspond to our own. It is equally possible that, for example, 'goat', 'sheep' and 'swine' may have formed a category of 'domestic livestock' while 'cow' was seen as something foreign and 'other' that only fell into a 'domestic livestock' category among Scandinavians.

4. When discussing the Iron Age in the inland areas of central Sweden (Jämtland, Härjedalen, Dalarna), this area is called 'hunting ground area' because there is no trace of sedentary settlement. Most of the archaeological finds in the area suggest that it was occupied by hunter-gatherers, though, in the light of domestic animal bones and some other finds, this view needs to be somewhat re-evaluated. It should be noted, however, that the majority of the Iron Age remains in the area can be connected to mobile groups whose main livelihood was very likely hunting.

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In the Hollow of *Tursas*? – An Overview of an Archaeological Work-in-Progress in Southwest Finland

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Abstract: Since 2012, an archaeological excavation has continued on a Late Iron Age (AD 800–1050) settlement site and a medieval and early modern village plot of Tursiannotko in Pirkkala (near Tampere). The very well-preserved materials found at the site give a lot of information regarding the modes of subsistence, building techniques, material culture, ritual practices and trade contacts of a relatively wealthy farmer and hunter community.

Map 1. Tursiannotko, in the context of Southwest Finland.

In the Pirkanmaa region, near the present-day city of Tampere, the largest archaeological fieldwork project in recent years has focused on Tursiannotko, a Late Iron Age (LIA) (800–1200 AD) settlement site in the municipality of Pirkkala. The site, originally found in 1971, has been excavated since 2012 by the Pirkanmaa Provincial Museum and the University of Helsinki in close co-operation with the municipality. Tursiannotko is situated near Lake Pyhäjärvi amidst a multi-layered North Tavastian cultural landscape. After the LIA settlement, the site continued as a medieval hamlet known as Pirkkala, growing into a large nucleated village of 17 farms during the 15th and early 16th centuries.

After reorganizations of agriculture and land tenure, most of the old village plot was given over and turned into arable land during the mid-19th century. Archaeologically this was a blessing, as the LIA cultural layer, being covered by more recent settlement layers, has been left largely undisturbed by cultivation. Opportunities to excavate well-preserved LIA settlement sites are quite rare in Finland. Thus the Tursiannotko dig has aroused a considerable amount of interest, resulting in a very succesful exhibition *Birckala 1017* in the museum centre Vapriikki (Tampere)[1] and an annual LIA-themed event in the vicinity of the site. This text is intended as an informational piece and a very general introduction on this important site and its historical context.[2]

Late Iron Age in Pirkanmaa – A Very Brief History

During the LIA, two settlement clusters were situated around the Lake Pyhäjärvi. The site of Tursiannotko and the poorly-known sites near the Pirkkala church (1 kilometer NE from Tursiannotko) belonged to the northern cluster together with sites on the other side of the lake, in present-day Nokia. Cemetery data proves that the northern cluster started to develop in Nokia around the 4th century AD at the latest; its expansion to the side of Pirkkala seems to date to the Viking Age (800–1050 AD). The cluster can probably be seen as a loose, small-scale polity or a social territory, even if its decision-making and legal institutions are

unknown. During the 13th century, it was organized into a parish named after the hamlet of Pirkkala, with a wooden church very likely situated near the present-day Pirkkala church (Haggrén 2017).

Another settlement cluster of similar age and history was located around the southern end of the Lake Pyhäjärvi, in present-day Vesilahti and Lempäälä. For example, several highly interesting Iron Age sites are known on the land of the manor house Laukko, well known to folklorists due its connection with Elias Lönnrot (and nowadays a locus of cultural and historical tourism).

Other clusters were situated further away to the east and south. The LIA settlement in the South Finnish lakeland interior strongly favoured sheltered bays and coves of large lakes, sometimes smaller lakes as well. Lake-fishing was an important mode of livelihood, and lakes were the easiest way to move around both in summer (with dugout canoes and rowing boats) and winter (with skis and sledges). At the same time, the fine-grained soils suitable for low-technology cultivation, pastures and hay-meadows were concentrated near the bodies of water. In fact, the distribution of permanent settlement was mostly determined by these agro-pastoral resources (Orrman 1991). On the other hand, the evidence of extensive hunting and trapping proves that woodland remained an essential part of the LIA taskscape as well.

The LIA groups were socio-economically ranked, with expressions of wealth and status differences being sometimes visible in the archaeological record. However, the presence of a social group that could be meaningfully defined as an 'aristocracy' seems unlikely. In my view, the LIA society conformed to the 'peasant mode of production' as defined by Chris Wickham in his influential study *Framing the Early Middle Ages* (2005). The local elites probably consisted of large-scale farmers, traders and high-status craftsmen with limited or no means to appropriate the labour or surplus of their less elevated neighbours. However, some place names seem to indicate a group of unfree labourers (slaves) within the LIA households (Salminen 2017: 258, 259).

There is wide consensus regarding the matter that these LIA groups in the South Finnish lakeland were Finnic-speakers, direct linguistic ancestors of present-day Finns. In all likelihood, they knew the so-called Kalevala-meter and were aware of at least some elements of the Finnic or Finno-Karelian mythology known to us. How they perceived their ethnic identity remains unknown, but at least the terminology distinguishing the south-western coast and interior lakeland, Suomi and Häme, and their respective inhabitants, must have been present in the Iron Age language (e.g. Vahtola 1980). Some elements in the material culture may have been used to express or construct ethnic identities correlated to these regional distinctions (e.g. Taavitsainen et al. 2007: 135–139).

During the LIA, increasing long-distance mobility, trade, more regular contacts with distinctly 'other' groups and the threat of raiding may have influenced ethnic markers and their use in status negotiations. On the other hand, the LIA groups in Finland were highly localized and autonomous, with no convincing evidence of any established supra-local organization. Thus, the amount of political legitimation or cultural authority to be gained by performing ethnic identity was presumably limited.

Finnic speakers were not the first language group in the South Finnish lakeland. Sámi speakers were not the first either, but they preceded the Finnic speakers, as the layer of Sámi substrate toponymy discussed by Ante Aikio (2007) and Mikko Heikkilä (2014) proves even today. The Sámi-speaking phase can be roughly dated to the first millennium BC and first few centuries AD, in some areas probably later as well. Archaeologically the population of this 'Younger Early Metal Period' (YEMP) is poorly known, but the available evidence does suggest mobile groups of big-game hunters and fishers, with variable contribution of cultivation and stock-raising to their livelihoods. Settlement sites of this period have not been found yet around Lake Pyhäjärvi, but some have been excavated in nearby areas, for example in Kangasala, east of Tampere. Lacustrine burial sites known by the folkloric name 'Lapp cairns' are apparently often associated with the YEMP population, and several of those are situated on Lake Pyhäjärvi. A couple of them have yielded finds

datable to the first centuries AD. Around the 4th century, a new burial practice more oriented towards fine-grained soils appears, marking the first stage of development of agro-pastoral settlement clusters mentioned earlier. This process can plausibly be connected with the establishment of the Finnic language in the interior, at least in a general sense (cf. Salo 1981: 437–445).

Not much is known of the chronology of the disappearance of the Sámi language from the South Finnish lakeland. That it could have happened fairly quickly around he Lake Pyhäjärvi is a fair guess, but the situation may have been very different, for example, around Lake Näsijärvi, where the evidence of a LIA farmer population is all but lacking. Unfortunately, the archaeological record of the hypothetical LIA Sámi population around Näsijärvi is also very limited and ambigious due to the disappearance of the Lapp cairn tradition and diagnostic ceramic types.[3]

Neverthless, it is beyond doubt that vast areas within the Finnish interior were inhabited by forager groups, which were very often or always Sámi-speaking. At the start of the Viking Age, if not earlier, these groups were integrated into transcontinental trade networks as suppliers of luxury furs, major exports of the Fennoscandian area during the LIA. The fur trade brought Finnic- and Sámi-speaking groups together in exhange partnerships. These seem to have been operated in a context of balanced reciprocity, where asymmetrical power relations were largely absent. This resulted in cultural negotiations and hybridizations, such as the adoption of similar interlace ornament styles by both groups. These issues are not yet sufficiently well understood, but research is progressing (e.g. Hakamäki 2016).

A very different view was painted in certain scholarly works from the early and mid-20th century, where the men from Pirkkala were portrayed as raiders and tribute-takers roaming over vast areas in Northern Fennoscandia. This idea was largely based on a postulated (but very likely non-existant) etymological connection between the names of Pirkkala and the Birkarlar, a late medieval and 16th century organization of traders and tax-farmers in Lapland. The Birkarlar were seen as a remnant of a LIA tribute empire originating from the settlements around Lake Pyhäjärvi. The Birkarl theory was forcefully expounded by the historian Jalmari Jaakkola (1885–1964), known for his extravagant interpretations of Kalevala-meter epic poems. Folklorists (and most archaeologists) cast a cold eye on his heroic vision, but moderated and more sensible versions of the Birkarl theory survived until recent decades. Nowadays the Birkarl theory has definitely been discarded, but the archaeology of Pirkkala is no poorer because of that.

The Archaeology of Tursiannotko
The old village plot of Pirkkala was situated on a low and wide hill covered by clay sediments and located conveniently close to a sheltered bay on Lake Pyhäjärvi. The western side of the hill descends into a small depression traditionally known as *Tursiannotko* ['Tursia's Hollow']. An archaeological survey in the 1990s established this evocative name in research literature and the official register of protected antiquities.

Figure 1. The western slope of the village-plot hill in June 2017 (photo by Sami Raninen, University of Helsinki).

The first map of the village was made only in the 1760s, but excavations have shown that the village plot was inhabited since the Viking Age. Excavations have so far covered only a small part of the village plot, and there are indications that some of the LIA and medieval farms may have been located outside of the nucleated village portrayed in maps.

According the current hypothesis, the nucleated settlement may have been formed around the year 1400, when the adoption of two-course cultivation and strip-parcelled common fields resulted in an increase of arable land and possibly necessitated the concentration

Figure 2. Late 11th-/12th-century house floor remains under excavation in June 2017 (photo by Sami Raninen, University of Helsinki).

of farmsteads in a single space. It has been suggested that six farms were situated in the hamlet at that time (Salminen 2017: 251, 263). The LIA settlement may not have been much smaller. At least one, and very possible more, LIA farms were located on the later village plot, and, as was said earlier, there may have been others in the vicinity. Strangely, no certain burial sites have been found so far. Usually archaeologists find LIA cemeteries first and settlement sites later, if at all. In Tursiannotko, the reverse situation is probably just a coincidence.

This is no place to go into details regarding the many fascinating archaeological features in Tursiannotko. To put it briefly, the LIA inhabitants of the site lived in corner-jointed timber cabins, cultivated above all barley but were aware of horse-bean as well, raised cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and chicken, and fished a lot. Interestingly, bones of the migratory fish species salmon, whitefish and trout are, so far, lacking in the very well-preserved record (analyzed by PhD Auli Bläeur). One may dare to surmise that all suitable salmon runs in the famous rapids of the region were owned by others already during the LIA, and that the people in Tursiannotko had to restrict themselves to lake-fishing.

Hunting and trapping of big, small and avian game – from elk to hare and black grouse – is clearly visible in the bone-finds. Several arrow-heads made of bone or antler have also been found. These include blunt heads designed to kill small fur-bearing animals, testifying to both highly advanced archery skills and the significance of fur trade. Luxury furs like weasel, beaver and fox were exchanged for prestigious imports like weapons of the highest quality, ornaments, silver coins and exotic textiles. In Tursiannotko, an Islamic silver coin from the early 10th century (coined in the Samanid emirate in Central Asia) has been found, as well as a number of colourful Viking-Age glass beads of Islamic, Byzantine or Kievan Rus' origin, and copper-alloy ornaments imported directly or cast by local craftpeople of imported material. Also weights, an artefact group directly related to trade, are included in the finds.

These finds, and many others, have been lost or discarded in living spaces or farmyards, or in the case of the dirham, apparently intentionally deposited in the remains of a possible grain-drying oven. Obviously the inhabitants of the site possessed items of portable wealth in some numbers. If their burials had been excavated, they would probably include even greater wealth, perhaps comparable to the famous LIA cemetery of Vilusenharju in Tampere (well represented in the *Birckala 1017* exhibition).

Some of the finds are obviously related to ritual practices and the belief environment. A famous LIA artefact type, a bear-tooth-shaped pendant cast from copper alloy, is a rarity in this region, apparently because *real* bear teeth and claws were used as amulet pendants instead. Some of these have been found in Tursiannotko. The ritual and magical significance of the bear in pre-Christian Finland is of no surprise to any folklorist. Interestingly, also a boar tusk and a probable claw of a predatory bird have been used as pendants.

Figure 3. Reconstruction of a bear tooth pendant (illustration by Roosa Lupunen for Museum Centre Vapriikki; © Roosa Lupunen, reproduced with permission).

Some of the animal bones and various artefacts seem to have been hidden intentionally under various structures. The dirham has already been mentioned; other examples include, but are not restricted to, a spearhead and beautifully crafted antler spoons found separately in remains of a late 11th-/12th-century house. The spoons are nearly unique survivals in Finland. While their material is ordinary, their ornamention is an indication of skill and probably a mark of value as well.

On the other side of Lake Pyhäjärvi, almost opposite to Tursiannotko, a very interesting anthropomorphic object was recently found by a metal detectorist on a lake-shore of Varassaari, formerly an island, in Nokia (Figure 4). This copper-alloy artefact, which can be dated to the Viking Age, is interpreted as a possible Óðinn figure of Scandinavian origin, perhaps a head-knob of some kind of a cultic staff. It was found with several other LIA artefacts. The site has not been properly investigated yet, but this author is inclined to see it as a sacrificial place where artefacts were deposed along the shore-line or in shallow water (the water-level of the lake was somewhat lowered during the 19th century). A few of other probable LIA water- or shore-sacrifice sites are known around Lake Pyhäjärvi, and the tradition may well date back to the Early Metal Period.

Figure 4a. Anthropomorphic figure found on the shore of Varasaari (which had previously been an island), roughly across from Tursiannotko. (Museovirasto KM40152:1. Photo by Ville Rohiola, CC by 4.0.[4])

Figure 4b. Reverse of Figure 4a (Museovirasto KM40152:1. Photo by Ville Rohiola, CC by 4.0[4]).

Finally, some notice should be given to the name of *Tursiannotko*. The name is interpreted as a mythological one, *Tursia* being a form of *tursas*, a water-monster or -spirit (Frog 2017: 109; Heikkilä 2017: 41), thus *Tursiannotko* appears to mean 'Hollow of *Tursas*'. North of Tursiannotko, a hill known as Hiidenmäki is situated. While no evidence of LIA burials

have been found on *Hiidenmäki* ['Hill of *Hiisi*'] (in 2017, the hill was metal-detected by experienced detectorists working together with an archaeologist), it may not be too daring to interpret it as a *hiisi*-site related to pre-Christian cult (Frog 2017: 122). This possibility is perhaps strenghtened by the local folklore related to healing magic practised at a natural hole on a rock surface on the hill. The hill attracts modern-day neo-pagans, adding another layer of meaning, memory and topophilia to this fascinating cultural landscape.

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Notes

1. The exhibition was open until March 2019.
2. For more detailed information and references, the reader is referred to Finnish-language publications Lesell et al. 2017 and Adel & Lesell 2017. English-language publications will eventually appear as the research project proceeds.
3. The Sámi-speaking population around Lake Näsijärvi must have been assimilated or displaced by the 16th century, as it does not enter into written record and the fishing sites and hunting ground in this area became owned and utilized by farmers from settlements in south.
4. Image available at: https://finna.fi/Record/musketti.M012:KM40152:1.

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Jómsvíkinga saga – Recent Research Focus on Genre

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This report offers an overview of recent research being conducted on Jómsvíkinga saga.

In recent years, *Jómsvíkinga saga* has received scholarly attention in many ways: it has been in the focus of a scholarly journal (*Scripta Islandica* 65, 2014), seminars and symposiums (e.g. ones organized in Wolin, Poland, in spring 2015 and 2017), and one dissertation (Þórðís Edda Jóhannesdóttir 2016). In addition, single articles and books have dealt with various aspects of the saga, such as its historicity, historical characters, outlaw-theme and onomastics (e.g. Morawiec 2009; Aalto 2009; Petrulevich 2013; 2016; Poilvez 2016). The reason for this attention is genuine interest in this saga which was not thoroughly investigated before the end of the 20th century. The saga itself poses a challenge for the reader and scholar: its style and content make it a combination that draws features from *Íslendingasögur*, kings' sagas and mythical sagas (Þórðís 2016: 192).

Jómsvíkinga saga's genre has thus raised discussion among scholars, because it has been difficult to categorize into saga genres, which has even led to new genre suggestions: Melissa Berman has suggested that *Jómsvíkinga saga* together with *Færeyinga saga* and *Orkneyinga saga* could be labelled as 'political sagas' (Berman 1985). The combination of different modes and somewhat 'unpolished' style that *Jómsvíkinga saga* displays, has been interpreted as proving something about the saga's early date. Categories of saga literature arise from the scholarly need to classify the sagas in order to evaluate, for example, their provenience and historical reliability as sources. However, it is actually typical that the sagas contain elements from several genres. Therefore, *Jómsvíkinga saga* is not an atypical saga. (Finlay 2014; Hermann 2013: 336.)

Although the earliest surviving manuscript of *Jómsvíkinga saga*, AM 291 4to, is dated to the end of the 13th century, the saga itself is supposed to have been written already around 1200. *Jómsvíkingadrápa*, which was composed by Bishop Bjarni Kolbeinsson of the Orkneys, is dated to the end of the 12th century (maybe around the 1180s) and it shows that there was an earlier, probably oral tradition concerning the Jómsvikings before the saga was written down. The poetical tradition about jarls of Hlaðir and the battle of Hjǫrungavágr, in which the combined fleet of Danes and the Jómsvikings was defeated, is especially strong. These poems were composed at different points in time and for different audiences, as Judith Jesch (2014) has pointed out.

Synopsis
In order to understand why *Jómsvíkinga saga* has been at the center of manifold research, one needs to look at the synopsis. It reveals how historical characters and events are mixed up with what we would call the supernatural today. In addition, the saga has intertextual connections for instance with *Eyrbyggja saga*, not to mention the kings' sagas. The saga was apparently very well known in the 13th century, since the author of *Fagrskinna* and Snorri Sturluson in his *Heimskringla* draw on *Jómsvíkinga saga* as part of Ólaf Tryggvason's saga in their respective works. Also, the poetic

tradition mentioned above supports the view that *Jómsvíkinga saga* was known as an immanent whole before it was written down (Clover 1986: 34–36; Gísli Sigurðsson 2004: 45).

Jómsvíkinga saga is set in the latter half of the 10th century in Denmark and Norway. At the core of the story is a Danish nobleman Pálna-Tóki who becomes the enemy of his former fosterson, King Svein Forkbeard of Denmark (ruled ca. 986–1014). Pálna-Tóki flees Denmark and goes on Viking raids with his crew. In Wendland (the West Slavic area on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea), he is offered an island, *Jóm*, by the Wendish Prince Búrizláfr. Pálna-Tóki's duty is to defend Búrizláfr's realm from other Vikings, so he builds a fortress on the island. Pálna-Tóki's Jómsvikings become famous for their law code and their fierce fighting.

The saga continues after the death of Pálna-Tóki: the Jómsvikings have a new leader Sigvaldi. He wished to marry one of Prince Búrizlafr's daughters. However, the Prince sets a condition: Sigvaldi must bring King Svein to Wendland, which he does by luring the king onto his ship. King Svein is forced to accept the terms that Prince Búrizláfr sets, and their deal is confirmed by marriage alliances. After this humiliation, King Svein plots to take revenge on the Jómsvikings. He invites them to a feast where the Jómsvikings become heavily intoxicated. King Svein manages to make them promise that they will attack his enemy Earl Hákon of Norway. After the feast, the Jómsvikings realize that they will have to fulfill their promise quickly so that they will not lose their honor and the possibility for a surprise attack.

The saga climaxes in the battle of Hjǫrungvágr in Norway, which probably took place in the end of 980s. The Norwegians are about to lose when Earl Hákon calls his protective goddess Þorgerðr Hǫrðabrúðr, who raises a hail storm with her sister Irpa. This changes the tide of the battle, and the combined fleet of the Danes and Jómsvikings lose. Sigvaldi flees but many surviving Jómsvikings are captured, among others Vagn Ákason, grandson of Pálna-Tóki. The last part of the saga depicts how part of the Jómsvikings are executed and how the rest of them survive because of their brave attitude.

Historical Background of the Saga

In spite of the fact that *Jómsvíkinga saga* is flavoured with incredible and fantastic elements such as the goddess Þorgerðr Hǫrðabrúðr and her magic, the saga plot itself seems to be based partly on historical characters and events. Such characters as King Harald Bluetooth, Svein Forkbeard and Earl Hákon of Norway are historical people, whereas some, such as the leader of the Jómsvikings, Pálna-Tóki, are virtually impossible to verify. The description of the fortress of Jómsborg may be exaggerated in the saga, but a Scandinavian presence on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea in the Viking Age is attested by archaeological finds and cannot be dismissed. The island of Wolin in present day Poland is the most probable place for the base of the Jómsvikings. (Aalto 2016.)

Thus, the saga combines elements that are familiar from the kings' sagas: the action concentrates on Danish kings and their attempts to rule not only in Wendland but also in Norway. On the other hand, the saga depicts local chieftains and their families in a way that is close to the *Íslendingasögur*. The community of Jómsvíkings itself has been in the focus of research. Marion Poilvez has compared the saga with others that have an outlaw theme, such as *Harðar saga*. She suggests that *Jómsvíkinga saga* may in fact have been "a kind of tutelar motif which influenced the outlaw narratives in Iceland" (Poilvez 2016: 105). Bjørn Bandlien, on the other hand, has pointed out that the law code of the Jómsvíkings may have had models in real life, such as the codes of knightly orders that were active in the crusades against the West Slavs in the 1150s (Bandlien 2005; Gelting 2007: 99; Bysted et al. 2012).

The place names in the different manuscripts of the saga show that there must have been a common core of the saga, but otherwise the compilers may have added place names in order to bring accuracy to the geographical sphere of the saga. The Norwegian place names are quite correct but distant places, such as Wendland, are very sketchy – they must have been outside the immediate knowledge of the compilers. (Aalto 2016; 2019.) In fact, some names such as Jómsborg, show that they were borrowed from Slavic language either directly or via Low German (Petrulevich 2016:

173). Taking into account this background and the archaeological finds which show a strong Scandinavian presence on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea in the Viking Age, the saga continues to be part of an ongoing discussion of how the Scandinavians (or Vikings generally) were active on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea and how they participated, for instance, in Polish state formation in Pomerania (Morawiec 2009).

Jómsvíkinga saga *as Part of Old Norse Historiography*

In the context of the Icelandic saga tradition, drawing the line between historiography and 'fiction' has been difficult. For instance, *Íslendingasögur* deal with the Icelandic past and some of the characters are historical persons, and yet these sagas are considered to be more literature than historiography. Mythical-heroic sagas, which were long considered to be pure fiction have now been re-evaluated with the conclusion that they may have been viewed as presenting the past for the saga audience (Lassen 2012). In the light of this knowledge, *Jómsvíkinga saga* seems to fall into the category of historiography. This is backed up by the fact that compendia such as *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla* used it as a source. (Aalto 2014.)

Yet it seems most plausible that the function of this saga changed during the centuries. For instance, it is placed among entertaining indigenous romances in the manuscript Stock. Perg. 7 4to (first half of the 14th century), which could indicate that it was chosen there because of its entertaining elements. The last version of *Jómsvíkinga saga* was written in the 16th century, and a Latin translation was made at the end of the same century. Still in the 18th century, the plot of the saga was repeated in two *rímur*, which would indicate that the saga was appreciated by Icelanders in later centuries more as entertainment than as history. This continuity of *Jómsvíkinga saga* from medieval poetry to post-medieval *rímur* definitely warrants further study.

Forthcoming Events and Research

As Þórðís Jóhannesdóttir states in the end of her dissertation, the investigation of *Jómsvíkinga saga* is not over. A whole session concentrating on *Jómsvíkinga saga* ("*Jómsvíkinga saga –*

Origins and Development of the Legend") took place at the 17th International Saga Conference in Reykjavík and Reykholt 12th–17th August 2018. The session explored, among other things, the development of the saga in different manuscripts, its historiographical aspect, historical content, language and style.

In addition to research, *Jómsvíkinga saga* is being translated into several languages, the oldest manuscript AM 291 4to being the basis for translations. A loose network of scholars from England, Poland, Czeck Republic, Finland, Iceland, Russia and France has been committed to providing translations in various languages. For instance, Dr. Alison Finlay has provided the new English translation of the saga with a full introduction by Þórðís Edda Jóhannesdóttir that came out in 2018. The earlier English translation by Lee M. Hollander was based on the 14th-century manuscript Stock. Perg. Nr 7, so there is a genuine need for the up-to-date translation of the oldest manuscript of *Jómsvíkinga saga*.

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Russian Laments of the Vologda Region in Modern Records: Distinctiveness and Relations to Other Traditions

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Abstract: This article introduces Russian laments of the Vologda region in relation to other lament traditions of the Baltic Sea region. The tradition of this region and lament collection there are briefly introduced as well as the Russian Lament database developed and used in connection with the current research. The language and poetics of the laments are outlined followed by a rhythmical analysis and comments on parallelism, alliteration and practices.

Commemoration and funeral rites regulate human behavior, including the usage of sounds. In a number of cultures, death is accompanied by public lament performance. A lament is a type of folklore text performed with a distinct melody and which is most often accompanied by weeping. Laments are mentioned in chronicles and epics, such as *The Epic of Gilgamesh* or the *Iliad*, presenting lament in connection with gods and heroes but presumably reflecting lament as a practice in historical societies. In some places in the world, the genre could still be found during the 20th century, now approached through archival materials, as is the case with Irish traditions (Lysaght 1997: 65–82), while elsewhere laments are found up to the present day, as in Egypt (Wickett 2010) or Bangladesh (Wilce 2009). In the Baltic Sea region, several traditions of lament are documented (see also Jouste in this issue). Karelian laments were collected and researched especially during the 20th and 21st centuries (see Stepanova 2011 and works there cited; see also Stepanova & Frog in this issue), while the documentation of Lithuanian laments began still earlier and Slavic laments have also been extensively researched (see Nevskaja 1993 and works there cited).

Several lament traditions have been compared by Lidia Nevskaja in *Балто-славянские причитания: Реконструкция семантической структуры* (1993) ['The Balto-Slavic Lament: Reconstruction of Semantic Structure']. There and elsewhere, Nevskaja shows that Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Belarusian and Russian laments have many shared features in their content and representation. She views these similarities as connected with the semantic points significant for mythological thinking, and especially the opposition 'life and death' (Nevskaja 1997: 419). Eila Stepanova (2011) has shown similar convergences both in the mythic world of laments and also in poetic features in her comparative research of Karelian and Lithuanian laments as representatives of Finnic and Baltic lament traditions.

The present paper focuses on the Russian lament tradition in its northwest local form, which is here situated in relation to Baltic and Finnic parallels. The goal of Nevskaja was reconstruction. Here, focus is on laments' form and operation based on empirical analysis.

Notes on the Collection of Russian Laments

The East Slavic причитание or причёт ['laments'] were first mentioned in the Russian *Primary Chronicle* (e.g. year 6586 = AD 1078), from the early 12th century, and may still be recorded in some regions of Russia today. Over the course of time, Russian lament changed, becoming a genre of rural women, not practiced among the nobility, and Mark Azadovsky (1922: 13) has also suggested that laments became longer across the centuries. The earliest collectors and researches of folklore considered lament uninteresting in contrast to folktales and *bylina*-epics. The collection of laments started in the second half of the 19th century. At that time, lamenters were presented in the capital on stage, where the Russian writer and later leader of Soviet literature ideology Maksim Gorky described them as:

> truly Russian, with a poor, insignificant canvas taking various forms – Yes! – but full of feeling, sincerity, force – all the things that are absent, which couldn't be found in the poetry of the craftsmen and theorists of art. (Gorky 1896.)

The first substantial collection of laments was published in 1872 by Elpidifor Barsov. He defined laments as "irreproachable effusions of thoughts and affects, which are caused by the

loss of relatives and dearly-close people" (Barsov 1872: 11). The laments of the first discussions were those of Irina Fedosova, whose texts are elaborate and highly skilled. Other records of the 19th and 20th centuries present less detailed laments from the East Slavic tradition. Mark Azadovsky (1922) stresses that the lyrical laments of 'typical' lamenters are more 'natural' than the 'artistic' texts of Fedosova, a point also appreciated by later researchers (see Alekseevsky 2005).

In the 20th and 21st centuries, the situation changed, and laments, which could be found in social practice became considered one of the most ancient and valuable types of folklore. Their complex ritual and artistic nature was acknowledged not only by researchers, but also in rural communities, where complaints can be found about the lack of skill in lamenting as the tradition declined. While speaking about the lament research, James Wilce (2005) draws attention to how research literature itself resembles laments by addressing it as a vanishing tradition. Kirill Chistov (1982), in his overview of 20th-century Soviet research, writes: "Thus, the elder generation of woman still remember a lot and folklore expeditions are still gathering priceless records, which will be impossible to acquire in 10–15 years." These words from almost forty years ago could equally be said in Russian research today, as the 'last years of the tradition' have drawn out for decades, making every fragment of evidence of the tradition seem valuable and worth recording.

In this paper, lament texts of the Vologda region are analyzed. The Vologda region is situated in Northwest Russia, bordering on Karelia. It is a distinct area and is ethnically and linguistically more or less homogeneously Russian. There was no serfdom (крепностное парво) in the territory, so rural populations were not moved and mixed as they were in some other parts of Russia. In the 20th century, roads remained rather poor and access to the majority of villages was exclusively via waterways, with no roads for automobiles before the 1980s. These circumstances appear directly connected to the maintenance of ways of life there, including continuity of the lament tradition.

These factors led to a great number of expeditions from Moscow and Leningrad (St. Petersburg) to the area in search of laments, including not only ethnographers but also researchers of music. Particularly valuable is lament collection in the region by Bronislava Efimenkova (Leningrad Conservatory) in the 1960s and 1970s, which she later published (Efimenkova 1980). In the 1990s, laments were recorded by centers for studying traditional culture, such as the Vologda Youth Center for Traditional Culture and the Cherepovets Center, which worked in the same territories. In the 2010s, I made about 10 expeditions in collaboration with the Vologda Youth Center for Traditional Culture and the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences, as a result of which new texts were collected (AA 2010–2017). I have published the corpus of Vologda texts in two books (Jugai 2011; 2016). Being a guest researcher in the Russian State University for the Humanities, I have created the database "The Russian Lament" (project RFBR № 14-36-50255), which is used as a tool in the formulaic and rhythm analyses presented below.

'Russian lament' and 'Vologda lament' are used as synonyms in the article because my Vologda material is treated as a representative of the Russian tradition. Although there are local variations in different regions, many features of Russian lament are shared in common. Sometimes I indicate the local tradition (e.g. of the Totemsky area, east of the Vologda region) when it is relevant.

The Content of Laments

Stepanova's (2011) comparative research on Baltic and Finnic lament traditions shows that many of their features, including of semantics and structure, are shared despite the difference in language. Comparing Stepanova's data with the material of this paper, it becomes possible to draw a conclusion that shared features exceed the differences in Baltic, Finnic and Russian lament traditions. At the level of content, there are shared key images in the laments of these different linguistic-cultural groups.

Stepanova (2011: 138) points out that Finnic and Baltic traditions share the formula of leaving along a road that in Karelian is, for example, 'dark' and 'unknown'. Nevskaya

similarly comments on this as a shared feature of Lithuanian and Russian examples: "The transformation of a deceased from 'ours' into 'other' is reached as the result of a 'long road' in the ritual; the significance of that term ['long road'] is as the connection between the realm of life and the realm of death, the central concept of laments" (Nevskaya 1993). In other words, the road is that which connects the world of living and the world of dead. This concept can be observed in the Vologoda texts in expressions like путь- дороженьку странную ['the way-road which is frightening'], странную да невозвратную ['the frightening one, unheard-of'] (AA2010–2015) or дороженька невозвратная ['the way-road of no return']:

(1) Ой, не на весельё весёлоё,
    Ой, ты собравсё, милой ладушка,
    Ой, во путь-дороженьку дальнюю,
    Ой, ты в дальнюю, невозвратную,
    Ой, уж ты на веки на вешныё
    (Jugai 2011: 64.)

    Oh, not for the glad gladness,
    Oh, you are going, my beloved,
    Oh, to the long way-road,
    Oh, to the long, of no return,
    Oh, you for the eternal eternality

In Vologda funeral laments, the characteristics of the deceased's road are 'sad', 'long' and 'of no return'. Objects used in funeral rites and vocabulary also refer to a journey or are based on a metaphor of death as departure. For example, the Russian substitution for 'funeral', *provody*, means 'seeing-off'. Lamenters ask the deceased: 'Where are you going? Where have you dressed [to go]?'. The deceased may also be identified with transformation into a bird, as in (2), which follows rhetorical questions about the departure:

(2) Да ты отро́стил жо крылышка,
    Да ты намёл сизы пёрышка,
    Стрепенуть да и у́литить
    Из высокова терема
    (Jugai 2011: 38.)

    And you have grown wings,
    And you have acquired feathers,
    To take a start and to fly away
    From the high tower-room

According to this fragment, the new clothes of the deceased are described through the metaphor of 'feathers and wings', which he wears and which is part of his preparations for the journey. Acquiring the features of a bird or of a bird's body is needed to pass the road to the otherworld. It is significant that the deceased's new nature in non-human, and identified with a form of non-human movement to make the journey.

Another type of road is seen in commemoration laments. The soul should return to the commemoration feast held by his relatives, and these laments include a motif of providing the soul with a body in which to attend. If he needs a non-human body with wings for his departure, his return, in contrast, is possible only 'on foot':

(3) Прилетите да с неба, ангелы,
    Вы вложите да в тело душеньку,
    В белы рученьки владеньича,
    В резвы ноженьки ходиньича.
    (Jugai 2016: 84.)

    Come fly from the sky, angels,
    Put the little soul in a body,
    The little one into little arms,
    The little walking one into little legs.

This is a temporary awakening for feeding and ritual washing in the sauna. The laments' invitations to the sauna contain the images of hand-woven clothes:

(4) Приходи-ко в пару-баенку,
    Да тело белоё да замаралось,
    Да платьё светло запылилось да,
    Приходи, да ты помоешшы...
    (Jugai 2016: 47.)

    Come to the steam room, the vapor bath,
    Your white body has got messed up,
    Your fair colored dress became dusty,
    Come here, and you will wash yourself...

The deceased of a commemoration feast is a wanderer, a pilgrim, who makes a long journey home and must depart soon. In some local lament traditions, the soul is usually called 'the guest'. Nevskaya writes that the motif of being a guest is a common feature of the Balto-Slavic tradition.

The 'way of no return' leads into the image of letter-message:

(5) Ты уйдёшь да в путь-дороженьку,
    В путь-дороженьку далёкую,
    На чужую дальню сторону.
    Уж, как с той да дальнёй стороны,

Уж, как пешому нету выходу,
Уж, как конному нету выезду.
Не напишёшь письма грамотки,
Не пошлёшь ты нам да весточки.
Боле сроду нам не видывати,
Жызна голоса не слыхивати.
(Jugai 2016: 41.)

You will go to the way-road,
The way-road far away,
To the alien far-away land.
So, from that far-away land,
So, the dismounted couldn't walk,
So, the equestrian couldn't ride.
Wouldn't write a letter-message,
Wouldn't send a piece of news.
Never more can we see you,
Your living voice never hear.

The letter-message creates a material link between the word of dead and the word of living and is present with remarkable similarity in laments of different cultures (Jugai 2016). The similarities indicate the importance of this motif to laments, which relates to a primary function of lamenting in these traditions as a channel for communication that manifests through performance.

The Avoidance Code of Laments

Laments are a complex communicative act, which, following the approach of Roman Jakobson (1960), involve a Sender, a Receiver and a message, transmitted through a special channel, using special code. The Sender has a communicative goal and choses the channel and the code in order to meet that end. Mikhail Alekseevsky (2007) has approached Russian laments as a form of communication with the dead. He considers the goal of commemorative laments to be to feed the deceased in order to get his blessing and help in return. Funeral lament, on the other hand, is the appropriate way to express sadness and to help a deceased soul find his or her way to the new home in the otherworld. From this perspective, the message is the content of lament or what is expressed, the code is constituted of the formal features of lament poetry and its language, the channel is the manner of performance, the context is the corresponding ritual situation and the goal of communication equates to the pragmatics of the particular lament. The Sender is the lamenter, a real woman of flesh and blood with neighbors and a family who is also a ritual specialist, able to use lament's special language, while the Receiver is the deceased, her relationship to whom is always relevant.

The code is realized through the textual rules that make the language and its form correct for the communication. Its formal features include vocatives, which may be metaphorical, semantic and syntactic parallelism and prominent use of diminutive forms. The term 'register' has been developed to refer to language and its formal features connected with a recurrent communicative situation, a concept that corresponds to but also overlaps with Bakhtins' 'speech genres' (see Frog 2015). Viewed through the concept of register, the formal features of laments may be viewed as poetic from the perspective of a researcher but they are not simply ornamental; they are constitutive features of the register as a distinct instrument of communication connected with a very specific type of Receiver (see also Stepanova 2015b).

Folklore genres that are used for contact with the otherworld seem to evolve toward rhythmic structuring and formulaic language. In some cultures, the origin of poetry is explained as a gift of nonhuman forces (Ermakova 1995), while some forms of traditional poetry have been construed as imitating non-human speech (anti-speech). Ludmila Vinigradova writes that spirits can cry, moan and slur. She notes that spirits in legends could speak using rhyme and speculates that rhyme could itself originate in ritual speech. (Vinogradova 1999.) Whatever the origin of poetic features, supernatural beings can be construed as being connected with certain registers, which may be directly connected with the formal poetics and language used to address such beings in ritual speech (e.g. Stepanova 2015b).

Within such registers, formal poetic features such as rhyme or parallelism, metaphorical or symbolic expression and linguistic elements such as lexical collocations all become interconnected, which can structure and reciprocally be reflected in formulaic language. Crystallized collocations of words are assembled in a lament in various ways in each performance and take several forms (cf. 'syntactic formulas' in Petrov 2012: 14). The collocation of a noun with a regular epithet

produces continuity of the subject with its attributes forming what Vladimir Toporov calls an 'elementary image' (cited in Nevskaya 1993). In the Vologda laments, there are two types of elementary images: *metaphorical substitutions*, metaphorical expressions used in the place of naming actors or other phenomena of the rite, and *etiquette formulas*, which are connected with the direct naming of these.

The use of metaphorical substitutions in laments was first addressed by Kirill Chistov. Chistov interpreted metaphoric substitutions used for dead persons and for death itself as rooted in a prohibition against naming relevant persons or phenomena because of mythological conceptions that this could summon them or cause them to occur (Chistov 1960: 12–13; on metaphorical substitutions in the Karelian lament tradition, see Stepanova 2004: 8). Metaphorical avoidance expressions motivated by mythological thinking has also been discussed in linguistic research as by Olga Sedakova: "The descriptive term should bury the dangerous, mortal name. The funeral terms are substitutes of an 'empty place' in terminology" (2004: 128–129). She proposes that "the metaphoricality of a funeral term is so strong, that a pure term is interlocked with the poetic allegory of the ritual poetry of laments." (Sedakova 2004: 132.) The idea is that the systems of avoidance terminology gradually shifted into an instrument that elevated the register as constitutive of its poetics (see also Stepanova 2015b). These metaphors could also have other origins; what is important in the present context is that they are widely used in laments traditions of the Baltic Sea region as part of lamenters' code or register.

Direct naming and substitutions are linked one to each other in different ways, including metaphor, metonymy, collation and parallelism. In the introduction to her *Толковый словарь языка карельских причитаний* ['Explanatory Dictionary of the Language of Karelian Laments'] (2004), Alexandra Stepanova states that the core of disctinctive units of diction is avoidance terminology, predominantly built on metaphors or archaisms (2004: 4). Lament texts are thus not direct and their language is not clear to someone unfamiliar with the register. In Karelian laments, the avoidance lexicon is used in combination with more general vocabulary even if naming avoidance is systematic for certain things like familial relations 'mother', 'daughter' and so on and phenomena such as 'death' (see Stepanova 2015a–b). There is, however, variation between traditions: in Vologda laments, it seems that fewer archaisms are used and metaphorical substitutions are not systematically employed.

In the eastern Vologda region, 'dove' is a dominant circumlocution. It is a vocative connoting endearment that is also common in everyday speech, and its use in laments is similarly also one of naming rather than reimagining the referent completely as a bird: the dove of laments has arms and legs, can walk and communicate with human beings. Whereas the 'dove' metaphor is a distinctive feature of Vologda laments, other 'pure' birds are used in the same function in other regions (Jugai 2013), such as Сизая ты голубушка... (Jugai 2016: 45) ['Little grey dove...'] or Да без тебя, лебедь белая... (Jugai 2016: 50) ['Without you, white swan...']. In western Vologda laments, metaphorical substitutions from the world of nature are almost completely absent and the soul is usually called 'the sweet guest' (Jugai 2016).

Vologda laments' metaphorical vocatives are organized into chains. The richest vocabulary of metaphorical nomination is found in expressions for 'mother', referred to as 'dawn', 'star', 'sliver', 'sun', 'dove', 'helper', 'swan', 'prayer', 'intercessor' and 'grief', as in the following example:

(6) Ой, что ведь есть-то на улице,
   Ой, прибылая ведь щепочка,
   Ой, что и есть-то ведь на небе,
   Ой, прибылая ведь звёздочка,
   Ой, что и есть ведь во тереме,
   Ой, прибылая ведь гостенька,
   Ой, прибыла гостья милая,
   Ой, да родимая мамушка!
(Efimenkova 1980: 106.)

Oh, there is in the street,
Oh, the arriving sliver,
Oh, there is in the sky,
Oh, the arriving star,
Oh, there is in the tower,
Oh, the arriving guest,
Oh, come, dear guest,
Oh, my dear born mummy!

As in this quotation, the deceased could be referred to by his or her relationship to the lamenter. There are examples of calling the deceased by his or her name. Generally speaking, avoidance vocabulary is prominent but not compulsory in Russian laments as it is in the Karelian tradition. The quantitative analysis of the Russian Lament database reveals that direct naming is in fact more frequent than metaphorical avoidance expressions. It is unclear whether this reflects changes in the register as naming taboos lost significant or direct naming has always been a part of this lament register (*pace* Chistov 1960: 12–13). However, this phenomenon does not lead to a conclusion that modern Vologda laments' register is less organized or closer to that of conversational speech. Non-metaphorical vocative expressions with the meaning 'dear mother' or 'sweet sister' are as crystalized as metaphorical equivalents like 'white swan' or 'red sun'. Full formulas have epithets, although others do not, with dialectal differences in vocabulary and pronunciation, and the etiquette formulas are not optional.

Parallelism

Direct and metaphorical nominations are commonly used together in semantic parallelism, organized with syntactic parallelism and lexical repetition, for example:

(7a) Ой, моё <u>красноё солнышко</u>,
    Ой, да <u>дорогая подруженька</u>
    (Jugai 2011: 14.)

    Oh, my <u>red little sun</u>,
    Oh, yes <u>dear little friend</u>

(7b) И <u>сизые-то голубушки</u>,
    Да <u>родимые сестрицы</u>,
    Да больше век-то не видывати
    (Jugai 2011: 50.)

    And for my <u>grey little dove</u>,
    Yes, for my <u>dear little sister</u>,
    Yes, I can't see forever.

The general scheme of parallelism in these laments is presented in (8):

(8) *Syntactic scheme of parallelism*

    Expletive particle + epithet + metaphorical naming
    Expletive particle + epithet + direct naming

Sometimes the pattern is interrupted by 'interlinear attributions' (Artemenko 1977):

(9) Не гриёт меня <u>солнышко</u>,
    Не гриёт меня <u>ясноё</u>.
    (Jugai 2011: 98.)

    It doesn't warm me, the <u>little</u> <u>sun</u>,
    It doesn't warm me, the <u>fair one</u>.

The brief version includes only the noun:

(10) Закатилосе солнышко,
    Да среди денька белово

    The <u>little sun</u> falls down,
    On a white little day
    (Jugai 2011: 40.)

Sometimes, syntactic parallelism causes morphological parallelism, which produces a morphological rhythm through rhyming morphemes:

(11) На меня, на серую кукушицу,
    На меня, на горькую горюшицу...
    (AA 2010-2015.)

    For me, for the grey cuckoo,
    For me, for the grief misfortune...

Russian laments are characteristically organized in couplets and semantic parallelism of paired verses is a common organizing principle. Couplet parallelism, called dyadic parallelism in some traditions, leads words and formulas to become linked into conventional pairs to express the same or equivalent things (Frog with Tarkka 2017: 217–221). Couplets may be based on an 'elementary image' using formulas that are semantically equivalent, like летняя летница [lit. 'summer room'] and светлая светлица ['light room'] as synonyms for 'fair room'. Different metaphors or etiquette formulas could also be paired as equivalents. For example, the pair очи ясные ['clean eyes'] and брови чёрные ['black eyebrows'] or ручки белые ['white arms'] and ножки резвые ['speedy legs'] are not semantically synonymic in their literal meanings but they operate as analogical equivalents in parallelism. Conventional pairings of this type can also occasionally lead, through a slip of the tongue, to mixed expressions like резвые рученьки ['speedy arms']. The relationship of couplet structure and parallelism is illustrated in example (12), which can be considered typical:

(12) Ты куды же ты сдобиласи,
    Так куды же снарядиласи.
    Ты бело да ты умыласи,

Ты на тот-то свет поторопиласи,
Тебе не времечко
Во сыру землю идти
Как же ты да опромышилась,
Как же ты да опрохошилась
Что же ты не полечилась,
Что же ты да не поиздила,
По домам да по казённым
(Jugai 2016: 35.)

Where are you departing to,
Where are you going?
You have washed away,
You have hurried to the otherworld,
It is not your time
To go to the damp ground.
How did you [manage to] vanish,
How did you [manage to] deceive yourself?
You didn't take care,
You didn't visit
The houses by the breech

The first couplet is built on anaphor and rhyme, the second on rhyme only. In the forth couplet опрохошилась (inf. опрохошиться) is a dialectal verb meaning 'to deceive oneself, to be deceived, to be disappointed', and the verb опромышилась (inf. опромыш(л)иться) is a dialectal verb derived from the noun промысел, which here means 'to vanish, disappear' but outside of the lament register is used with reference to fur-bearing animals (*SVG*: 5; *SRNG*: 301). In these verses, anaphora extends to the beginning of these verbs, which can also be seen in the following couplet. The third couplet in the series is not built on such poetic principles. Although lines may be linked through different poetic principles, this example reflects the dominant couplet structure.

Couplet structure is by no means unique to the Russian tradition. For example, Mordovin is an Uralic language (i.e. related to Finnic) in which laments are also organized in couplets (Imjarekov 1995), as are laments still farther afield in unrelated languages such as laments in Egypt (Wickett 2010: 178). However, this structuring principle is not shared across laments traditions of the Baltic Sea region: according to Eila Stepanova (2011), Lithuanian and Karelian traditions appear to be free verse stichic poetry, without regular verse length or organization into couplets or stanzas of regular length. Parallelism is a prominent feature in both traditions, but the stichic form allows flexibility of two or more parallel units

(see also Stepanova 2017). Longer series of semantic parallelism are also part of the Russian lament tradition, but this occurs as a series of parallel couplets as in example (6) above, rather than as dyadic pairs forming couplets, as in example (12). Parallelism is thus a common feature in lament traditions of the Baltic Sea region, although how it is used varies in relation to the particular tradition's other principles of organizing language into verses.

Rhythmic Structure

The performed rhythm of a Russian lament depends on the local tradition. Recorded texts may be divided into three groups according to the manner of presentation as *a*) sung, *b*) dictated or *c*) summarized. Sung texts are performed in a musical mode as was customary in ritual contexts. Dictated texts retain their organization in verse spoken without conventional musical organization. Summarized texts are also spoken but without maintaining organization into verses. The rhythmic structure of lines in local traditions has been analyzed and coded using the symbols in (13):

(13) *Key to representation of rhythm*

■	= stressed syllable
□	= weakly stressed syllable
_	= unstressed syllable
:	= long vowel
(...)	= unpronounced text
//	= pause

Most sung and recited texts exhibit a dominant type of line, consisting of a sigh-proclitic, semantic sequence and the cadence (which could be deleted). Verses from laments of different areas are presented in (14), (15), (16) and (17) accompanied by the analysis of their metrical structure. In example (14) from the Totemsky area, the rhythm is catalytic in sung performance, leaving the cadence unpronounced (here in parentheses):

(14) *Totemsky area*

Ó~й, ты моё ча́до, ты ми́~ //(лое)
■ : _ _ ■ _ _ ■ :
Ó~й, ты куда́ ты собра́~ //(ласе)
■ : _ _ ■ _ _ ■ :
Ó~й, да куда́ снаряди́~ //(ласе)
■ : _ _ ■ _ _ ■ :

Oh, you my child swee//(t)
Oh, you where have you pa//(cked)
Oh, and where have you dre//(ssed)

In example (14) and also in (15), all lines end on a vowel. Sometimes this vowel is added to the spoken form of the word, as in the form, found in the third verse of (15), нарядиласе ['dressed'], which would normally be нарядилась in other types of discourse,:

(15) *Tarnogsky area*

О́, эте-мене́, да милая́ ты подру́//уженка~,
■ _ _ _ □ _ _ _ ■ _ _ ■ // _ _ _ _ :
О́, эте-мене́, да ты куда́ жё среди́//иласе~,
■ _ _ _ □ _ _ _ ■ _ _ ■ // _ _ _ :
О́, эте-мене́, да ты куда́ наради́//иласе~
■ _ _ _ □ _ _ _ ■ _ _ ■ // _ _ _ :

Oh, *ete-mene*, and my sweet frie//ndling,
Oh, *ete-mene*, and where have you pa//cked,
Oh, *ete-mene*, and where have you dre//ssed

Examples (14) and (15) are both from different parts of the East Vologodian tradition. The frame of verses differs between these areas – i.e. the proclitic and cadence used in singing. However, the rhythm of the semantic sequence is the same, with two anapest feet – i.e. it consists of two main stresses each preceded by two unstressed syllables.

Examples (16) and (17) are both from the Kaduisky area, the West Vologda region, where the semantic sequence is performed with three stresses each followed by an unstressed syllable as a trochaic accentual rhythm. The example from Sosnovka (16) varies this rhythm through reduplication of the stressed syllable in performance. The second stress is placed on the onset of a multisyllablic word; this syllable is pronounced, followed by a pause and interjection ой ['oh'], and then the stressed syllable is repeated with the completion of the word, giving the semantic sequence a tetrametric rhythm:

(16) *Kaduisky area (Sosnovka)*

И~-о́й, дак-ы отыпра~вля́йси-ка го́ // ой,
　　　　　да го~сия ми́лая.
_ : ■ _ _ _ _ _ : ■ _ _ ■ // _ _ ■ : _ _ ■ _ _
И~-о́й, дак-ы со~ своё́~й ты да но́ // ой,
　　　　　да но́~вой го́рници.
_ : ■ _ _ _ : _ ■ : _ _ ■ // _ _ ■ : _ ■ _ _
И~-о́й, дак-ы по~дошило́ жё да по́ // ой,
　　　　　да по~ра – вре́мечко.
_ : ■ _ _ _ : _ _ ■ _ _ ■ // _ _ ■ : _ ■ _ _

I-oh duk-y, go away, gue// oh, guest sweet.
I-oh duk-y, from your ne// oh, new high room.
I-oh duk-y, it come the ti// oh, the time-date.

In the example from Maza (17), variation is in the opposite direction. Rather than increasing the number of stresses, the second stressed position is weakened, and could also be omitted completely:

(17) *Kaduisky area (Maza)*

А вы послу́шайте, по~жа́~луйста,
_ _ _ ■ _ _ _ : ■ : _ _
А чё я бу́ду да ва́~м ро~сска́~зывать,
_ _ _ ■ _ _ □ : _ : ■ : _ _

А чё я бу́ду да ва́~м на~ка́~зывать,
_ _ _ ■ _ _ □ : _ : ■ : _ _

And you here, please,
And what I'll say to you,
And what I'll tell you,

The semantic sequence of verses in the Vologda tradition is thus characterized by both anapest and trochaic feet in eastern and western performance dialects. Proclitic interjections, on the other hand, could be with or without stress and from one to five syllables long, which makes the picture more complicated. The number of typical lines is about 55–70% although it may be as high as 100% in sung texts (if we count special words, such as the interjection 'Oh'). When this rhythmical context is recognized, any other type of line looks like a rhythmical deviation, as illustrated in example (18) where the fourth and fifth verses (in italic font) have one rather than two unstressed syllables in the first part of the verse:

(18) О́й, у друго́го-то бе́режку
■ _ _ ■ _ _ □ _ _
О́й, как шипи́ца колю́чая
■ _ _ ■ _ _ □ _ _
О́й, я одна́-одинёшенька
■ _ _ ■ _ _ □ _ _
О́й, горька́я горю́шица,
■ _ ■ _ _ □ _ _
О́й, как се́ра куку́шица,
■ _ ■ _ _ □ _ _
О́й, не приплы́ть, не прича́лити
■ _ _ ■ _ _ □ _ _

Oh, from the other bank
Oh, there is wild-rose prickly
Oh, I am one-alone
Oh, like a grief-misfortune,

Oh, like a grey cuckoo,
Oh, cannot moor, cannot get a place

This metrical variation co-occurs with a formulaic interjection in which the lamenter refers to herself, interrupting the description of the river's bank, between its identification as prickly and its analogical parallel as a place where one cannot find a mooring or get a place. The rhythm is restored following the interjection. Mikhail Gasparov (2004) has observed the syntactic nature of the rhythm: lines of the same meter gravitate to the same syntactic schemes. In Vologda laments, parallelism leads to patterns of rhythmic correspondence of lines in couplets.

In summarized texts the rhythm vanishes, but the interesting point is that the number of syllables within formulas such as pairs of elementary images remains constant, although words between them are more susceptible to fluctuation. I have analyzed summaries by the person who performed the same lament, summaries of laments performed by others and even written summaries where a neighbor has written for the lamenter. They consistently try to make the content clear without trying to sing or recite and the traditional rhythm is gone as a consequence. Nevertheless, in the chaos of lines with a totally different structure, the formulas, connected as they are by their syntax, are united. This observation resonates with the findings of Yelena Sesselja Helgadóttir about post-medieval Icelandic *þulur*, which lack periodic meter but in which the formulas maintain internal metrical structuring of rhythm and phonic patterning like alliteration or rhyme even though the surrounding verse is not structured in the same way (Helgadóttir 2017: 135–136). Helgadóttir shows that formulas may have rhythm, alliteration and rhyme even in the surrounding free verse. Vologda lament formulas support this finding by retaining their internal rhythmic structure even in summaries where regular rhythmic verse structure is otherwise lacking.

Phonic Patterning
Sounds provide a binding element of formulas. A prominent feature of Karelian laments is alliteration (the repetition of onset sounds in initial syllables, which are always stressed in the language), which have a prominent role in shaping the lament register's lexicon (Stepanova 2015b), but alliteration has not been considered significant for Russian folk poetry. In 20th-century research, alliteration only received mentioned for use in proverbs and sayings (Kvjatkovsky 1966). The presence of alliteration in the *The Tale of Igor's Campaign* was even used in arguments that it is fake (see Zaliznyak 2008: esp. 284). More recently, Andrey Zaliznyak has compared this text with lyric songs and found similarity in formulas, including ones rich in alliteration (Zaliznyak 2008: 165). Putilov has analyzed songs and *bylina*-epics and found that the type of alliteration in these forms of folk poetry differs from that of literature (Putilov 1999). For example, folk poetry includes "inner rhyme, sound repetitions, alliteration, assonance, consonance, plays on words" and "reverse combination of syllables" as seen in Тут же ли быть да белой лебеди (*leb—bel—leb*) ['there should be a white swan'] or Кленова стрела лежит (*le—el—le*) ['the maple arrow lies'] (Putilov 1986: 14–16). The phonic features of formulaic idioms of Russian laments appear quite similar to what Putilov observes in these other genres.

No systematic research has been done on alliteration in the Russian laments, but a rapid look reveals a number of collocations with recurrent sound combinations and reverse combinations, such as сыпучие песочики ['loose sand'], мелкие камешки ['small stones'], косата ласточка ['queued swallow'], печка кирпичная ['brick oven'], тёмная комнатка ['dark room' = coffin], невесёлая весточка ['gloomy news'] and мила лада ['sweet beloved']. There are also etiquette formulas with alliteration like скорая смертушка ['fast death'], все веки вешные ['everlasting centuries'], богоданный мой батюшка ['god-given father'] and милая ты моя мамушка ['my dear mummy']. The repetition of sounds can also be a side effect of a lexical repetition with tautological epithets, as in светлая светлица ['bright room'], горе горькое ['bitter grief'] and часы часуются ['the hours are houring'] (cf. Vepsian *casovijad casuized* ['hours of hours']). Although alliteration is not typical for Russian folk poetry in general, many formulas of laments contain it and similar phonic patterning.

These patterns seem to concentrate and stabilize in formulas, as Helgadóttir (2017) has observed in her study of Icelandic *þulur*.

From Form to Ritual Practice

Within the Russian tradition, laments were considered to be simple and sincere words of grief. Very skilled lamenters may say: "young women say, 'we can't (we have no skills)'. How could this be? It goes by itself, this itself is lamenting." (Jugai 2011: 96.) This gives an emic perspective on the tradition – i.e. a perspective of the people who practice it. A lamenter should not simply imitate crying with her melody; she should perform real grief (see also Stepanova & Frog in this volume) and express herself spontaneously in the lament language. Researchers, on the other hand, viewing the tradition and its products from an etic perspective – from the outside – can illuminate the principles and conventions that govern the production of traditional texts.

Funeral and commemoration rituals show that a lament is not just an emotional text. In traditional culture, the formulation and performance of lament are controlled by a number of prohibitions: laments should not be performed at the wrong time and place; the dead should not be buried without laments как животину ['like cattle']; one should not lament too much (one might wake the deceased or s/he will wear wet clothes in the otherworld); one should not lament too weakly or without the deceased – сухими слезами ['with dry tears'] (AA 2010–2017; cf. Stepanova & Frog in this volume). With regard to the Russian lament tradition, the relation between the world of the living and that of the dead appears to be ruled by two main presuppositions: the deceased is important to his or her relatives and the deceased is potentially dangerous. The first idea is connected with the necessity for regular communication in the cemetery; the second makes that contact elaborate.

Some rules for lamenting are connected with their formal features, some with their content. Central ritual aims of ritual laments seem more or less shared across different traditions of the Baltic Sea region and also more widely, and thus the content of laments also seem to share some key features. First,

they contain images and motifs related to contact between worlds, whether these take the form of roads, flight or (written) letters. At the level of formal features, different lament traditions may all be distinguished to varying degrees from other forms of speech or poetry as a culturally established code for the particular type of communication with the dead, and this code is connected with natural weeping. Lament traditions of the Baltic Sea region share poetic organizing principles such as semantic parallelism and linguistic features such as prominent use of diminutives and vocative address as well as poetic phraseology based on metaphor (see Nevskaja 1997; Stepanova 2011). At the same time, the language and poetic form varies both by language and local tradition. In Russian laments, rhythm is prevalent; in Karelian and Lithuanian laments, alliteration and metaphorical expression are more important. Within the Finnic lament tradition, formal differences in the rhythmic structure of lament are pronounced, and areapparent even within the Karelian tradition (Frog & Stepanova 2011: 204–209), where variation in the lament register's vocabulary also varied by regional dialect (Stepanova A. 2004). Similar observations are also apparent above even within the Vologda tradition, which is itself only a representative of the broader Russian lament tradition. In order to better understand any one culture's lament tradition in the Baltic Sea region, it is important to consider how its features and uses relate to those of other cultures' traditions, yet it is equally important to recognize difference, whether at the level of different language groups or at the level of regional and local community practices.

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SVG = Словарь вологодских говоров, VI. ['Vologda Dialect Dictionary, vol. VI']. Вологда: Русь, 2007.

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New Research on Skolt Saami Laments

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Abstract: This report briefly presents on evidence of a lament tradition among the Skolt Saami. The lament tradition was recognized when documented by earlier scholars but has never entered discussion of lament traditions and has remained generally unrecognized in discussions of lament traditions in the Baltic Sea region.

The study Historical Turning Points of Multilayered Music Tradition among the Skolt Saami in Finland is the first comprehensive analysis of Skolt Saami musical culture in Finland and its historical and cultural context. This research project (2015–2018) is funded by the Academy of Finland and its scientific and cultural impact in the Skolt Saami community is enhanced by a simultaneous key project Skolt Saami Memory Bank: A Pilot for Data Management and Revitalisation of Endangered Skolt Saami Music, Language, and Culture (2016–2018).

Research is based on the fact that the Skolt Saamis have always lived in a multi-cultural environment and their musical tradition is inherently multi-layered. The study explores the ways in which Skolt Saami have shaped and incorporated the overlapping traditions of the neighbouring Sea Saami, Karelian,

Russian, Norwegian and Finnish cultures into their own musical culture during the 20th century. This multicultural environment, which had existed in these regions for centuries, broke down as the borders of Norway, Finland and Russia / the Soviet Union were reorganized. Three Skolt Saami areas in Petsamo – Paččjokk, Peäccam and Suõ'nn'jel – were incorporated into Finland in 1920 and contacts between Finnish Skolt Saamis, Norwegian Sea Saami, Russian Skolt Saamis and other ethnic groups began to decline. After the Second World War, these village areas were ceded to the Soviet Union and Finnish Skolt Saamis were forced to migrate to new areas, namely to Sevettijärvi and Nellim in the Inari district.

One part of the research concerns Skolt Saami laments, called *virss*, which have not yet been studied comprehensively. The main

reason for this has been the lack of research material and the fact that a significant part of the traditional Skolt Saami culture slowly diminished after forced migration. In the archive collections of Skolt Saami music, there are only three recordings that are marked as laments in the catalogues. These were recorded by A.O. Väisänen in the 1920s and 1930s, and they are all performed by the same person, Näskk (Anastasia) Moshnikoff. The following example was recorded in 1936:

Ij kuâđđ-a-jam ni tuu â´lǧǧ-e,
                              piârr-a-gaž-gažža,
ij kuâđđ-a-jam tuu nijdd-a piârr-a-gaž-ža,
tõt kuâđđ-a-ji, tuu nuõrr-a ââggaž
                              jeäl-e-ǩeânna-na.
Ij vet tå´lǩ le´žže še vuäinn-a-maž,
mõn-a le´žžep vuäinn-a-maž.
Âmat le´žžep jeä´l-e-škue´tteded-e
tuu pue´rr-e-vuõđast-a
di suu låkka vaajtaded-a.

De spä´sseb-e, spä´sseb ruåđ-aža,
                              peâmm-a-mast-a
da ruõkk-a-mast-a tiu´dd-a šââdd-jâ-laža-ža.

Âmat le´žžep jeä´l-e-škue´tted
tuu jeälleže peâmmââ´lj.
Ton le´žžek kuullâded-ed.
Mâi´d-e le´žžep vuäinnam-ad
mâ´te tõin-e le´žžep pooraškue´tteded
âmat le´žžep vuei´teškue´tteded.

Spä´sseb-e, spä´sseb-e šuurid spä´sseb-i.
Di täst tän-a ââ´lmest de tun-a âlmma.
(SKSÄ L277a; transcription by Seija Sivertsen, Marko Jouste and Miika Lehtinen.)

[The lamenter speaks:]
Not even your son was left in the family.
Not even your daughter was left in the family.
What was left, was your young life,
it was left unlived.
It was not possible (for you) to see
what we have been able to see.
How can we begin to live on your kindness
and change to his number?

[The deceased speaks:]
Thank you, my relatives
for taking care of me,
for burying me,
feeding me to adult age.

[The lamenter's ego speaks:]
We begin to live your life, foster child
probably you can hear of what we have seen.

and then we may begin to eat (a dinner to
                              honour your memory).
Then we have enough strength to carry on.

[The deceased speaks:]
Thank you, thank you, many thanks.
for the life here on earth and in eternity.
(Translated by the author.)

Some additional descriptions of laments, performances and performing context occur in published scientific research papers and in manuscripts and journals of researchers who visited the Skolt Saami area before the Second World War (e.g. Itkonen 1948; Hämäläinen 1938; Storå 1971; Laitinen 1977; Jouste 2006; 2017). However, during this research, I have been able to identity some new examples of laments in additional archive material and I have made some new interviews on the subject.

The findings so far show that the principles of the Skolt Saami lament tradition bear similarities to Russian and Karelian traditions. The main three performing-contexts are funerals, weddings, and expressing grief for men being sent to war. Most of the information concerns laments at funerals. After a person died, it took three days to prepare him or her for the funeral and all the phases included laments. However, in contrast to the rich lamenting in Karelian tradition, the only context in a Skolt Saami wedding ceremony where a lament was performed was when the bride was taking leave of her mother and her childhood home.

The texts of the laments seem to consist of phrases that occur in a similar form in many performances. The main characteristics are a dialogue between the person who performs the lament and the deceased, expressing repeatedly one's gratitude with the word *spä'sseb* and describing the good will of the deceased while he or she was still living. The analysis of the texts has also made it possible to discover similar phrases in texts of other Skolt Saami musical genres, mainly long narrative songs called *leu'dd*. Most often these *leu'dd*s describe sorrow for the loss of the living areas of Petsamo. It also seems that sometimes an excerpt of a lament of the bride has been added as a quotation within a *leu'dd* narration of a wedding. Furthermore, the analysis has shown that the genre of improvised *leu'dd*s also has melodic and textual similarities with the lament genre (Jouste et al. 2007). Often these

can be described as a gratitude laments, a use of lament also known to exist in the Karelian tradition.

For more information, please visit: http://www.oulu.fi/giellagasinstitute/skolt_saami_music or http://www.oulu.fi/giellagasinstitute/skolt_saami_memory_bank.

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Conference Report – Austmarr VI: Religion, Language, Practice, with a Workshop on Late Iron Age Mortuary Behaviours
5ᵗʰ–6ᵗʰ December 2016, Helsinki, Finland

Kendra Willson, Polish Institute of Advanced Studies / University of Turku

The sixth annual conference of the Austmarr network was held in Helsinki on 5ᵗʰ–6ᵗʰ December 2016. The focus of this seminar and workshop was on the nexus of language, religion and archaeology. The conference was hosted by Frog (University of Helsinki), organized with assistance from Eila Stepanova and Kendra Willson. The twenty-five attendees included visitors from Sweden, Germany and Poland. One day of traditional conference presentations was followed by a full-day workshop.

The conference session on December 5ᵗʰ was held in the main building of the University of Helsinki. The morning papers focused on linguistic topics – etymology and names. Janne Saarikivi (University of Helsinki) gave the opening talk on "Pre-Christian Finnic Anthroponyms and the World View behind Them", reporting on background to the project "Suomalais-ugrilaiset henkilönnimisysteemit: Esihistoriallisen nimenannon rekonstruointi" ['Finno-Ugric Personal Name Systems: Reconstruction of Prehistoric Naming'], led by Terhi Ainiala, which received funding from the Academy of Finland for 2015–2019. Data and research on Finnic personal names are sparse. Sources on pre-Christian Finnic names include birch bark letters from Novgorod, later documents and place names and surnames derived from older personal names. The oldest layer of Finnic names are often compounds containing two lexemes; reconstructed name elements include *Iha- ['desire'], *Kauka- ['long'], *Ikä- ['age'], *Toivo- ['wish'] and *Valta- ['power'].

Continuing with names, Frog (University of Helsinki) spoke about "Semantic Disambiguation of Theonyms", namely the problem of how and when the names of gods are distinguished from the names of the things of which they are gods. He focused on the example of Uralic *Ilma ['sky'] as well as other names for sky and thunder gods in Uralic and Indo-European languages. Strategies for disambiguation include adding suffixes (e.g. *Ilma* > *Ilmari* ['sky god'], *Ukko* ['old man, thunder god'] > *ukkonen* ['thunder']) or replacing either the name of the god or of the phenomenon with a different lexeme, often a borrowing.

Mikko Bentlin (University of Greifswald) presented on "Religious Practices and Folk Beliefs Reflected in the Germanic Loan Words of Finnish". While much of the early Christian vocabulary in Finnish came via Slavic (e.g. *risti* ['cross'], *pappi* ['priest'], *raamattu* ['Bible']), there are also many words borrowed from North and West Germanic languages, such as *joulu* ['yule'], *piispa* ['bishop'], *sielu* ['soul'], the names of the days of the week and the dialectal interjection *hellerei* < Swedish *Heliga Maria* ['Holy Mary']. Loan words are also found as names of beings from folk belief such as *jätti-* ['giant'] (cf. Swedish *jätte* ['giant']), *lohikäärme* ['dragon'] (literally 'salmon-serpent', but somehow modeled on Old Norse *flugdreki* ['flying dragon']), *näkki* ['evil water spirit'] (cf. Swedish *näcke*), *tonttu* ['gnome/elf/domestic spirit'] (cf. Swedish *tomte*) and the verb *vitriä* ['to progress secretly, move fast'], which may be connected to Swedish dialectal *vittra* ['female forest spirit'].

Kendra Willson (University of Turku) discussed "*Runo* Revisited: Borrowing and Semantic Development". The Finnish word *runo* ['poem'] has traditionally been viewed as reflecting a loan from Proto-Germanic *rūnō, the source of English *rune*. However, given its

limited distribution in Finnic and the range of meanings attested in Germanic and Finnic languages, it was more likely borrowed at a later stage, from Early Norse near the start of the Viking Age, probably in the meaning of 'incantation, verbal charm' and in conjunction with the spread of incantational magic in North Finnic cultures.

After lunch the seminar continued with a session on archaeology. Jhonny Thérus (Uppsala University) presented on "The Complex East Swedish Burial Practices during the Period of Conversion, c. 900–1150: Some Examples, Problems, and Solutions". The archaeological record from Uppland during the centuries of Christianization suggests a long period of gradual change with parallel customs and different local solutions, integrating aspects of Christian burial with existing rituals. Many pre-Christian cremation graves contain only 10–20% of the expected quantity of bones. The missing bones may have been used in ancestor rituals.

Anna Wessman (University of Helsinki) gave a talk with the title "Karelian Women in Espoo?". The area of Central Uusimaa has had a dearth of Iron Age finds, although pollen data indicate that the area was settled. However, recently a number of stray finds from the Late Iron Age have emerged largely through the efforts of metal detectorists. Finds of ornaments of female dress are of an eastern type, indicating a more complex web of contacts than has generally been assumed for this area.

Vykintas Vaitkevičius (University of Klaipeda) spoke about "*Apidėmė*: Deity – Place Name – Memorial Site". The Lithuanian *apidėmė* [lit. 'nearby spot/mark'], has been known since the 16th century as the name of a deity associated with abandoned settlement sites. It also appears, with gradually increasing frequency, in place names referring to cultivated fields and meadows. Monuments and memorial practices and feelings of personal connection to these sites are a living tradition.

Finally, Leszek Słupecki (University of Rzeszów) presented on "The Scyld Scaefing, or There and Back Again? – Boat Burials and the Idea of Reincarnation". The boat burial scene in *Beowulf* is one of the earliest and fullest descriptions of this type of ritual. The poem also contains a passing reference to Scyld arriving in the world in his boat, an idea expressed in more detail by William of Malmesbury and in the Aethelweard Chronicle. This motif may connect boat burials to beliefs about reincarnation.

The first day concluded with a reception hosted by Folklore Studies of the University of Helsinki. The second day of the conference, Finnish Independence Day, was a workshop at the Hotel Arthur, with fifteen attendees. The discussion focused on Late Iron Age mortuary behaviors approached from different angles, with reference to texts that had been distributed ahead of time. Charlotte Hedenstierna-Jonson (Uppsala University) led the first segment, "Two Women, Two Places, Two Graves: Deconstructing Two Viking Age Burials". The first case study was Bj 854 from Birka in the Lake Mälar valley, a rich chamber grave known as the 'Birka princess'. The second was the 'Klinta grave', RAÄ 59:3 from Köpingsvik in Öland, a complicated cremation burial which has been suggested to be the grave of a '*volva*' or other magic practitioner, especially because of the staff found there. Eila Stepanova (University of Helsinki) opened the subject of "Lamenters: Performance and Roles Invisible to Archaeology", considering evidence for lamenting traditions in Old Norse as well as belief systems seen in Lithuanian and Karelian laments. After lunch, Daniel Sävborg (University of Tartu) led the discussion on "Burials and Graves in Written Sources", examining Ibn Fadlan's well-known account of the funeral on the Volga in comparison with descriptions of funerary practices from Norse sources and *Beowulf*, as well as Norse traditions connected with mounds and mound-breaking. The final section of the workshop, led by Frog (University of Helsinki), concerned "Authority in Practice and Performance", discussing archaeological evidence for activities of ritual specialists in connection with funerary practices. The discussion was intense and wide-ranging. The day concluded with a dinner at the restaurant Kolme kruunua.

The Austmarr network is an international, interdisciplinary network of scholars from different disciplines and different countries

interested in interdisciplinary potential and the role of cultural contacts in shaping the cultures around the Baltic. The network includes archaeologists, folklorists, historians, linguists, philologists and scholars of religion based in Estonia, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Sweden. We aim to overcome the boundaries among disciplinary, linguistic and national traditions and develop new methods for cultural reconstruction as we strive for a deeper understanding of the human history of the Baltic Sea region. The Austmarr network has held conferences and workshops annually since 2010. The 2019 meeting is planned for Vilnius, Lithuania, with a theme of sacred places (see Vaitkevičius, in this issue).

Conference Report – Austmarr VII: Crossing Disciplinary Borders in Viking-Age Studies: Problems, Challenges and Solutions
1st–3rd December 2017, Tartu, Estonia
Joseph Ryder, University of Bergen

The 7th annual Austmarr symposium took place December 1st–3rd in the main building of Tartu University, at the Department of Scandinavian Studies. The symposium was organized by Daniel Sävborg (University of Tartu). The theme of the event was interdisciplinary approaches to the Viking Age, and both the presenters and the audience reflected that. The speakers included archaeologists, historians, philologists, historians of religion, runologists, folklorists and others who conduct research related to the Viking Age. The most pressing concern and the general theme was the need for dialogue between scholars of different disciplines working within the broad area of Viking Studies. As stated by Henrik Janson (University of Gothenburg) in his keynote lecture, "it's high time scholars from various disciplines talk to each other."

On Wednesday evening, November 30th, a welcoming reception was held in the restaurant Püssirohukelder. The following morning, Sävborg opened the symposium, and Margit Sutrop, dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Arts at the University of Tartu delivered a welcoming speech. The first session was dedicated to the keynote lecture of Jens Peter Schjødt (Aarhus University), who presented on the question, "Óðinn – The Pervert?". The potential homosexuality of Óðinn has been a subject of attention in recent years (e.g. Bolli 2007). In the literary record, particularly the *Edda*s, Óðinn only cross-dresses as a last resort, and the literary evidence points to Óðinn as being 'quite straight'. The lecture was followed by a discussion on the concept of gender in the medieval Norse world, with attendees bringing up the issue that 21st-century theoretical perspectives on gender may be projecting our contemporary views of gender on the past.

Following a break for coffee, Maths Bertell (Mid-Sweden University) presented the paper "Using Theory from Religious Studies on Archaeological Sources: Problems and Wet Dreams". All disciplines within Viking Studies have limitations, and an interdisciplinary approach can help mend this issue, but we lack a shared terminology for interdisciplinary frameworks. Bertell proposed the concept of religiolects as one concept that could help mend this issue within Viking-Age interdisciplinary studies. Anna P.F. Wessman (University of Helsinki), Frog (University of Helsinki) and Charlotte Hedenstierna-Jonsson (University of Uppsala) then presented the paper "A *völva* or *seiðmaðr* in Finland? – Cultural Creolization as a Problem for Interpretations". The three presenters addressed the Pukkila boat burial from the 8th century, a cremation grave that looks like a grave of a Scandinavian ritual specialist but that is situated in a Finnic-type cemetery. Their multidisciplinary approach which incorporates later Finno-Karelian folklore, material culture and comparative mythology, led to the interpretation that cultural creolization occurred during the Iron Age. The third paper in this session was by Sabine Heidi Walther (University of Copenhagen / University of Bonn): "Leo the Deacon on the Religion of the Rus': A Contextualizing Literary Perspective". Walther revealed that Leo the Deacon's account of the Scandinavian Rus' utilizes common literary tropes from

classical sources. Her research stresses that literary evidence of human sacrifice, like Leo the Deacon's, must be examined with caution due to the nature of the historical sources, particularly when archaeological evidence for human sacrifice within this period is scant and contested. Klas af Edholm (Stockholm University) then carried this discussion forward with his paper on "Interdisciplinary Research in the Study of Human Sacrifice". Af Edholm stressed that archaeology alone cannot answer the question surrounding human sacrifices in the Viking Age. He proposed a framework that incorporates theory from religious studies to help answer this riddle. Discussion was lively and continued across a lovely lunch at the restaurant Püssirohukelder.

Jessie Yusek (University of Nottingham) opened the first afternoon session with her paper on "Monstrous Women: Exploring Gender in Medieval Icelandic Literature and Society". In Icelandic sources, monstrous women are portrayed as women who do not conform to traditional gender roles. Yusek showed how a survey of Icelandic medieval literature can provide insight to the roles of marginalized or neglected groups. Kirsi Kanerva (University of Turku) then presented the paper "Stories of Medieval Men Killed by Supernatural Beings: Post-Medieval Folklore as a Key to Their Interpretation?". Modern folklore can be used to examine literary accounts within Icelandic medieval sources. Kanerva showed that this methodology can be applied to stories from the modern era where unexplained or untimely deaths were attributed to supernatural beings. The final paper of this session was presented by Vykintas Vaitkevičius (University of Klaipėda): "Archaeology and Folklore: Case of Samogitian Hill-Forts (W Lithuania)". Vaitkevičius compared hill-fort locations and typologies to local folklore pertaining to them. Curiously, smaller hill-forts were found to have more folklore records associated with them than larger hill-forts, and the abundance of folklore surrounding Samogitian hill-forts opens interesting avenues for future research.

The first day's final session was a special discussion session, "Female Viking Warriors" introduced by Charlotte Hedenstierna-Jonsson and Daniel Sävborg. It was inspired by new genetic analysis of a grave from Birka, Sweden, and the lively debate that this has sparked. The grave was originally thought to be a male burial, but the analysis has revealed the person to be female. The historical sources point toward the existence of warrior women in the Viking Age, and the new research has led to a myriad of different interpretations concerning gender roles within the Viking Age, including a lively contribution from conference attendees. The day ended with a guided tour of the exhibit Viking Era Treasures from Estonia, at Tartu City museum.

The second day of the conference began with the keynote lecture of Henrik Janson (University of Gothenburg) on "Old Norse Religion and the Troublesome Quest for an Interdisciplinary Research". Scholars of Old Norse religion have difficulty reaching a consensus on Old Norse Religion, and they must be careful when attempting to use sources from outside their own disciplines. There Janson stresses that there is nevertheless still a need for Viking-Age scholars of different disciplines to communicate with each other, raising questions and concerns that continued to be discussed during the coffee break.

The following session was opened by Sebastian Wärmländer's (Stockholm University) paper "The Longhouse at Hrísbrú, Iceland: An Interdisciplinary Study". Archaeological evidence shows that the longhouse at Hrísbrú was the home of an elite, and the Icelandic sagas mention events that took place at the farm and church site. Wärmländer's presentation revealed how historical evidence from Icelandic sagas aids in interpreting the complex archaeological evidence at this excavation site. Alexandra Sanmark (University of Highlands and Islands) then presented an inspiring paper "Assembly Sites: Methodology and Theory". Research on Viking-Age assembly (*thing*) sites has been limited due to the lack of clear theoretical and methodological frameworks for identifying and analyzing them. Sanmark has developed a new methodology for identifying thing sites that combines a wide range of different approaches, and she illustrated how this methodology has been successful in identifying thing sites in the Viking world (see further Sanmark, this volume). The third paper of the session was presented by Ragnar Saage (University of Tartu) on "Metallographical

Analysis of Vendel / Viking-Age Iron Amulet Rings". Saage revealed that metallographical analysis has determined that Vendel-/Viking-Age iron rings were of low quality iron, leading to the interpretation that the quality of the metal did not matter. This led to many interpretations from the attendees, and particularly interesting was discussion on the possibility that the rings may have been used as musical instruments.

Following the energetic discussions that carried through lunch, Laila Kitzler Åhfeldt (Swedish National Heritage Board) delivered the paper "Archaeology and Runology – A Happy Marriage?". She opened both advantages and difficulties when combining runology with archaeology. The two disciplines can complement each other, but Kitzler Åhfeldt stressed that both runologists and archaeologists need to ensure that they are utilizing the latest theoretical and methodological frameworks from outside their respective disciplines. Sirpa Aalto, Ritva Kylli, Anna-Kaisa Salmi and Tiina Äikäs (University of Oulu) then presented on "Reconciliation of Sources: Investigating Food Culture in Ostrobothnia (Northern Finland) in the Pre-Modern Era". A combination of archaeological, osteological and historical sources was used in this paper to investigate the diet of pre-modern Ostrobothnia, and the societal implications that this diet suggests. Historical sources, such as tax records, were used in combination with archaeology and osteology to help understand the change in diet in Northern Finland between the medieval and modern eras. The final paper of the session was presented by William Pidzamecky (University of Nottingham): "'Many Big Ships and Excellently Well Fitted...': A Case Study of Norse Vessels in the Saga of King Hakon c. 1204–1263". There are limitations in discussing Norse vessels from either a purely historical or archaeological perspective. Pidzamecky introduced a methodology that combines both the material and literary records, showing how this is preferable since both sources complement each other and ease the limitations of evidence linked to different fields.

After coffee followed a short session of two papers. Marika Mägi (Tallinn University) discussed "Place Names and Archaeological Districts in the Viking-Age Eastern Baltic".

Through an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates place names, archaeology, topographical studies and written sources, Mägi showed how it is possible to identify a creolization of Scandinavian cultures and of cultures across the Baltic Sea. However, more archaeological evidence is still needed to compliment the historical and literary sources. Jakub Morawiec (University of Silesia) then delivered "Viking Raids on Territories of Western Slavs – Research Problems and Challenges". Traditionally, scholarship has viewed that the Vikings had not affected the Slavs of the Baltic coast. However, Morawiec revealed how archaeological evidence suggests that there was extensive Viking activity, including Arabic silver and distinctly Scandinavian burials at Wolin.

There was an additional short break before day two ended with the second special session "The Salme Mass Burials in Ships – Archaeology Outdoors and Indoors", introduced by Jüri Peets (Tallinn University), Marge Konsa, Raili Allmäe (Talinn University), Liina Maldre (Tallinn University) and Reet Maldre (Tallinn University). The Salme ship burials are an almost 'typical' representation of a Viking grave: ship, weapons, dogs, gaming pieces. The analyses of the excavated site of the ships includes a multidisciplinary approach – a landscape analysis to plot the mass grave site in its greater landscape, an osteological analysis to determine the species of dogs, and a survey of the Old Norse literature that suggests Vikings from Sweden raided Estonia. Following this second special session, the attendees were treated to a wine reception hosted by the Swedish ambassador, Anders Ljunggren, and his wife, Barbro Allardt Ljunggren, and a symposium dinner was held at the restaurant Püssirohukelder.

The final day of the conference opened with the third keynote lecture by Anne-Sofie Gräslund (Uppsala University), who delivered a lecture titled "Interdisciplinarity – The Hardships of an Archaeologist, from the 1970s Onwards". The lecture highlighted the lack of interdisciplinary research within Viking Studies, for example, runologists often do not know where the rune stones they are working are sit in the landscape, and a great deal of Viking-Age archaeologists no longer learn Old Norse.

Gräslund stressed that academics must open a dialogue to improve interdisciplinary studies.

In the following session, Elena Melnikova (Russian Academy of Sciences) delivered the paper "The Invitation of Varangian Princes in the Light of Interdisciplinary". She took a multidisciplinary approach to understanding the legend of the meeting of the Varangian princes and its connection to the dynasty of Rurik. Her multidisciplinary study spans linguistic, archaeological and historical sources (including Arabic, Frankish and Byzantine) in order to reconstruct the society that surrounds the legend. Stanislav Belskiy then discussed "The Newly-Discovered Boat-Grave of the Viking Age in Karelia (Russia)". He presented results of current archaeological research, which center on an excavated boat-grave site overlooking Lake Ladoga. Archaeological landscape analysis and place name data were brought in successfully to show a correlation between the find location of the boat-grave and place name data from the sagas. Tatjana N. Jackson (Russian Academy of Science) kept the lively discussions going with her paper "Saga Stories and Slavic-Finnish Archaeology: Bilateral Cooperation". Jackson stressed that Icelandic sagas do not function as purely historical documents, but also as interpretations of history by the authors, but that there is still merit in the sagas. Combining saga data with the archaeological record can thus prove to be useful, such as comparing archaeological data from the rampart at Polotsk, which archaeological data initially showed to be wood, while described as of stone in the sagas, while later archaeological data revealed a stone foundation. The final paper of the session was given by Leszek P. Słupecki (University of Rzeszow): "Old Norse Runic Inscriptions on Wooden Stocks and Old Russian Birch Bark Writing: A Chance for Comparisons Never Used". Słupecki compared Norse runic inscriptions and Slavic Cyrillic birch bark inscriptions, showing that both systems served a similar variety of needs such as religious, business, magic, mediating vulgarities and finding other uses in everyday life more generally. A multidisciplinary comparative study of these two writing systems definitely appears warranted, and should be a subject for further investigation.

After lunch, Miriam Mayburd (University of Iceland) presented the paper "Old Norse Philology Meets Metaphysics: On Limits of Epistemology and (Re)Turn to φαινόμενον". Mayburd argued that the phenomenological approach outlined by Rudolf Otto can help scholars such as theologists and scholars of Old Norse philology cross disciplinary borders. A phenomenological methodological approach can provide interdisciplinary scholars with a needed interpretative and cross-disciplinary framework. Maria Cristina Lombardi (Eastern University of Naples) then discussed "Intersections among Disciplines: A Kenning for 'Sword'". Lombardi's overview of literary sources mentioning Germanic weapons revealed that these often include kennings, and suggest or reference spirits that dwell in the weapons. Imagery analysis of the blades of some Viking-Age weapons shows distinct patterns which can be linked to sword-kennings from the Viking-Age sagas, something that would be missed without combining the two disciplines. Anna Solovyeva (University of Iceland) joined the conference via Skype to present the paper "Text and Context in *Skáldatal*: Reading a written Document of an Oral Tradition". Solovyeva proposed that the *Skáldatal*, a medieval Icelandic list of court poets and rulers, should be studied not only from a textual and codicological basis, but from an interdisciplinary methodological approach with a focus on memory.

Following the inevitable break for coffee, Luke John Murphy (Snorrastofa, Reykholt, Iceland) delivered the paper "Reasoning Our Way to Privacy: Towards a Methodological Discourse of Viking Studies". Echoing Maths Bertell's paper, Murphy foregrounded the issue that interdisciplinary approaches to the Viking Age are hindered by scholars' lack of common terminology and methodology that spans across disciplinary borders. The case study of privacy in the Late Iron Age shows that a dichotomy, emic and etic, can be deduced which can aid scholars in disentangling the methodological issues faced when analyzing material from other disciplines. Agneta Ney (Uppsala University) then presented the paper "Interdisciplinary Studies and Historiographical Changes". Continuing from Henrik Janson's (University of Gothenburg) lecture, Ney

emphasized that there is great risk in crossing disciplinary borders, since the Viking Age cannot be explained by 13th century literary sources, although the sources certainly still have potential value for approaching the Viking Age if used with caution, proper source criticism and methodology. Denis Sukhino-Khomenko (University of Gothenburg) presented the final paper of the conference "Crossing the Disciplinary Borders: *thegn*s in Northern Europe (the British Isles and Scandinavia)". Most studies of Anglo-Saxon society explore the role of *thegn*s in pre-Norman England, yet very few studies compare the Norse societal and linguistic cognate, Old Norse *þegn*. Sukhino-Khomenko stressed that scholars of Anglo-Saxon and Old Norse literature should be utilizing each other's research, and return to the sources to cross the disciplinary border (see also Sukhino-Khomenko, this volume).

The conference ended with the Austmarr Network business meeting, led by Daniel Sävborg, Kendra Willson and Frog. The meeting included discussion of the book developed from previous Austmarr meetings, *Contacts and Networks in the Baltic Sea Region:* Austmarr *as a Northern* Mare nostrum, *500–1500 A.D.* that will appear with University of Amsterdam Press (Bertell et al. 2019; on which, see also Bertell et al., this volume). This was the seventh consecutive year during which the Austmarr Network has organized a symposium, and plans for the 2018 meeting were made to be held in Uppsala, with tentative plans for Lithuania as a venue in the following year.

The question that underpinned the 7th Austmarr symposium was *What happens when scholars cross disciplinary borders?* Inter-disciplinary approaches to research are often difficult and beset by theoretical and methodological issues. As noted by Anne-Sofie Gräslund, the first step to mend these issues is to open dialogue, as well as to attempt to understand the biases that come within each discipline. Communication is key, and it was interesting to learn that the Austmarr Network has upheld a view that the most important discussions at conferences happen during the coffee breaks. Interdisciplinary studies can be utilized and advanced through communication. As discussed by Luke John Murphy, the very existence of the Viking Studies discipline, and Viking Studies departments at universities, offers an excellent opportunity for crossing disciplinary boundaries. With careful cross-disciplinary research, and innovative theoretical and methodological frameworks, as well as communication between scholars of different disciplines, the Viking Age can be opened to interpretations previously unexplored. Austmarr VII marks a step in this direction. The importance of this step has led Daniel Sävborg to organize a volume of selected papers and additional invited contributions that will carry these perspectives into broader international discussion.

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Conference Announcement – Austmarr IX: *Genius loci* in the Prehistory of the Baltic Sea Region

29th–30th May 2019, Klaipėda, Lithuania

Vykintas Vaitkevičius, University of Klaipėda

Austmarr IX is devoted to topic of *genius loci*. The term *genius loci* literally refers to a 'spirit of a place', rooted in a concept for a type of supernatural being of Roman religion. The concept has been extended metaphorically from a supernatural agent inhabiting a place to the 'spirit of a place' as an abstract atmosphere that can be conceived in many ways and becomes particularly interesting as a tool for exploring the past. A challenge is that the phenomenon is difficult to pin down and can be conceived in different ways. Nevertheless,

studies of it involve a wide range of specialists, and interdisciplinary discussion is much needed.

A main aim of the symposium is to promote a better understanding of *genius loci* through fruitful communication across disciplines that share common interests and concerns for cultures and their contacts and networks in the Baltic Sea region. The event has organized theoretical and methodological discussions based on empirical data from the Baltic Sea Region and cultures inhabiting it. Questions brought into focus include the emergence of construction of a *genius loci*, the development and transformations of the history of particular sites or types of site, and their variation and stratification. Participants have been invited to consider *genii loci* in relation to cultural memory and also supernatural agency, including perspectives on local collective experience and individual engagement with the site or sites in question, address in both focused case studies and broad comparative discussions.

The venue of the symposium will be University of Klaipėda, Institute of Baltic Region History and Archaeology. Further information can be found on the Network website: www.austmarr.org. Welcome to Klaipėda!

Conference Report – Folklore and Old Norse Mythology
27th–28th of November 2017, Helsinki, Finland

Jesse Barber, University of Helsinki

A true meeting of the minds surrounding the current and forthcoming research in the fields of Nordic Folkloristics, Religious Studies, Literature, Philology and many more occurred in Helsinki, Finland, from the 27th to the 28th of November 2017 at the Folklore and Old Norse Mythology conference. This event belongs to a series of annual conferences popularly known as the 'Aarhus Mythology Conference' because it was founded at Aarhus University in 2006 (anticipated by a similar event there in 2005). Across the years, the conference has been held in Aarhus (2006–2008), Aberdeen (2009), Reykjavík (2010), Zürich (2011), Bonn (2012), Harvard (2013), Aarhus (2014), Stockholm (2015) and Berkeley (2016) before its 12th incarnation in Helsinki. The speakers at the 2017 event ranged from the foremost scholars in mythology research to bright, up-and-coming PhD students, all of whom came from various countries and disciplinary backgrounds. There was a broad spectrum of subject material from different times and geographic locations, but the discussion centered around non-Christian Iron Age and medieval Scandinavian Religion and later folklore influenced by it. The conference was organized by Folklore Studies of the Department of Philosophy, History, Culture and Art Studies, University of Helsinki, the Academy of Finland Project "Mythology, Verbal Art and Authority in Social Impact", the Finnish Literature Society (SKS), the Society for Medieval Studies in Finland Glossa ry and the Department of Finnish, Finno-Ugric and Nordic Languages and Literatures, University of Helsinki, with support from the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies and the Donner Institute.

The event began with a session organized around riddles of genres of discourse and modes of expression. Professor emeritus John Lindow (University of California, Berkeley) gave a bold opening to the event by observing that we are in the midst of a paradigm shift concerning how folklore is viewed and understood in Old Norse studies. In his presentation "Old Norse Mythology and Legend Tradition", Lindow examined the parallels between the myth of Óðinn stealing the mead of poetry and legend-type ML 6045 drinking cup stolen from the fairies, which is attested from the 12th century in England and from all over Europe in later centuries. The core of his arguement was that identifying parallel structures in and of themselves is not helpful, because differences in traditions in their entirety affect how one must understand the narratives. PhD Laila Kitzler Åhfeldt (Swedish National Heritage Board) turned attention to the medium of communication, speaking about "Gotland Picture Stones and

Narration". She discussed the use of stencils to make the images on the Viking-Age Gotlandic picture stones. She argued these reusable images have parallels with formulaic language, and that this perspective may lend some understanding to the peculiar features of the picture stones. Professor emerita Else Mundal (University of Bergen) then returned to the broader problem of genre and categories, addressing the overlapping borders between "Old Norse Mythology, Heroic Legends, Religion and Folklore". She argued that the presence of overlap between these genres suggests they can shed light on one another. Mundal applied this idea to measure the extent to which later folklore can inform one's conception of Old Norse Mythology, or whether it can at all. This first session brought key issues into focus that continued to be addressed from different perspectives and through different materials during the rest of the event.

The second session wrestled with identities within and linked to mythology, and how these are engaged and constructed. Professor Jens Peter Schjødt (Aarhus University) proposed the idea of "Pre-Christian Religion of the North as Folklore: The Example of Freyr", suggesting that 'religion' should be studied as 'folklore' to a degree, and that this idea should inform the way we reconstruct the vernacular religion of the North. He applied this concept to the god Freyr, analyzing the geographic diversity of the cult and to answer the question 'why' some gods were preferred in certain areas and not elsewhere. PhD Joonas Ahola (University of Helsinki) carried discussion from a single god to how gods' identities and stories about them can be engaged and manipulated in "Myth and Character-Building in the Icelandic Family Sagas". Ahola discussed the ways this transference of the storyworld from one narrative genre to another has taken place in medieval Iceland and illustrated the blending between saga and stories of mythology. The presentation emphasized the character-building of Icelandic outlaws in the family sagas through references to Scandinavian mythology, assessing how and to what extent the merging of storyworlds may have affected the audiences' reception of the saga narrative as well as to what extent this

should be accounted for in modern interpretations of saga texts. Senior Lecturer Judy Quinn (University of Cambridge) then carried discussion to explore the discourses behind specific mythological narratives and their construction of gods' identities in "Fifth-Column Mother: Týr's Negotiation of Kinship (and *jǫtunheimar*) According to *Hymiskviða*". Quinn explored the oral traditions behind the mythological configurations in the eddic poem *Hymiskviða*, especially Týr's profitable exploitation of his parents – i.e. the *jǫtunn* Hymir and his sympathetic (apparently non-*jǫtunn*) mother. Quinn argued that aspects of the plot suggest an orally-transmitted tradition at odds with the main patterns of Old Norse mythology as identified through the lens of structuralism. She paired this idea with the unusual challenge in the poem to anyone better able to speak of the gods (*goðmálugr*), which indicates a consciousness of competing narratives and lends understanding to the dynamism of oral traditions behind the poems of the Codex Regius. Together, these three papers brought into clearer focus the dynamics of traditions operating in and as discourse.

From talk of gods, the conference advanced to other types of supernatural beings. Troll-women were brought into focus by Professor Rudolf Simek (University of Bonn) in a paper titled "Basic Instincts?", where he considered Icelanders' fascination with 'large women', reviewing the various appearances of troll-women in Old Norse literature and their various functions including seeresses, helpers, foster-mothers, caring lovers and dangerous antagonists. His survey pondered the question why these women often betray their kin to side with the hero, even to the point of procreating with him. Simek explored these human interactions with troll-women to identify social functions underlying the stories. PhD Tommy Kuusela (Institute for Language and Folklore in Uppsala) followed Simek's exciting talk with "A Brief History of Giants" – an overview of the study of *jǫtnar* from the 17th century to the present day. His overview noted the change from the common view of *jǫtnar* as old gods, forces of nature and agents of chaos in older scholarship to the more positive view held in the 1990s, emphasizing the dependence of the gods on the *jǫtnar* for their (potential)

resources and cosmological knowledge. After so much talk of 'large women' and 'giants', it seemed only natural that Henning Kure (Mythologist, Copenhagen) brought attention to size in "Size Matters – Dwarfs in Old Norse Myths and Folklore". Kure highlighted the diversity of uses of the term 'dwarf' in Old Norse myths, Icelandic sagas and Germanic folklore. The term can refer to a type of supernatural being, upright timber studs in house constructions, fibula clasps and (in compounds) illness as well as to echoes. His presentation attempted to elucidate the role of the mythical dwarf and why these objects share their name. These papers highlighted the pervasiveness of elements of mythology in culture while also underscoring the degree to which both scholarship and popular culture construct the ways we think about these supernatural beings even today.

The fourth session brought the day full circle by returning to genres of more recent folklore. Professor emeritus John McKinnell (University of Durham) explored "Traces of Pre-Christian Religion in British Ballads and Popular Poetry", looking at evidence of mythological patterns, religious beliefs, or ritual found in some of the late medieval and early modern British Ballads. These traces clashed with the orthodoxy of Catholic and Protestant Christianity, providing a methodological basis for recognizing motifs with a potential *longue durée* through their resemblance to other sources. Although such evidence might tell us nothing new about the religion of pre-conversion times, they can provide evidence of the survival of elements of earlier Scandinavian traditions within popular culture over many centuries. Professor Catharina Raudvere (University of Copenhagen) continued discussion on ballads and their potential relevance while leaving aside questions of diachronic continuities of religion in "Transforming, Transgressing, and Terrorizing: Shape-Shifters in Swedish Medieval Ballads". The Swedish supernatural ballad tradition is too often neglected in the study of religion. These songs are filled with supernatural elements like elves, nixies, shape-shifters, the animated dead and various kinds of spirits. Appearances of supernatural agents in ballads are characterized by moral messages, testing the social borders and the dangers of transgressing them. Raudvere analyzed the ballad 'The Werewolf', but rather than arguing for an unbroken genealogy over centuries, she probed the ballad for conceptualizations of honor, destiny and good versus evil as a viable means to approach a world-view and ethical stances that existed in relation (not parallel) to Catholicism and Lutheranism with links to Old Norse literature. Lecturer Andreas Nordberg (University of Stockholm) then advanced discussion more fully onto a theoretical and methodological track in "The Configurations of Old Norse Religion and a possible point of contact with late Scandinavian folk traditions". Nordberg proposed a model of vernacular Scandinavian Religions' practitioners alternating between contextually dependent configurations of beliefs, suggesting four general configurations:

1. Farm and farmer
2. Hunter and fisherman
3. Warbands and warrior
4. Myth (partially coinciding with the configurations of the farmer and warrior, but not at all with those of the hunter or fisherman)

With this idea of configurations in mind, Nordberg suggested that, if a configuration is adaptable to new circumstances, it may remain in use, though potentially in a new way; if it is not adaptable, it may transform into some other cultural phenomenon or slowly cease to exist. Nordberg used this model as a platform for considering the question of connections (of some sort) between Old Norse religion and more recent Scandinavian folklore, resonating well with the preceding discussions of ballads by McKinnell and Raudvere.

The first day of the conference did not end with the last session. Presenters and guests continued their conversations over wine at a cheerful evening reception hosted by the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies and the Academy of Finland project "Mythology, Verbal Art and Authority in Social Impact" of Folklore Studies, University of Helsinki. This change in venue enlivened discussion and continued well into the evening.

Professor Terry Gunnell (University of Iceland) kicked off the second day with a look at "George Marwick's Account of 'The

Muckle Tree or Igasill': Folklore or Literature?". The story about 'The Muckle Tree' bears striking parallels to characters as well as motifs from Old Norse mythology, including figures like 'Mrs. Norn', 'Oddie' (cf. Óðinn), his horse 'Sliper', the 'keeries' (cf. *valkyrjur*) and 'Ballie' (cf. Baldr), who went to a hot place called 'Huli' (cf. Hel) or 'Sartur' (cf. Surtr) and needed to be rescued and resurrected. Gunnell considered the piece and its background, wrestling with the riddle of whether it could have roots in an oral tradition passed on over time or had evolved in some way from contacts with written sources. If George Marwick's account reflects an independent continuity from oral traditions of the northern islands, Gunnell suggested it would lend legitimacy to the existence of several versions of the Baldr myth in the North Atlantic, a potential diversity which finds support from the different versions of the story in Saxo Grammaticus' *Gesta Danorum* and also in Irish mythology. Comparative approaches examining narrative folklore was then taken up by Docent Matthias Egeler (Ludwig-Maximillians University, Münich, and Institute for Advanced Study, Berlin; DAAD P.R.I.M.E. Fellow), who compared "Medieval Irish Folklore and the Construction of Place in *Eyrbyggja saga*". Egeler's emphasis was on the role of Þórólfr Twist-Foot and his subsequent forms as a Viking-turned-farmer, a haunting revenant and a destructive bull, correlating them to medieval Irish place-lore (*dindshenchas*). Þórólfr's story culminates in an act of place-naming around the area of Álftafjörður in Iceland, which bears striking parallels with medieval place-lore surrounding Áth Lúain (today's Athlone in Co. Westmeath) in Ireland. Egeler argues these similarities are so strong that they suggest a conscious intercultural transfer of place-lore from medieval Ireland to Settlement Period Iceland, which most likely took place through oral discourse rather than literary borrowing. Lecturer Eldar Heide (Western Norway University of Applied Sciences) brought this day's first, intense session to a close with his presentation about "Magical Fishing in *Historia Norwegie* – Incomprehensible without Late Folklore". Using 19th- and 20th-century Icelandic as well as Northern Norwegian legend traditions, Heide offered an explanation for an otherwise opaque passage from *Historia Norwegie* about Sámi catching fish through supernatural means. According to Heide, the passage describes Sámi magically stealing fish from the Norwegians' storehouses at a distance, using a crooked stick to draw up the fish from a lake, and he suggests this may have been understood as *seiðr*, because it bears strong connections with ideas about *seiðr* from Old Norse sources and later traditions. These papers offered valuably complementary perspectives on different insights that might be gained through comparative uses of narrative materials.

The second session of the day was started off by Professor Gísli Sigurðsson (Árni Magnússon Institute in Reykjavík), who looked at examples of "Mythology of the Prose *Edda* Interacting with the Sky". He proposed the sky can function as a memory aid for oral tradition and applied this theory to mythological material from *Gylfaginning*, which describes the sky itself as Ýmir's head, in which the world tree can be observed in and above the sky, and the sky is the location of many mythological locations and characters. Gísli placed these mythological references within the context of memory techniques and ethnic astronomy from around the world, submitting that this helps one understand why these mythological stories with roots in the Viking past were still told in 13th century Iceland (over 200 years after Iceland's official conversion to Christianity). PhD Kirsi Kanerva (University of Turku) then took a different slant on how narratives may have been engaged in Old Icelandic society in "Brynhildr, the Suicidal Valkyrie: Views of Suicide in Medieval Iceland". She compared three examples: Nanna's (i.e. Baldr's wife's) death in *Snorra Edda*, Brynhildr's suicide in *Vǫlsunga saga*, and Guðrún Ósvífsdóttir's remarkable life in *Laxdæla saga*. Kanerva's paper pondered what these sources may tell us about medieval Icelandic attitudes and views towards suicide. The theme of valkyries was then taken up from the perspective of archaeology by Lecturer Leszek Gardeła (University of Rzeszów) in "Women and Axes in the North: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Viking Archaeology, Old Norse Literature and

Folklore". Gardeła was specifically concerned with the meaning behind unusual female graves containing axes, exotic items and ritual items like staffs. These graves date from the 9th to the 10th century and are found in Norway, Denmark and Sweden. His study of these graves employed an interdisciplinary and theoretical approach to archaeological sources that could accommodate the fluid meanings (both mundane and ritual) of these axes with connections to women in the North. More broadly, Gardeła used this methodology to test the extent of how possible or justified it is to use archaeology, literature and folklore to better understand the Viking mind. The three papers in this session offered fascinating perspectives on how people may have engaged with mythology and mythic images and models of behavior in contemporary society.

The third session was organized around magic of different types. Professor Stephen Mitchell (Harvard University) explored "Myths, Historiolas, and Magic", which entailed the possible connection between an early 11th century rune-inscribed spindle whorl found in Lincolnshire, England, and the famous skull fragment inscription from Ribe, Denmark. He placed this comparison against the background of the international *historiola* charm phenomenon, relevant Nordic charms (both vernacular and Christian) like the Kvinneby copper amulet, the Narsaq rune staff and the Ribe healing stick, as well as extant mythological texts, like the eddic poem *Skírnismál*, where magic plays a critical role. PhD student Karolina Kouvola (University of Helsinki) was "In Search of the *tietäjä* with a Little Help from Old Norse Material". She addressed the question of how and what kind of Old Norse material was used to construct the idea of the *tietäjä*, a ritual specialist who uses incantations as primary means of manipulating the unseen world, within Finnish scholarship from the late 20th century to the present. Kouvola's paper examined the use of Old Norse material in constructing the *tietäjä* theory, exploring how Finnish scholars such as Anna-Leena Siikala and others developed and shaped understandings of the *tietäjä* through their comparative approaches. PhD Kendra Willson (University of Turku) then took up the ever-debated topic of Old Norse magic known

as *seiðr* in "Approaching *seiðr* from Later Traditions – Possibilities and Pitfalls". Willson gave an overview of the history of scholarship about *seiðr* and the controversy of directly connecting it to shamanism. She argued that the problems surrounding *seiðr* and shamanism are largely definitional, making the question of the extent of their relationship unanswerable, and she rightfully concluded that "*seiðr* is cool" and remains a crucial part of vernacular Scandinavian Religion. The papers of this session foregrounded the importance of taking issues of magical practices into consideration when discussing mythology and its operation in society.

The final session brought ritual specialists into focus from diverse perspectives. Lecturer Maths Bertell (Mid-Sweden University) discussed "Exclusivity in Old Norse Ritual and the Christianization of Ritual Space (with a Hint of Folklore)". He claimed that, in the 6th century, the rise of the Óðinn cult corresponded with a change to a more exclusive and universal religion, ultimately drifting closer toward Christian concepts. He argued that Old Norse religion's ritual side was one of the aspects that changed in the pre-Viking period, resulting in the concept of Valhǫll, and that, although this move was born out of the adaptation of Old Norse religion to fit new circumstances when leaving mainland Scandinavia, it inadvertently produced and led vernacular mythological structures to converge with those to be introduced with Christianity. From this controversial topic, PhD student Simon Nygaard (Aarhus University) opened discussion on "Skalds as Ritual Specialists? Looking for Religious Ritual Frameworks in the Oral Performance of *Haraldskvæði*, *Eiríksmál* and *Hákonarmál*". Nygaard argued that these three poems stand out from skaldic poetry due to their metres, *málaháttr* and *ljóðaháttr*, which are generally thought of as eddic rather than skaldic, observing that *ljóðaháttr* especially often signifies magical or religious material. This choice of metre implies a bridging between mythology or religion and courtly politics. In his paper, Nygaard explored whether these poems might reflect oral, non-Christian religious rituals and what functions the performance of such a ritual would have, for both performer and audience. Docent Frog

(University of Helsinki) concluded the conference by exploring assertions that reduce to claims like "'My God Can Beat up Your God' – Asserting Specialists' Power and Authority through Mythic Discourse" from the Old Norse corpus. He examined a few categories of cases: encounters between Christian and non-Christian ritual specialists, Þórr and Christ as competing agents linked to different ritual specialists, and encounters of Óðinn with *vǫlva*s in relation to the authority of different types of non-Christian ritual specialists in Finno-Karelian kalevalaic mythology. Frog submitted that approaching these cases as forms of mythic discourse (i.e. the use, communication and manipulation of mythology) produces a more nuanced view of the dynamics of folklore behind individual sources. These papers connected with threads that wove through the conference concerning and continuously returning to mythology from the ideal and abstract worlds and stories, with which we are so accustomed, to the discourses in which they existed in society, and how people related to and interacted with them. After a short, official closing discussion, we all

moved on to the true closing discussion of this grand event at a warm reception hosted by Folklore Studies of the University of Helsinki.

Overall, the conference was a great success, highlighting the relationship between folklore and Old Norse mythology. A diversity of participants and attendees made for riveting discussions colored by candid new ideas. Helsinki, as a Mecca of Folklore Studies, was an impeccable setting for the theme, and the conference flowed smoothly under Frog's hostmanship. Of course, two exciting days did not bring the exciting conversations to an end. On the one hand, the 12th annual Aarhus Mythology Conference concluded with the decision that the 13th would be organized by Maths Bertell and Tommy Kuusela in Uppsala, held in the fall of 2018, and the 14th conference is being organized for 2019 in Bergen by Eldar Heide. On the other, Joonas Ahola and Frog are developing a publication on the platform of the conference. The lively discussions we experienced in Helsinki are being carried, with all of their excitement and enthusiasm, into the future.

Conference Report – Network of Early Career Researchers in Old Norse: Trends and Challenges in Early Career Scholarship Workshop
21st–22nd October 2017, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

Luke John Murphy, University of Leicester

The rapidly-changing modern university poses particular opportunities and challenges for junior scholars, academics who have not yet secured permanent employment at a cultural or research institution. Early career researchers (here understood to refer to PhD students, post-doctoral researchers, external lecturers and a range of other insecure junior appointments) have traditionally been able to lean on their more senior colleagues' advice and knowledge of university systems, but the increasing pace of reform and counter-reform sweeping across most academic institutions makes even well-connected, experienced academics unsure about the future. In response, ECRs working with the (broadly-understood) Viking and Medieval Nordic region have increasingly taken to social media to communicate with one another, sharing experience, resources and support.

While much of this assistance remains informal and deeply personal, the Network of Early Career Researchers in Old Norse (or "NECRON"; also known as the Netværk for yngre forskere i nordisk vikingetid og middelalder, or "NYFVM") is an attempt to offer a more structured forum for ECRs to collaborate with and support one another in the face of the issues they face.

NECRON's first event, a two-day workshop entitled "Trends and Challenges in Early Career Scholarship" was held at the University of Copenhagen in late October 2017, organised by a collective of ECRs from across the Nordic region: Katarzyna Anna Kapitan (University of Copenhagen, Denmark), Luke John Murphy (University of Leicester, U.K.), Helen Leslie-Jacobsen (University of Bergen, Norway) and Simon Nygaard (Aarhus University, Denmark). Generously sponsored by Clara

Lachmanns Stifelse and the Universities of Copenhagen, Aarhus and Bergen, the workshop was billed as an opportunity for participants to update one another on their research – primarily via a long poster session – and to discuss the career challenges ECRs face in the modern university.

The workshop's first day began with two keynotes on "Current Academic Trends" in Old Norse scholarship, both with a strong focus on how ECRs could engage with these ongoing debates. Tarrin Wills (University of Copenhagen) presented his thoughts on the use of Digital Humanities as a secondary discipline for medievalists, prompting discussion of methodologies – both digital and traditional – and the difficulties of ECRs finding stable platforms to host their work when moving between institutions. This was followed by Emily Lethbridge (Stofnun Árna Magnússonar Reykjavík), who discussed Cultural Memory in light of her own work with landscape, and her own experience of building a long-term project alongside the time-consuming labour of funding applications and short-term contracts.

These themes were built upon by a round-table discussion of "Academic Trends in Medieval Scandinavian Scholarship" chaired by Kapitan and featuring Michael MacPherson (University of Iceland), Nygaard, Beeke Steegmann (University of Copenhagen) and Yoav Tirosh (University of Iceland). The good-spirited debate ranged from the need for digital research to have strong research questions to the necessity of explicit methodological discussion, focusing in particular on the difficulties of defining just what is – and what is not – a contribution to a particular scholarly movement.

The remainder of the day was taken up by a combined poster and "slam" session. While posters are not common at humanities conferences, the organisers of the workshop asked each participant to present their current research as a poster in the hope that this would allow a good deal of informal exchange between scholars who would ordinarily have been unlikely to meet. With nearly thirty posters presented by scholars from across the Nordic region, Germany, Poland, Britain and the US, discussions crossed disciplinary boundaries from the History of Religion and Manuscript Studies to Archaeology and Linguistics. This included four short slam presentations by participants whose research was not well-suited to the poster format, where each speaker presented themselves and their ongoing project in just three minutes.

The second day sought to address the titular "Challenges" of an ECR career, opening with two keynote papers on publishing in modern academia: Leszek Gardeła (University of Rzeszow) offered a well-reasoned, systematic overview of the pros and cons of publishing in different formats and championed publishing for popular audiences; while N. Kıvılcım Yavuz (University of Copenhagen) introduced Kısment Press, a not-for-profit, Open-Access alternative to traditional publishing houses.

This dialogue on publishing was followed by consideration of another key skill for ECR scholars, with a round table on teaching, chaired by Murphy and featuring Leslie-Jacobsen, Friederike Richter (Humboldt-Universität of Berlin) and Seán Vrieland (University of Copenhagen). The conversation quickly covered good practices and key skills for the classroom and courses where these could be acquired, but also touched on the difficulties of teaching across linguistic, cultural and disciplinary boundaries, as well as noting frustration at the lack of support offered by some institutions, even in serious cases of bullying among students.

The final afternoon was opened by a forthright, autobiographical keynote by Karen Bek-Pedersen (Aarhus), detailing her career to date, and explaining the difficult choices she faced between a traditional academic career and a more balanced, fulfilling lifestyle that still allows her to contribute to academic discourse. Discussion following this challenging presentation understandably picked up on the difficulties of securing permanent employment, prejudice against "Independent Scholars" and issues in transferring from one national academic system another. These topics were revisited during the following round table on career planning for ECRs – chaired by Leslie-Jacobsen and featuring contributions by Dale Kedwards (University of Southern Denmark), Lara Hogg (University of Sheffield) and Nygaard – which also covered the challenges of internationalisation and the "two-body

problem" (where an academic must leave their partner and/or family and live in a different place to find work), and which served as a capstone to the workshop.

The event closed with a short discussion of the potential future of the NECRON network. It was agreed that a forum for ECR discussion and networking at the 2018 Saga Conference in Reykjavík would be an ideal next step, and that the organisers of the 2017 workshop would work towards publishing a small e-book of the posters presented in Copenhagen. While the exact future of the network remains unclear, anyone interested in future events or collaboration is encouraged to consult the organisation's website: necronnetwork.wordpress.com/.

In summary: although it was acknowledged that the road ahead for ECRs will likely result in a large majority of us reluctantly leaving traditional academia to pursue forms of employment that offer greater stability, increased job security and more normal family lives, there was also a mood of defiance, a sense that ECRs would have to challenge the prevalent academic culture of short-term, poorly-paid contracts, unreasonable requirements for time abroad and the stigmatisation of those who take periods of leave (be that for parental, personal, or health-related reasons). In the words of one contributor, Védís Ragnheiðurdóttir (University of Iceland): "These are things we need to fight against, because nobody is going to do it for us."

Conference Announcement – Methodology in Mythology: Where Does the Study of Old Norse Religion Stand, and Where Can We Go from Here? – The 2019 Aarhus Old Norse Mythology Conference

31st October – 1st November 2019, Bergen, Norway

Eldar Heide, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences

Welcome to the 2019 Aarhus Old Norse Mythology Conference in Bergen! The topic this year is: Methodology in Mythology: Where Does the Study of Old Norse Religion Stand and Where Can We Go from Here? The idea is to present a selection of important source types and approaches and discuss their potentials, pros and cons, based upon what the research history has shown. What can we gain by approaching Nordic pre-Christian myth and ritual from this angle? And what are the disadvantages or risks? Musical entertainment by Einar Selvik, known from Wardruna. For the programme and registration, see https://blogg.hvl.no/on-myth-conference-2019/.

Contacts and Networks in the Baltic Sea Region: *Austmarr* as a Northern *Mare nostrum*, 500–1500 AD

Maths Bertell, Mid-Sweden University, Frog, University of Helsinki,
and Kendra Willson, Polish Institute of Advanced Studies / University of Turku

This collection has been developed on the basis of papers presented at earlier meetings of the Austmarr Network, which illustrate and expound upon the dynamics of contacts and cultural interaction in this part of the world.

The collection is organized in four sections and a total of twelve chapters. These are opened by a general introduction to cultures and contacts of the Circum-Baltic arena, which includes speakers of Baltic, Finnic, Germanic, Sámi and Slavic languages. The introduction provides a broad frame of reference for considering the sections and individual chapters both separately and in dialogue with one another.

The first section, Mental Maps, consists of three papers. Aleksandr Podossinov introduces the section with a chapter on "The Northern Part of the Ocean in the Eyes of Ancient Geographers". Tatjana Jackson follows this with her contribution on "*Austmarr* on the Mental Map of Medieval Scandinavians", exploring why directions were conceived in ways that might seem counter-intuitive to scholars today. Sirpa Aalto then discusses "The Connection between Geographical Space and Collective Memory in *Jómsvíkinga saga*". The second section, Mobility, also consists of three papers, with emphasis on movements by embodied people. The section starts off with Laila Kitzler Åhfeldt's study on questions of "Rune Carvers Traversing *Austmarr*?". The topic of cross-cultural marriages are then discussed by Leszek Słupecki in "Polish Noble Families and Noblemen of Scandinavian Origin in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries: The Case of the Awdańcy Family: By which Route Did They Come to Poland and Why?".
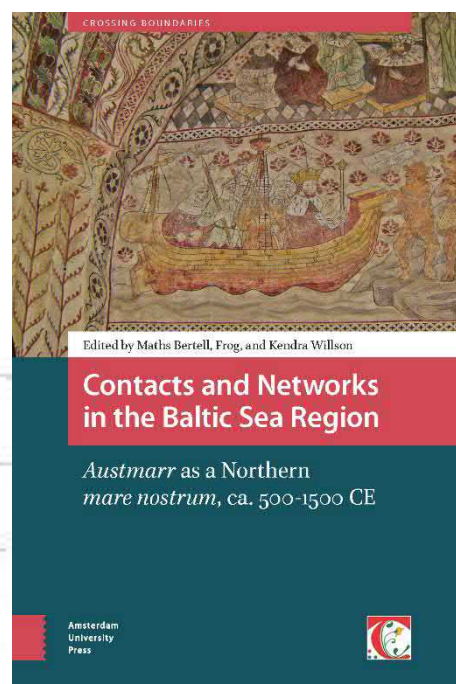
Jukka Korpela then discusses the commodification of people in "A Medieval Trade in Female Slaves from the North along the Volga". The fourth section, Language, includes two papers. Kendra Willson draws attention to the general lack of Finnic or Sámi language use or even names in connection with runic writing in "Ahti on the Nydam Strap-Ring: On the Possibility of Finnic Elements in Runic Inscription". The transition to the Middle Ages brought Low German into a prominent position in trade networks, foregrounded by Mikko Bentlin in "Low German and Finnish Revisited". The final section of the book, Myth and Religion Formation, is organized in four papers. Lauri Harvilahti begins discussion with his chapter on "Mythic Logic and Meta-Discursive Practices in the Scandinavian and Baltic Regions", illustrated with a variety of

examples. Karolina Kouvola follows this with a case study of a mythological poem in "The Artificial Bride on Both Sides of the Gulf of Finland": The Golden Maiden in Finno-Karelian and Estonian Folk Poetry". Maths Bertell brings attention to the material side of religion in "Local Sámi Bear Ceremonialism in a Circum-Baltic Perspective", which gives particular attention to Sámi drums and their regional variation. The section is brought to a close with Frog's "Mythologies in Trans-formation: Symbolic Transfer, Hybridisation, and Creolisation in the Circum-Baltic Arena (Illustrated through the Changing roles of *Tīwaz*, *Ilma*, and *Óðinn*, the Fishing Adventure of the Thunder God, and a Finno-Karelian Creolisation of North Germanic Religion)", the title of which is almost an abstract. Discussions of the volume are as rich as they are varied. Like the Austmarr Network itself, it is hoped that this collection will stimulate and advance discussion on contacts and networks, which are of such great importance for understanding cultures and their histories in this part of the world.

For more information, please visit the publisher's website at: https://www.aup.nl/en/book/9789462982635/contacts-and-networks-in-the-baltic-sea-region.

Atlantic Outlooks on Being at Home: Gaelic Place-Lore and the Construction of a Sense of Place in Medieval Iceland

Matthias Egeler, Ludwig-Maximilians-University, Munich

Much of both Icelandic and medieval Irish literature is, in one way or another, storytelling about places, reflecting a deep engagement with the concept of 'place' and the creation of a 'sense of place'. This book takes as its starting point the shared interest that Icelandic and Irish storytelling have in 'place' and asks whether the medieval Icelandic sense of place, as reflected in Icelandic narrative culture, has been influenced by the close contacts that existed during the Viking Age between Iceland and the Gaelic-speaking world of Ireland and Scotland. In attempting to answer this question, the book contributes to the long-standing debate about Gaelic influences in Icelandic culture, the much more recent discourse on the spatiality of medieval Icelandic literature and storytelling, and the cultural history of the Icelandic Settlement Period. Obliquely, the findings of the book may even shed light on the origins of Icelandic saga literature.

The books offers critical insights on a number of general points of spatial theory, as both the Gaelic and the Old Norse-Icelandic material can offer valuable contributions to the theoretical-systematic study of 'space', 'place' and 'home'. The focus of the monograph, however, lies on an in-depth study of material drawn primarily from toponymy and two especially place-focused medieval Icelandic texts: *Landnámabók*, the 'Book of Settlements', and *Eyrbyggja saga*, the 'Saga of the Inhabitants of Eyr'.
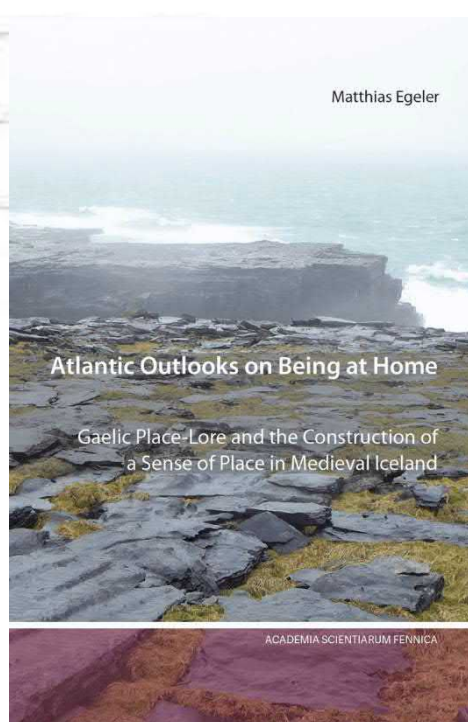
The book's first chapter ("Place, Naming Place, and Playing with Place") starts out with presenting the reader with an introduction to fundamental aspects of current theorising on the concepts of 'space', 'place' and 'home'.
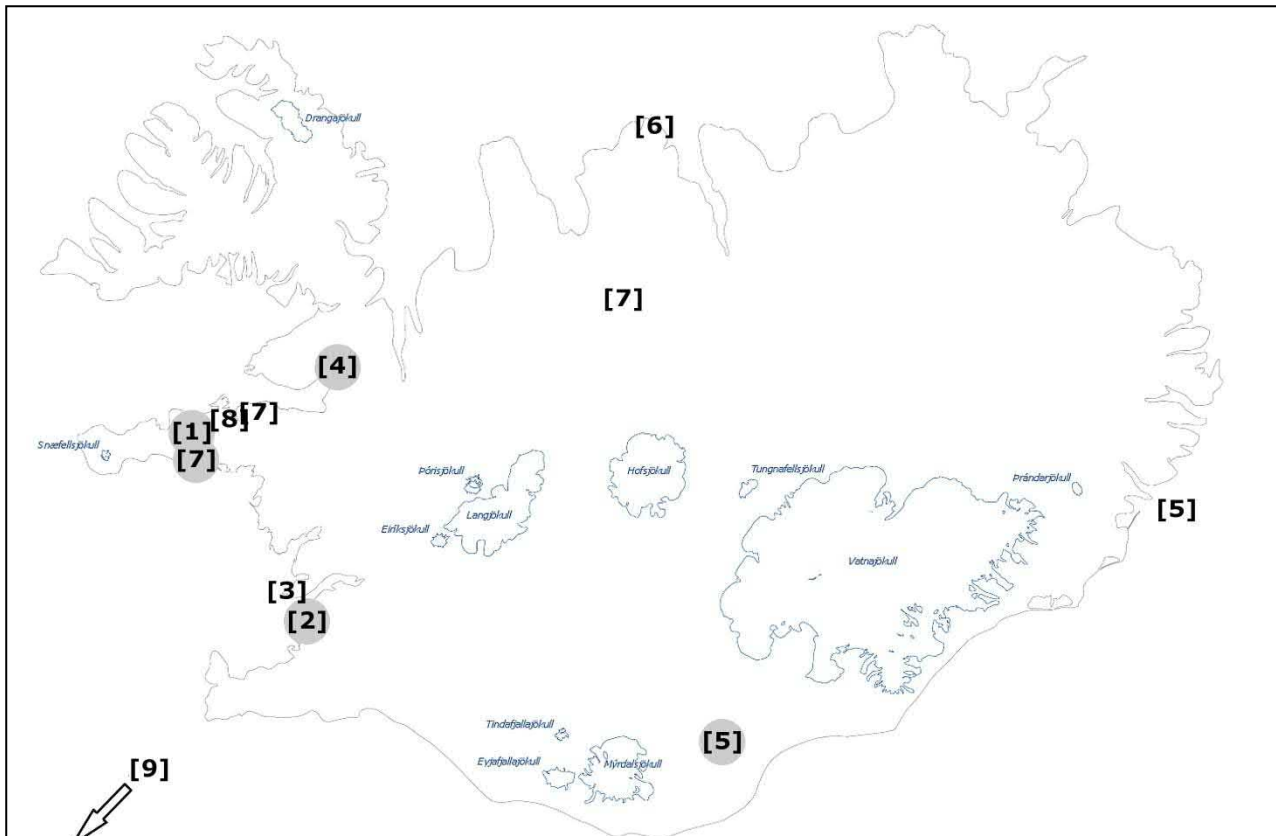
Map 1. The overall location of the main cases of an Icelandic reception of Gaelic place-stories and other Gaelic strategies for semanticising the landscape: [1] the water-horse story in Landnámabók *H71/S83; [2] the account of Ørlygr Hrappsson's settlement in* Landnámabók *H15; [3] the biographies of 'Saint' Ásólfr in* Landnámabók *S24 and H21; [4] the account of Auðr the Deep-Minded and the Krosshólar Hills in* Landnámabók *S97; [5] the accounts of papar in* Landnámabók *(S1/H1, S320/H280, S323=H283) and* Íslendingabók *(ch. 1); [6] the early modern folklore of the Ódáinsakur in the Hvanndalur Valley and its possible Viking Age prehistory; [7] the accounts of houses of excessive hospitality in* Landnámabók *(S72/H60; S86/H74; S200=H168) and* Eyrbyggja saga *(ch. 8); [8] the story of Þórólfr Twist-Foot and his transformation into a splendid but violent bull in* Eyrbyggja saga *(especially chs 33–34, 63); [9] and the report of Hvítramannaland in* Landnámabók *(S122/H94). Tales explicitly connected to the Hebrides are marked in grey. Additional implicit connections to the Hebrides can be assumed at least for all papar-lore. Map based on data from the National Land Survey of Iceland (http://www.lmi.is/en/okeypis-kort/), used by permission (www.lmi.is/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/License-for-use-of-free-NLSI-data-General-Terms.pdf, accessed 30 March 2017).*

After this theoretical prelude, the discussion takes a more empirical turn, making a survey of Icelandic place names that seem to have been directly transferred from Britain (esp. Scotland and the Scottish islands) and undertaking a comparison of three medieval Irish and three medieval Icelandic place-stories that highlights remarkable structural parallels in how stories are told about places in both the medieval Gaelic-speaking world and in early Iceland.

The second and main chapter of the book ("Narrating Place: a Survey of Place-Stories on the Move") then undertakes an in-depth study of nine specific examples of Icelandic-Gaelic place-lore adaptations:

1. The water-horse story in *Landnámabók* H71/S83

2. The account of Ørlygr Hrappsson's settlement in *Landnámabók* H15

3. The biographies of 'Saint' Ásólfr in *Landnámabók* S24 and H21

4. The account of Auðr the Deep-Minded and the Krosshólar Hills in *Landnámabók* S97

5. The accounts of *papar* in *Landnámabók* (S1/H1, S320/H280, S323=H283) and *Íslendingabók* (ch. 1), which can be shown to be purely pseudo-historical constructs playing on Gaelic approaches to the semantisation of space rather than relating any factual presence of Gaelic monks in pre-Settlement Iceland

6. The early modern folklore of the Ódáinsakur in the Hvanndalur Valley and its possible Viking-Age prehistory

7. The accounts of houses of excessive hospitality in *Landnámabók* (S72/H60;

S86/H74; S200=H168) and *Eyrbyggja saga* (ch. 8)

8. The story of Þórólfr Twist-Foot and his transformation into a splendid but violent bull in *Eyrbyggja saga* (especially chs 33–34, 63)
9. The report of Hvítramannaland in *Landnámabók* (S122/H94)

All these narratives seem to be based on an adaptation of prominent and common Gaelic storytelling motifs as they are found in medieval Irish literature, especially Irish hagiography and the heroic storytelling of the Ulster Cycle of Tales. With some important *caveats*, these nine examples aim to be an exhaustive survey of major Icelandic adaptations of Gaelic place-lore. The chapter also pays particular attention to the use of toponyms in such narratives and to the specific historical situation of the Icelandic settlement. In particular, this includes the strong emphasis on the narrative construction of 'home' that results from this historical situation and which in many ways is mirrored in the narratives under scrutiny: it seems that some early settlers made themselves at home in Iceland by inscribing Gaelic stories into their newly-taken land.

Chapter 3 ("Epilogue: Hoofprints and Sagas"), the book's final chapter, focusses on patterns and cross-connections rather than on individual tales. It takes the material introduced in chapter 2 and analyses it laterally, highlighting themes that appear to recur and play dominant roles across this dataset. Among the most notable of these recurrent themes is a strong impression that the way how Gaelic material is adapted in high medieval Icelandic place-storytelling seems to imply an element of a genuine Settlement Period tradition in 13th-century Icelandic literature: this literature seems to preserve much more early material than the author would have thought possible before the conclusion of the project presented by this book. Another recurrent theme is the importance of the Hebrides for the transmission of Gaelic place-lore to Iceland: more than half of the (it seems) clear cases of an Icelandic adaptation of Gaelic place-lore are explicitly connected with early Icelandic settlers that reached Iceland not directly from Scandinavia, but first emigrated to the Hebrides before finally moving on to Iceland. The Hebrides, it appears, acted as a central corridor for the transmission of Gaelic cultural elements to Iceland: for some early Icelandic settlers, the reference point for what 'home' should be like was not Scandinavia, but was the Gaelic landscape of the Scottish isles, and so after their arrival in Iceland they went on to turn the Icelandic landscape conceptually into a facsimile of the landscapes of the Gaelic world. This last point, furthermore, already plays into one of the two final important points to note: Gaelic-inspired Icelandic place-lore seems to show a marked emphasis on the Christian religious semantisation of the land as well as a pervasive focus on the creation of 'home'.

Both of the latter points, of course, arise naturally from the overall historical situation of the Settlement Period: during this period, early Icelandic Christianity was first and foremost dependent on Irish and Scottish Christianity, and the settlement on a previously entirely empty island necessitated a concerted effort to establish a bond between the settlers and this new, empty land. Taking the implications of this emphasis on the creation of 'home' one step further, the third chapter – and the book – conclude by considering some recent and classical contributions to the discussion about the origins of Icelandic saga literature. Thus, the book closes with the question of whether the reception of Gaelic place-lore in Iceland, which first and foremost seems to reflect a deep yearning for 'home' by partly Gaelicised settlers that had reached Iceland via Britain and Ireland, might not be just another expression of the same need that later on would bring forth Icelandic saga literature.

Viking Law and Order: Places and Rituals of Assembly in the Medieval North
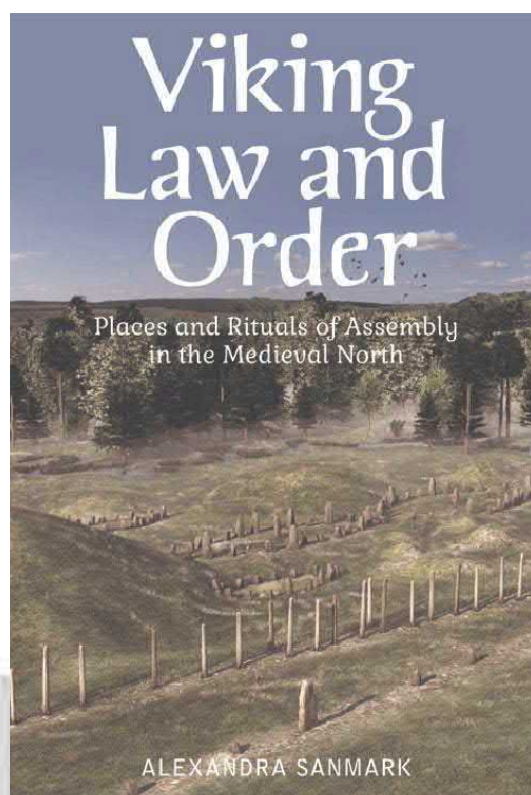
Alexandra Sanmark, Institute for Northern Studies, University of the Highlands and Islands

The new monograph *Viking Law and Order: Places and Rituals of Assembly in the Medieval North* is the first comprehensive study of Viking-Age and Norse assembly (*thing*) sites, covering Scandinavia, Scotland and the North Atlantic region. Until very recently the characteristics of *thing* sites were virtually unknown, apart from a few select sites such as Þingvellir in Iceland and Gamla Uppsala in Sweden. Using archaeological evidence, written sources and place names, this book provides a comprehensive analysis of these assembly sites, showing that they played an integral role in Norse culture and identity.

Chapter 1, entitled "Assembly Research: Past and Present", sets out the aims of the book and examines the three main themes of *landscape*, *time* and *memory* and how they relate to Norse assembly sites. The importance of the recent developments in landscape archaeology as well as earlier *thing* site research for the results of this study is explained. Based on this work, a new interdisciplinary research methodology, drawing on archaeological evidence, written sources and place names, has been developed. Through this approach, the meaning and use of *thing* sites across the Norse world is explored. This book therefore moves beyond assembly site descriptions and analyses and also investigates the activities enacted at the assemblies, and how these were experienced by the people gathered.

Chapter 2 examines the function of assemblies in Viking-Age society. This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the assembly institution in Scandinavia and how this fitted into earlier Germanic assembly systems in Mainland Europe. This is important as the *thing* organisation is at times seen as an isolated phenomenon related to Norse society only. It is shown that many of the traits present in Viking-Age society are found in early medieval sources from Frankia and Saxony. This chapter also investigates which groups in society could actively participate in assembly-meetings, demonstrating that the elite was the most influential. The traditional male-female binary division of 'included' men and 'excluded' women is, moreover, shown to be invalid.

Chapter 3 represents the starting point for the assembly site investigations by examining the layout and design of some of the most important *thing* sites across Scandinavia. It is demonstrated that these major assembly sites had many features and traits in common, albeit in ever-shifting patterns. When a *thing* site was first created, the location was carefully selected, as it needed to have the right topography, and often pre-existing anthropogenic features, such as burials. For the continued creation, or redesign of an existing assembly, a pool of features was available, from which a selection were added and presented in varying combinations. By bringing together archaeology, written sources and place names, it is possible to characterise a range of features associated with assembly sites. This clearly demonstrates the most important result of this study: that a shared idea of what constituted an assembly site existed in the minds of the Norse. The

detailed site investigations also show that the assemblies that are designated as top-level sites in the written sources have the most striking monuments and design. The archaeology of these sites therefore reflects the hierarchy spelt out in the written evidence.

Chapter 4 builds on the evidence of *thing* sites as elite foci in the landscape and examines the elite rituals carried out at these sites. Previous chapters show that the elite strived for the 'right' site architecture and competed with rivals through the design of their *thing* sites. The assembly features were not only symbolic, but also played important roles in the various assembly site rituals. The majority of these rituals seem to have been elite-driven and modifications to the sites can therefore be seen as reflections of societal change, for example in terms of rulership and religion. In this chapter, the identified assembly site features are investigated in terms of their meaning and function in elite rituals carried out at the sites. The differing roles and experiences of the *thing* participants and the attendees add to the multi-layered nature of the assembly gatherings. The assembly rituals can be defined as 'commemo-rative', which entail performances, i.e. evocation and declarations of key components of ritual narratives, but also bodily movements, such as gestures, postures and motion. In addition, dramatic spectacle tends to be employed to strengthen memory creation.

Chapter 5 shifts the focus to the rituals and activities of the wider community at the assembly sites. A wide range of community activities and rituals, which most likely created collective memories and strengthened social cohesion, were enacted. Many of these activities may have been designed by the elite, but equally the idea of assemblies as communal spaces may have been collectively driven. The archaeological signature of meeting-places and assembly sites suggests associations with feasting and eating on a large-scale, and architectural layouts that emphasised the collective over the individual and facilitated group interaction and cohesion. The construction, enlargement and maintenance of monuments and other features required the participation of large numbers of people. By joining in this work the population gained shared ownership of the sites. This was further enhanced by communal activities during the meetings, which also involved games and sports, as well as trade. Assemblies therefore formed arenas of interplay between the top-elite and the wider population; kings were elected and ruled through the assembly, while at the same time they were continuously dependent on the endorsement of the people.

Chapter 6, entitled "Centralisation of Power: Christianity and Urbanisation", builds further on the idea of the constantly shifting and evolving *thing* site, examining in detail the modifications that took place in assembly site location and features from the late tenth and 11th centuries until the end of the Middle Ages in Scandinavia. Alterations in the tenth and 11th centuries are most clearly seen in the rune-stone rich areas of the Mälaren region of Sweden and most of the evidence presented here relating to this time period is therefore from this area. The changes observed at this time can, however, be expected in other geographical areas too, bearing in mind the major societal shifts, such as urbanisation and Christianisation, that seem to have been driving them forward. Further changes in the following centuries, connected with to building of parish churches and cathedrals as well as urbanisation, are also investigated. The most striking pattern to emerge in the Late Middle Ages is the gradual merging of top-level assemblies, trade and episcopal sees in the towns.

In Chapter 7, the focus is moved to the North Atlantic and the regions settled by the Norse people, starting with Iceland, the Faroes and Greenland. By close examination of *thing* sites and their features in these areas, it becomes clear that the overall concept behind these sites was the same as in Scandinavia and variations of the same rituals and activities seem to have taken place. The assembly site features, were, however, different in two important aspects; assembly booths were constructed and there is no coincidence between burials and assemblies. As these areas were substantially unpopulated prior to the Norse arrival, there were no monuments to reuse and no need to link back to past rulers. Instead, above all through the assembly booths, the assembly sites connect to the recent past and current political patterns.

Chapter 8 examines the evidence of Norse administrative structures and *thing* sites in Norse Scotland. This area, unlike Iceland, Greenland and the Faroes, had been populated since the Mesolithic period, and the Norse therefore interacted with existing populations. In this area, the Norse expressed themselves, just as in Scandinavia, through the appropriation of monuments, above all large mounds. The other assembly site features are similar to those found in the other Norse settlements as well as Scandinavia, although some influence from the Picts and Gaels of Scotland is seen. The nature of the evidence of law and assembly varies across Norse Scotland, partly as a result of the varying political situations. The most detailed evidence relates to Orkney and Shetland, where Scandinavian rule lasted the longest, until the 15th century.

In the final chapter, it is again shown that the Norse *thing* organisation was neither new nor unique, but situated within a Germanic tradition of law and assembly, which can be traced back to the first centuries AD; thus predating the earliest Frankish laws. This chapter also demonstrates that outdoor *thing* sites seem to have been the norm in Scandinavia until the late sixteenth or the 17th century. Occasional indoor meetings are known in earlier times, but it was not until the early modern period that specific buildings were designated, and at times created specifically, for these gatherings. Finally, the reasons why some assembly sites remained in use for many hundred years, while others were used only for very short periods of time, are examined, as well as the links between assembly sites and central places, and the legacy of the major *thing* sites on the administrative landscape of today.

For more information, please visit the publisher's site at:
https://edinburghuniversitypress.com/book-viking-law-and-order.html.

PhD Dissertation Projects

Communicative Registers, Enregisterment and Indexicality in Viena Karelian Kalevala-Metric Poetry (working title)

Tuukka Karlsson, University of Helsinki

The dissertation project examines the praxis of *runo*-singing (*runo* being a vernacular term for 'poem'), dialects of mythology and registers of communication in the corpus of Viena Karelian Kalevala-metric poetry (cf. Agha 2005; 2007; Frog 2015; Siikala 2000; 2012; Tarkka 2005; 2013). By using a multidisciplinary methodology to study research materials comprised of various oral genres, such as incantations, epic poetry and lyric, my goal is to explore how various register formations were reflexively evaluated and (re)valorized in selected individual and communal corpora. The discussion also spans questions about enregisterment – i.e. how the register formations became recognized and underwent changes in their socio-historic lifetime (Agha 2007; 2015; see also e.g. Johnstone 2016). In addition to the aspects mentioned above, I am interested in social- and text-level indexicalities in the research data (see Agha 2007; Lehtonen 2015).

Research Material

The research material for my thesis consists of the corpus of Kalevala-metric poetry collected and recorded in Viena Karelia. The corpus consists of more than 4,800 texts from a period spanning more than a century. The material has been published in the anthology *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* ['The Ancient Poems of the Finnish People'] (1908–1948 and 1997) and can be found online at skvr.fi. While this massive corpus offers fruitful possibilities for comparative analyses, it also requires limiting the research data to a few selected corpora. These corpora for analysis can be based, for example, on what has been recorded from individual singers, from within a family or village community, or the central criterion may be genre.

I approach the research data as evidence of mythic discourses. The concept of mythic discourse views mythology in terms of enduring and fundamental symbols that are nevertheless in a continuous process of re-interpretation within changing formations. These symbols are continuously being negotiated, contested and re-interpreted in social intercourse, which forms a discourse that includes various different and competing views. Thus, mythic discourses work as part of social life when treating historical and social events. (Siikala 2016 [2012]: 19–20; see also Frog 2014; 2018.)

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework on which research is proceeding has been developed from research in different disciplines. The key points of departure are currently, on the one hand, folkloristic theories of textualization and, on the other hand, concepts of registers of communication, enregisterment and indexicality from Linguistic Anthropology. Texts of the selected corpora are read as reflexively construed and metapragmatically treated entextualized units, which form part of stereotypes of social indexicality, or registers (see Visakko 2015: 46). The registers are social formations in the sense that they have a social domain, or a socio-historical population that recognizes and uses them. Thus, register formations undergo continuous reflexive reanalysis, which leads to changes in their valorization and use. (Agha 2007: 81.) This approach provides a uniting theoretical framework for the dissertation's articles.

The Research Articles

The dissertation project is article-based. The first article (forthcoming) discusses how reflexive treatment of tradition in *runo*-performances

functions as a strategy of constructing identity and as an act of stance-taking (Du Bois 2007). My discussion aims at a critical treatment of Anna-Leena Siikala's (2000; 2012: 35; 2016 [2012]: 94–97) theory of habitus-based ideal models of *runo*-singers and provides a register-based model for studying the phenomenon. The study found that *runo*-singers were able to reflexively utilize the mythic register, in order to align with social personae of the mythology tradition. This action allowed them to allocate meaning to their performances and to engage in dialogue with tradition and other performances.

The second article aims at close textual analysis of incantation performances. It investi-gates stance-taking as a phenomenon and its manifestations in Kalevala-metric incantations. In special focus are ritual specialists' strategies of expressing footing when addressing mythic agents. The text sets out to discover if a performer can strategically use certain affixes, imperatives and features of text-level indexicality in order to reach his or her desired goals in performance.

The third article discusses culture-specific illocutionary utterances of the incantation register. The aim is to explore register-specific explicit and implicit performatives of Kalevala-metric incantations. By investigating the cultural enregisterment of performative locutions, I intend to provide a view on the construction of an incantation text. Finally, the fourth article of the dissertation intends to treat large-scale enregisterment of *runo*-praxis, and to discuss the historical changes in prestige and features of incantations and epic. For the completion of the thesis, an introductory chapter will provide additional theoretical discussion and bind the articles together.

Goals of the Dissertation

The register-based framework for the dissertation allows closer conceptualization of *runo*-singing praxis and illuminates how *runo*-singers reflexively treated the Kalevala-metric tradition. Correspondingly, the concept of enregisterment is for its part well-suited to the study of the social life of the *runo*-singing phenomenon, while it simultaneously illuminates the changes in the socio-historical life of the praxis. On a micro-level, focus on questions of indexicality makes utterance-level strategies and aspects of stance-taking visible. This further sharpens the discussion on the meanings and social relevance of *runo*-praxis on the level of individual performers.

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MASTER'S THESES

Óðinn: A Queer *týr*? A Study of Óðinn's Function as a Queer Deity in Iron Age Scandinavia

Amy Jefford Franks, Aarhus University

Óðinn's gender has been very contentious within scholarship. While he is the god of war, he has also been argued to be queer or *ergi*—somewhat passively homosexual or cross-dressing. Brit Solli argues that "as a god, Odin thus constitutes a paradox: He is the *manliest* god of warriors, but also the *unmanly* master of seid" (Solli 2008: 194). Ármann Jakobsson also argues that "a god who is queer is not queer" (2011: 13), implying that these two roles are mutually exclusive. In this thesis, I use these statements as points of departure, which explores the ways in which Óðinn can be perceived as queer, using the *Prose Edda* and *Poetic Edda* as primary source material. I argue that it is not paradoxical to his role as a god, or a god of war, to be queer.

I start by analysing what it meant to be a deity in pre-Christian Scandinavia, questioning emic words and categories, alongside discussions of cultic worship and the ideas of omnipotence and omniscience to demonstrate the disparity between pre-Christian deities and supernatural beings and modern Western ideas pertaining to this. I then explore narratives and iconography surrounding Óðinn's queer nature and employ a queer theoretical perspective to do so. By exploring semantic centres, various narratives and religious variation, I demonstrate that Óðinn can be read as queer based on various examples, and that there was also diversity in how he was perceived based on source types. Furthermore, I discuss the idea of the warrior cult and the role of women within this to demonstrate that this was not a strictly masculine space, and that therefore Óðinn's role within this did not constitute a paradox. Finally, I conclude that Óðinn was a queer deity, and that this fits into a broader understanding of diversity of gender in Iron Age Scandinavia.

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CALLS FOR PAPERS

The Formula in Oral Poetry and Prose: New Approaches, Models and Interpretations

1st Symposium of the Project Formulae in Icelandic Saga Literature
5th–7th December 2019, Tartu, Estonia

In 1928 Milman Parry presented his definition of formula in the Homeric epics. It was followed by a series of articles which resulted in a new view of oral poetry in general. The Oral-Formulaic Theory, with its prominent role of precisely the formula, brought together poetry from genetically unrelated traditions into a universal model. It affected the research on various literary traditions, not least the Eddic poetry and the saga prose, and resulted in many reinterpretations. But the theory has also been questioned and revised. New approaches in the study of formulas have been developed among linguists and folklorists. The present symposium aims to discuss new approaches, models and interpretations of formulas in traditional poetry and prose. The symposium will have a special focus on Old Norse literature, but it attempts to integrate the research on several different cultures and let the knowledge of and research on them shed light on each other.

For the event, we have organized the following keynote lectures:

- Frog, University of Helsinki
  "Formulaic Language and Organizing Principles of Discourse: Making Sense of the Phenomenon in 'Poetry' and 'Prose'"
- Stephen Mitchell, Harvard University
  "Memory, Formulas, and Merging Revisited"
- William Lamb, University of Edinburgh
  "The Formula in Narrative Prose: Recent Research and Future Challenges"
- Paul Acker, Saint Louis University
  "A History of Oral Formulas and Eddic Poetry"
- Bernt Øyvind Thorvaldsen, University of South-Eastern Norway
  "The Eddic Formula: Methodological Considerations"
- Slavica Rankovic, Independent scholar
  "The 'No Reaction' Formula in *Íslendingasögur*: A Distributed Reading of Grettir's Temper Management"
- Jonathan Roper, University of Tartu
  "Formulas in Anglophone Tales"

All researchers (including PhD students) who are interested in presenting their ideas or research results connected to these or similar topics are encouraged submit proposals for 20-minute paper presentations (followed by 10 minutes of discussion). The venue of the symposium will be University of Tartu, Department of Scandinavian Studies. Please send short abstracts by September 1 to *daniel.savborg[at]ut.ee*.

Further information can be found in the attachment and on the symposium website: https://www.maailmakeeled.ut.ee/en/departments/formula-oral-poetry-and-prose.

Would You Like to Submit to *RMN Newsletter*?

RMN Newsletter is an open-access annual publication that sets out to construct an informational resource and discourse space for researchers in diverse and intersecting disciplines. Its thematic center is the discussion and investigation of cultural phenomena of different eras and the research tools and strategies relevant to retrospective methods. Retrospective methods consider some aspect of culture in one period through evidence from another, later period. Such comparisons range from investigating historical relationships to the utility of analogical parallels, and from comparisons across centuries to developing working models for the more immediate traditions behind limited sources. *RMN Newsletter* welcomes and encourages its readership to engage in this discourse space and it also promotes an awareness that participation will support, maintain and also shape this emergent venue.

The journal features peer-reviewed articles under the heading Communications or the title of a thematic number, while discussions, reports on current research, projects, conferences and so forth are organized under the heading Comments, Perspectives and Reports. The venue emerged with an orientation toward presenting information *about* events, people, activities, developments and technologies, and research which is ongoing or has been recently completed, with many contributions oriented to discussion and/or engaging in discourse opened in earlier issued of *RMN Newsletter* or in other publications.

The success of this publication as both a resource and discourse space is dependent on the participation of its readership. We also recognize the necessity of opening contact with, and being aware of, the emerging generation of scholars and welcome summaries of on-going and recently completed MA and PhD research projects.

If you are interested in making information about your own work available or participating in discussion through comments, responses or article contributions, please send your contributions in *.doc, *docx or *.rtf format to Frog at: *editor.rmnnewsletter[at]gmail.com.*

For more information and access to earlier issues, please visit our web-page at https://www.helsinki.fi/en/networks/retrospective-methods-network.