REFLECTIONS OF BELIEF SYSTEMS IN KARELIAN AND LITHUANIAN LAMENTS: SHARED SYSTEMS OF TRADITIONAL REFERENTIALITY?*

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Abstract

Known the world over, laments are one of the oldest genres of oral ritual poetry. They are usually performed by women during rituals: funerals, weddings or leaving to join the army. Laments are works of a special kind of improvisation; they were created during the process of performance, drawing upon traditional language and motifs. The objective of this article is to open a discussion of relationships between Karelian and Lithuanian lament traditions, as representative examples of Finnic and Baltic traditions, respectively. I focus on representations of 'belief systems' as these are reflected through the poetic features, images and motifs of both Karelian and Lithuanian funeral laments.

Key words: Lithuanian lament, Karelian lament, register, word-power, funeral ritual, conceptions of death, traditional referentiality.

I

Laments[1] are one of the oldest genres of oral ritual poetry, and scholars agree that they belong among primordial varieties of folklore, with their roots in the cult of the dead (Honko 1974, p.9, and works there cited; Tolstoi 1958, p.25). Lament poetry has also been viewed as the origin of all lyric poetry (Werner 1924; cf. Stepanova A. 2003, pp.25-26). Laments may be generally defined as: 'melodic poetry of varying degrees of improvisation, which nonetheless follows conventionalised rules of traditional verbal expression, most often performed by women in ritual contexts and potentially also on non-ritual grievous occasions'.

Lamentations – also called dirges, wailing, weeping or elegy – have been known all over the world, and are still found in some cultures of the present day. In most cultures, they are performed by women, although men have also been found to perform them in some exceptional circumstances.[2] The most common ritual contexts for lamenting are funerals, weddings and the departure ceremonies for men conscripted into military service. However, laments were also performed 'occasionally', i.e. outside of ritual contexts.

Aims and objectives

The objective of this article is to open a discussion of relationships between Karelian and Lithuanian lament traditions, as representative examples of Finnic (otherwise known as 'Balto-Finnic') and Baltic traditions, respectively. I will focus on representations of vernacular religion or 'belief systems', as these are reflected through the poetic features, images and motifs of both Karelian and Lithuanian laments. I have selected funeral laments and their ritual context for comparison. As Aili Nenola points out:

'As a folklore genre, laments are part of the song tradition of the community, and they often represent an archaic layer both musically and poetically. Funeral laments (dirges) in particular were also part of religious tradition, in that they reflected communal concepts of death and the fate of the dead, as well as relations between the living and the dead' (Nenola 2002, p.73).

Word power

My central research interests are Karelian laments, their language as a formulaic system that functions as a channel for cultural expression for the generation,

[1] I would like to thank Aušra Žičkienė for providing me with copies of her own works which I would not otherwise have been able to access, Frog, for his discussion, comments and assistance with the translation of lament texts into English, and also Jim Wilce for his insightful comments on an earlier version of this paper. I am deeply indebted to anonymous peer-reviewers for comments and corrections. I would like to thank Jūratė Šlekonytė for helping me organise and coordinate contacts with Lithuanian colleagues. Finally, I would like to thank the organisers and participants of the Baltic Worldview conference, especially Daiva Vaitkevičienė.

[2] For an example from Bangladesh, see Wilce (2002).

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and communication of meanings (Stepanova E., 2004; 2009). I approach the formulaic system of Karelian laments through John Miles Foley's theory of 'word power' (Foley 1995). Foley's 'word power' describes the authority and special meaning of 'words', typologies of language, and typologies of language use which these develop through regular patterns in application. In other words, 'word power' provides a framework for how and why terms and expressions develop refined or exceptional meanings in a poetic system, and also the meanings, values and associations that a poetic system, such as the poetics of traditional laments, imports into a communication. This is particularly relevant to 'occasional' laments, which apply the poetic tradition in unique contexts. It is also relevant for recognising and understanding images and motifs which reflect vernacular belief systems. According to Foley, '*word power derives from the enabling event of performance and the enabling referent of tradition*' (Foley 1995, p.213, original emphasis). The tradition therefore establishes a conventionalised framework of referentiality, which can be seen in the special idiomatic language (hereafter referred to as 'register') of Karelian laments. For example, according to Karelian beliefs, 'dead ancestors' only understand the special language of laments as opposed to ordinary spoken language (Stepanova A. 2003, p.186) – at the most general level, the language of laments was loaded with 'word power' as a language which the dead can hear and understand.

Finnic lament traditions

Finnic lament traditions were found primarily in Orthodox areas and were exclusively performed by women. Both ritual and occasional laments were found among Karelians[3] and Vepsians; in Ingria among the Ižors and Votes; and among the Seto of south-eastern Estonia (Honko 1974; 2003; Nenola 1982; 1986). All Finnic lament traditions utilised special kinds of improvisation. They were not learned by heart, but rather were created during the process of oral performance. Laments were created anew in each situation, but within the conventions of the traditional lament register and motifs.

The main feature of Karelian and other Finnic laments is that their special poetic idiom is not easily comprehensible to the uninitiated listener, because it is full of coded metaphorical expressions or circumlocutions. In Karelian laments, no relatives, intimate people, some objects as well as phenomena are ever named directly. (Stepanova A. 1985; 2003; 2004.) This aspect of the language is based on naming taboos, for example, avoiding the name of the deceased. Earlier, people believed in the magic power of the name, and in order to avoid harming relatives, either living or deceased, they did not mention their names directly. (Honko 1963, p.128; Konkka 1975, p.178.) These taboos were later forgotten, as the powerful magical associations of names waned in significance, but the poetic language of laments retained its value, it retained 'word power'. The language and performance of laments conforms to certain conventions, such as alliteration, parallelism, as well as an abundance of plural and diminutive-possessive forms. This poetry was not subject to fixed metre. The primary organisational units were based on the rhythms of melodic phrases of varying length and marked by a consistent pattern of alliteration. These units can be referred to as poetic 'strings'.[4] Using J.M. Foley's terminology, all of these features belong to the 'register'[5] of Karelian laments (Stepanova E. 2009, pp.13-24, 113). As an example, we can begin with a funeral lament performed by a mother to her deceased daughter:

(1)

Valkualkua vualimaiseni valtajouččenuisien 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 ilmajouččenuisien 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, tulituohukšuisie tunnon luajitella, hiän niitä myöte tiän turvasih tunnon kualelis tuuvehih šyntysih tuuvittamaiseni?

[3] This includes the White Sea Karelians, Olonets Karelians, Ludes, and also the Tver Karelians, who migrated from north-western areas around Lake Ladoga to a small area west of Moscow in the 17th century.

[4] For an overview of the relationship of this poetic system to metre and its forms across different Finnic cultural areas, see Frog, Stepanova (2011, pp.195-218).

[5] Register can be defined as a special language which a performer uses to perform poetry and which the audience uses to understand it. A register contains 'words' (i.e. idiomatic formulaic verbal expressions), structuring and organisational strategies, linguistic and paralinguistic features (such as gestures), which are characteristic of the particular oral poetry genre. (Foley 1995, pp.50, 210; 2002, pp.114-116; Harvilahti 2003, p.95.)

Etkö še vois ni, vallan pikkaraini vualimaiseni, valkeista syntysistä varpulintusina vallan ylenekšennellä vaimalon vartuvoni esih?

Ta ihaloijen ilmalintusien innollisina ilmaikkunaisien aluštaisilla. Niistä innon šilmittelisin inhu vartuvon innon pikkaraista itvomaistani… (Stepanova, Koski 1976, p.84)

'Whiten my little[6] cherished one [daughter] to the whiteness of white little swans for the departure to the white little ancestors, so that in [their] white little ways, to the white little ancestors [other world], white little own-communities [relatives] will come to meet [her].

Like the beautiful weird little birds, with see-through little waters, *kujin*, make [her], and like little dolls you, *kujin*, dress my little pictured one [daughter] [for going] to the honourable little ancestors [other world]. So that her, in beautiful little ways, into the honourable little ancestors [other world], *kujin*, [one] will place.

Like miraculous free little swans, *innon*, my dear little sprouted one [daughter], *innon*, make, for the miraculous little ancestors [other world], with miraculous moving little waters.

Come from white little ancestors [other world] to prepare copper little stairs, by which, to the white little ancestors [other world], *vallan*, will step, *vallan*, my small little cherished one [daughter].

Could you not, from the dear little ancestors [other world], *tunnon*, dear little own-communities [relatives], burning little candles, *tunnon*, prepare, that she, with those, to your little protections, *tunnon*, will come to the dear little ancestors [other world], my little rocked one [daughter]?

Could you not, *vallan*, my small little cherished one [daughter], from the white little ancestors [other world], as small little sparrow-birds, *vallan*, fly up in front of my wilting body [the lamenter]?

And, as beautiful little sky-birds, [fly] in front of little sky-windows. So from these, *innon*, [I] could eye the pitiful body's [the lamenter], *innon*, small sprouted little one [daughter].'

[6] In this translation, 'little' indicates that the following noun is a diminutive form which is made with a suffix in the original language. Circumlocutions are decoded in square brackets. Original expletives, which have no semantic value (any longer), are given in the translation in italics. The purpose of this translation is to provide the 'feel' of the original Karelian text, and the challenge posed by its register and structures.

Lithuanian laments

The Lithuanian lament tradition, like the Karelian tradition, was an important part of the life cycle of the individual, and of the ritual life of the community, where it maintained a role in funerals, weddings, and perhaps other areas as well. These traditions are rooted in a pre-Christian past, and yet persisted through the process of Christianisation up to the present day (Černiauskaitė 2006, pp.16-23). As in the Karelian tradition, Lithuanian laments ('crying with words') are improvised poetry performed by women with a recitative melody and astrophic form: rather than metre and stanzas, the poetics develop around syntactic periods similar to the poetic 'strings' of Karelian laments. (Sauka 1986, pp.140-149.) It is possible to differentiate local traditions of Lithuanian laments, but these are unified by the use of the same essential poetic features, that is, parallelism, diminutive forms, epithets and metaphors, and rhetorical questions (Sauka 1986, pp.146-149). Donatas Sauka (1986, p.149) has proposed that images and descriptions of the world of the dead encountered in lament texts are not remnants of 'pagan' conceptions or of an archaic layer of Lithuanian mythology; rather, they are poetic images invented by lamenters according to the worldview communicated through 19th century legends. However, the mythic images preserved in laments appear in lamentations long before the 19th century (Grumadaitė 2005). Moreover, it will later be shown that these features were not exclusive to the Lithuanian tradition; they are encountered in other lament traditions as well. The following example is a Lithuanian lament by a woman for her late husband:

(2)

O mano vyreli, mano dobilėli, ko pabūgai? Ar blogų darbelių, ar sunkių metelių pačiam gražumėly, pačioj jaunumėlėj?

Nei šiaurių vėjelių buvo, nei bangių lietelių lijo; palaužė tokį ąžuolėlį, paskynė mano dobilėlį.

O mano vyreli, palieki mane siratėlę dideliame vargely; o kur aš eisiu, niekur aš nerasiu tokios patiekėlės; palieki su mažais vaikeliais.

Visi nubars mane siratėlę, visi nustumdys; nerasiu nei jokios užvėjėlės, nei jokio užstojėlio.

O mano vyreli, įtraukei mane į didį vargelį, į dideles ašarėles.

O mano vyreli, tu ten rasi didelę patiekėlę; pulk po kojelių pirmiau mano tėveliui, mano motinėlei.

Aš tau parašyčiau margą gromatėlę savo graudžiomis ašarėlėmis iki tėvelio, iki motinėlės.

Pulk po kojelių mano motinėlei gimdytojėlei, mano tėveliui augintojėliui.

O priimkite savo žentelį, mano vyrelį, už baltų rankelių, o užstokite ant vėlių durelių, o atdarykit vėlių dureles; o pasodinkite į vėlių suolelį!

O atkelkite vėlių vartelius, o atdarykite vėlių dureles, o priimkite mano vyrelį, o pasodinkite į vėlių suolelį, į lemtą pulkelį (Nevskaia 1993, pp.233-234).

'My little[7] husband, my little clover, what startled you? Perhaps a bad little work, or a hard little time for your own beauty, for your own youth?

There were no northern little winds, no little rains pouring down; [they] broke this sort of little oak, tore off my little clover.

Oh my little husband, you left me, an orphan, in great little sadness; where will I go? Nowhere can I find this sort of little consolation; you left me with small little children.

All will abuse me, an orphan, all will push [me] away, I will not find any sort of little shelter, any sort of little protection.

Oh my little husband, you pushed me into a great little grief, into great little tears.

My little husband, there you will find the great little consolation; bow down to the feet of, first of all, my little father, my little mother.

For you, I wrote a variegated little manuscript to little father, to little mother, with my own miserable little tears.

Bow to the feet of my own little mother, of my little father-teacher.

Take your son-in-law, my husband, by his white little hands, put him near the gates of the dead, open the gates of the dead… sit him down on the little bench of the dead.

Oh, open the gates of the dead, open the little doors of the dead, take my little husband, sit him down on the little bench of the dead, among honourable people.'

History of the research

The phenomenon of laments has interested researchers of different academic fields, folklorists, anthropologists, musicologists and linguists, as well as from many diverse perspectives.[8] However, the collection and study of laments has generally remained in the shadow of other oral genres of poetry and narrative, such as folk tales, legends, epic and mythology. This was the case for both Karelian and Lithuanian laments. There have been different suggestions for why laments were not sufficiently collected and researched. Aleksandra Stepanova (2003, p.9) suggests that one significant reason was that the epic was already a rare and dying tradition in the 19th century, while laments were still vital and common, so researchers did not pay special attention to the genre.

The 19th century was a period of establishing national identity in Finland, the literary language, and a 'Finnish' culture (Piela *et al*. 2008). Researchers were primarily interested in Finnic epics and folk songs. Laments were collected as well, but they were only supplementary to 'more important' genres of folklore. The systematic collection of Karelian laments began in the 1930s, during the Soviet period, and the detailed research and study of laments did not begin in Finland and Soviet Karelia until the 1960s. (Stepanova A. 2003, pp.4-23.)

In Lithuania, laments were being collected as early as the 17th century. These earliest collected texts were sometimes no more than small fragments, as examples of the performed tradition. The pre-Christian voice of laments emerges very strongly in these early texts. They are laconic in form, and contain rhetorical questions. (Grumadaitė 2005). The more systematised collection of Lithuanian laments started at the beginning of the 19th century, and selections from the great collections of Lithuanian laments documented, for example, by Jonas Basanavičius and Antanas and Jonas Juška, have been published in the Lithuanian language (Basanavičius 1926; Juška 1954). However, research on laments did not begin until much later, at the end of the 20th century (Žičkienė 2005, p.59).

For this paper, I use unpublished Karelian laments from the Folklore Archive of the Institute of Linguistics, Literature and History (Karelian Research Centre), as well as laments in one published collection (Stepanova, Koski 1976). This is the only published collection of Karelian laments, and it benefits from Russian translations of Karelian texts. There are no English translations of Karelian laments, although it is hoped that a collection similar to that which Aili Nenola (2002) has made for Ingrian laments will appear in the future.

Although there has been extensive collection of Lithuanian laments from different regions of Lithuania and Belarus, and these have been published in different collections, these collections are only available in the

[7] In this translation, 'little' indicates that the following noun is a diminutive form which is made with a suffix in the original language. This translation is based on the Russian translation in Nevskaja (1993, pp.234-235).

[8] For a survey of research, see Feld, Fox 1994, pp.39-43.

original language. This presents a significant challenge for researchers from other cultures who cannot access these rich sources for their studies. Very few Lithuanian laments have been translated. The discussion in this paper is based on quotations from numerous laments and the few complete laments accompanied by Russian translations in Lidiia Nevskaia's book *Балто-славянское причитание: Реконструкция семантической структуры* (The Balto-Slavic Lament: A Reconstruction of its Semantic Structure, 1993), and in Nijole Laurinkiene's article *Похоронные причитания Пелясы* (Pelyasa Funeral Laments, 1987) on laments recorded in the village of Pelyasa (Belarus). In addition to laments, I have also used Lithuanian and Latvian folk songs (*dainos*) published in Russian in a few collections and studies as secondary sources.[9]

The comparison which I present is therefore based on the very limited sources for Lithuanian laments which were available in languages I could access. It must therefore be stressed that my findings are necessarily conditional on the degree to which the limited sources available to me are generally representative of the corpus. There have been almost no studies or collections made dealing with these lament traditions in languages outside the Baltic languages for more than 100 years, while a Lithuanian researcher attempting comparisons with the Karelian lament tradition would no doubt face corresponding challenges posed by the language barrier.

Previously, particularly in Russian research literature, the folklore of Lithuanians, and Baltic peoples more generally, was connected to Slavic culture and tradition. Together, these were perceived as constituting a Balto-Slavic linguistic-cultural group, which was in its turn connected to the Indo-European linguistic-cultural heritage. Several studies on diverse folklore genres and linguistic corpora were generated according to this approach, including studies on laments and funeral rituals (Ivanov 1987; Ivanov, Nevskaia 1990), although Soviet anthropologists and craniologists included Finnic populations in their research (e.g. Denisova 1990). Lidia Nevskaia's study (1993) is the only major study on the relationship between Baltic and Slavic laments texts, and it belongs to this school of research.

Baltic and Finnic populations have had a long history of linguistic and cultural contacts, which have been studied especially in linguistic and archaeological research. At the beginning of the 20th century, A.R. Niemi (1912) was interested in investigating relationships between Baltic and Finnic traditional poetries, particularly after travelling in Lithuania in 1908–1911. He collected songs, poems, incantations and magic, and later attempted to compare the Finnish and Estonian corpora to the Lithuanian corpus. In these songs, their motifs and manners of performance, he observed Baltic loans, which he interpreted as arriving in conjunction with the layer of Baltic loanwords in Finnic languages. (Junttila 2009, p.71.) However, Niemi's ideas did not lead to broader comparative research: Baltic and Finnic ethnic groups are associated with different linguistic-cultural families – Indo-European and Finno-Ugric, respectively – and therefore were unsuited for comparison.

Matti Kuusi proposed that relations between Proto-Baltic and Finno-Volgaic populations began in approximately 1500 BC and that these relations were strong for the next 1,500 years. Loans and other linguistic influences took place in both languages during that era. Kuusi attributed the birth of kalevalaic poetry to that Finnic-Baltic period, while acknowledging that the poetry of laments and *yoiks* belongs to a much older cultural stratum. (Kuusi 1963, pp.129-134.) Even if Kuusi's argument is dated, there is extensive evidence of a long history of intimate cultural contact and it is reasonable to assume that this contact was not limited to language, but extended to other areas of cultural activity and rituals.[10]

In the field of musicology, Aušra Žičkienė (2001) wrote her dissertation on melodies of Lithuanian laments in the context of the European lament tradition. In her articles (2002; 2005), she also addresses the relationships between the lament melodies of Lithuanian, Slavic and Finno-Ugric traditions, and concludes that common features which belong to an extremely archaic layer of folk singing can be recognised in lament melodies. This archaic quality and its history of persistence is supported by Žičkienė's (2009) study of historical musical 'layers' in Lithuanian singing traditions. Corresponding studies on the level of verbal aspects of the lament tradition have not been done.

Even if I have not been able to access sufficient sources for a comprehensive comparative analysis and my conclusions will necessarily be conditional, I consider it very important to reopen the discussion which A.R. Niemi tried to begin a century ago.

II

It seems obvious that there are relationships between these two traditions, such as the context of lamenting, performers of laments, and manners of performance. The central context of lamenting is in conjunction

[9] See, for example, Sprogis 1868; Fortunatov, Miller 1872.

[10] For a more recent survey of historical language contacts in the circum-Baltic region, see Koptjevskaja-Tamm, Wälchli (2001).

with *rites de passage* associated with special motifs required in the laments by the ritual and its function. However, laments remained characterised by a common register across both ritual contexts and also in occasional laments performed outside of rituals. The performers of laments were and still are women ritual specialists in both traditions. Both traditions are improvisational, even ritual laments incorporate situationally specific improvisations within the poetic system, and the principles of oral-poetic composition as described by Oral Formulaic Theory could be applied to both traditions (Lord 1960; Foley 1988).

Stylistic and poetic features

In this study, representations of vernacular religion or belief systems reflected through the poetic features of lament traditions will be approached on three levels: 1) on the level of stylistic features; 2) on the level of metaphoric or formulaic language and expressions; and 3) on the level of motifs employed in funeral laments. As has been mentioned previously, laments incorporate some typical stylistic and poetic features. These create a special kind of aesthetic for this poetry, which provides rhythm and order to laments. The most prominent feature to mention is repetition with its various functions – from acoustic repetition to the repetition of whole units of text, that is, from alliteration to syntactic parallelism.

Alliteration[11] is the most restrictive compositional feature of Karelian laments and it is particularly associated with the formulaic language of poetic circumlocutions. The register of laments has developed this system of circumlocutions, which in some regions exhibits tremendous flexibility for expansion or contraction. The density of alliteration in Karelian laments remains at a more or less consistent level across local traditions – approximately one out of every two words (i.e. a density ratio of 1:2) participating in alliteration. The number of words participating in a single alliterative pattern varies considerably according to the length of the poetic 'string' (Stepanova A. 2003, pp.86-108). In the following example, it is possible to observe two poetic strings with different patterns of alliteration. In the first string, eight out of 15 words alliterate with *va-* (including the diphthongs *vua-*, *vai-*, *voi-*). In the second, eight out of 14 words alliterate with *i-*. In both these poetic strings, the lamenter uses special meaningless expletive words to support and extend the alliteration. In the first poetic string, *vallan* appears, and in the second *innon*. A variety of expletives are found in the lament register, accommodating all possible alliterative syllables.

(3)

*Etkö še **voi**s ni, **va**llan pikkaraini **vua**limaiseni, **va**lkeista syntysistä **va**rpulintusina **va**llan ylenekšennellä **vai**malon **va**rtuvoni esih?*

*Ta **i**haloijen **i**lmalintusien **i**nnollisina **i**lmaikkunaisien aluštaisilla. Niistä **i**nnon šilmittelisin **i**nhu vartuvon **i**nnon pikkaraista **i**tvomaistani* (Stepanova, Koski 1976, p.84).

'Could you not, *vallan*, my small cherished one.DIM [daughter], from the white ancestor.DIM.PL [otherworld], as small sparrow-bird.DIM.PL *vallan*, fly up in front of my wilting body [the lamenter]?

And, as beautiful sky-bird.DIM.PL, [fly] in front of sky-window.DIM.PL. So from these, *innon*, [I] could eye the pitiful body's [the lamenter], *innon*, small sprouted one.DIM [daughter].'

Alliteration has not been researched in Lithuanian laments, and is not an observable feature in the laments available to me. Finnic languages and Karelian in particular are well suited to alliteration, because of the initial stress (Frog, Stepanova 2011). Initial stress is a linguistic feature associated with the circum-Baltic, and found in Finnic and Germanic languages, and also Latvian, but not Lithuanian (Koptjevskaja-Tamm, Wälchli 2001, pp.638-640). This may be a significant factor in the fact that alliteration does not appear prominent in Lithuanian laments. However, it is a feature which warrants future investigation.

A common feature of Karelian and Lithuanian laments is parallelism. This variety of repetition is used in diverse folklore genres (see further Jakobson 1966). Many kinds of parallelism are found in laments – semantic, syntactic, morphological and lexical (Stepanova A. 2003, pp.31-33; Stepanova E. 2009, pp.16-17; Nevskaia 1993, p.129). The preceding quotation (3) provides an example of parallelism. The two poetic strings have the same content repeated in each of them (i.e. semantic parallelism): the lamenter-mother asks her deceased daughter to come in the form of a bird, so that the mother can look at her child. However, each string carries the lament's plot subtly forward. In the first string, the lamenter asks her to fly from the other world; in the second string, she asks her to fly to the window. In addition, this example also presents tautology: 'sparrow-bird.DIM.PL'; the synonymic repetition between strings, such as 'sparrow-bird.DIM.PL' and 'sky-bird.DIM.PL', or 'wilting body' and 'pitiful body'. This extends to the parallel use of expletives, which are themselves repeated in each string *val-*

[11] On alliteration in Finnic cultures generally, and in laments specifically, see Frog, Stepanova 2011.

lan–innon. In the example under discussion, syntactic parallelism, which is a repetition on the level of the structure of the sentence, is not present, but it is typical in Karelian laments (see example (1)).

According to Lidiia Nevskaia (1993, pp.129-161), all of these types of parallelism are present in the Lithuanian tradition. The following example presents patterns of parallelism between strings and within a string:

(4)

O priimkite savo žentelį, mano vyrelį, už baltų rankelių, o užstokite ant vėlių durelių, o atdarykit vėlių dureles; o pasodinkite į vėlių suolelį!

O atkelkite vėlių vartelius, o atdarykite vėlių dureles, o priimkite mano vyrelį, o pasodinkite į vėlių suolelį, į lemtą pulkelį (Nevskaia 1993, pp.233-234).

'Take your son-in-law, my husband, by his white hands.DIM, put him near the gates of the dead, open the gates of the dead … sit him down on the bench. DIM of the dead.

Oh, open the gates of the dead, open the doors.DIM of the dead, take my husband.DIM, sit him down on the bench.DIM of the dead, among honourable people.'

Semantic parallelism is present here in the near-identical content of each string, and as in Karelian laments, each string carries the lament's plot subtly forward. In the first string, the lamenter asks that her husband be seated on the bench of the dead, and in the second string, she asks that he be seated among 'honourable people'. Synonymic repetition is also found within a string, as in 'open the gates of the dead' and 'open the doors.DIM of the dead' in the second string.

The register of laments also contains some special grammatical features. One grammatical feature which really jumps out in both the Karelian and Lithuanian lament traditions is the abundant use of diminutive forms – almost all nouns in laments are in the diminutive, especially all terms which refer to kinship.

Lithuanian:

(5)

Kelkis, motule, kelkis širdele, nuog balto patalėlio, nuog pušų lentelių

'Get up, dear mother.DIM, get up, dear heart.DIM, from the white bed.DIM [the place where the deceased lies before burial], from the pine tree planks.DIM [the place where the deceased lies before burial].'

Karelian:

(6)

miun […] kalliz nainego kandajane azetettu jo, ven'an ni vestolauččazila pandu (Stepanova, Koski 1976, p.153).

'My dear woman-carrier.DIM [mother] is already put on the Russian hewn planks.DIM [the place where the deceased lies before burial].'

Another grammatical feature of the lament language is the use of possessive forms. This is especially done with terms of kinship and when naming the addressee of the lament. In Karelian laments, possessive forms are made using the genitive pronoun *miun* (my) or *siun* (your) and the accompanying possessive suffix *-ni* or *-si* (*miun kannettuiseni* [my carried one.DIM, child]); and in Lithuanian with the genitive pronoun *mano* (my) or *tavo* (your) (*mano vyreli* [my husband.DIM]).

An important grammatical feature of the register of Karelian laments is the use of plural forms rather than the singular – even in those situations where one person, object or phenomenon, rather than many, is in question. For example, *kultalaitakiekkoset* (golden-edged disc.DIM.PL) means 'the sun'. A bride's maidenhood appears in folk songs or in spoken language in the singular, yet in laments it appears in the plural form: *nuoret valgijat valdazet* (young.PL white.PL freedom. DIM.PL). (Stepanova A. 2003, p.30.)

My limited sources for Lithuanian laments do not allow me to make any generalisations about the use of plural forms. In one example, I observed the use of a plural form for a singular object in a parallel construction: *Motinele, tamsus tavo budinkėlis, tamsūs tavo nameliai* (Nevskaia 1993, p.142) (Mother.DIM.SG, dark is your home.DIM.SG, dark are your house.DIM.PL). In this synonymic parallel construction, the mother's coffin is, after her death, described as her new home or house. In the first part of the phrase, the lamenter uses a singular form, and in the second, a plural, which seems more remarkable considering that the 'house' is a coffin, which is clearly a singular object. However, it is not possible to tell how conventional this usage is, nor what rules might govern the use of plural forms (for example, in parallelism).

The use of plural forms and alliteration is inconclusive, yet both Lithuanian and Karelian laments exhibit a range of varieties of parallelism and extensive use of diminutives and possessive forms as characteristic features of the poetry. These features appear to be associated with the register of laments in each culture, and are consequently loaded with 'word power' in the referential system of the traditions. These common stylistic features reveal parallel systems of traditional referentiality.[12] This is significant, because, as Foley

[12] 'Traditional referentiality … entails the invoking of a context that is enormously larger and more echoic than the text or work itself, that brings the lifeblood of generations of poems and performances to the individual performance

states: 'If traditional phraseology and narrative are conventional in structure, then they must also be conventional in their modes of generating meaning. ... But by and large the referential function of traditional units will remain consistent, everything else being equal' (Foley 1991, p.6).

The few common features alone do not demonstrate any special kind of relationship between Karelian and Lithuanian lament traditions. However, they do show that these two traditions have correspondences on both stylistic and grammatical levels, and therefore corresponding strategies for the generation of meanings. This brings us one step closer to understanding whether these correspondences are significant, reflecting features from past cultural contacts which became established and 'remained consistent'.

Metaphoric (formulaic) language

It is easy to find the same types of circumlocutions related to kinship terms in both traditions. In the Karelian lament tradition, the system of circumlocutions is very highly developed. Aleksandra Stepanova's *Толковый словарь языка карельских причитаний* (Dictionary of Karelian Lament Language, 2004) contains over 1,400 circumlocutions and formulaic expressions translated into Russian. The Lithuanian tradition also seems to have various kinds of special metaphors or circumlocutions for kinship terms. Some of these seem to have counterparts in the Karelian lament language. For example, the Lithuanian *mano vyreli, mano užstovėli* (Nevskaia 1993, p.234) (my husband.DIM, my protector.DIM) corresponds directly with the Karelian *miun kohtalähiseni, puolistaja* (Stepanova A. 2004, p.51) (my husband.DIM, my protector).

The circumlocutions referring to 'mother', which are based on a mother's function in raising the child, have a lot in common in both traditions. The mother is the one who raises, teaches, takes care of and feeds a child, and so on, and thus according to these functions the basic semantic word for 'mother' in a circumlocution is an agentive noun, most often derived from verbs (Stepanova A. 2004, pp.15-16; Nenola 2002, p.96; Nevskaia 1993, pp.98-104). For example, Karelian *kantajani* (my carrier), *vualijani* (my cherisher), *uččijazeni* (my teacher) (Stepanova A. 2004, pp.17-18), and Lithuanian *mano gimdytojėle* (my birth-giver), *mano augintojėle* (my grower), *mano motinėlė užtarėjužėlė* (my mother protector) (Nevskaia 1993, pp. 100-103). In Finno-Ugric languages, nouns of this type, derived from verbs and used as names to denote a doer, are assumed to be one of the archaic forms of naming, and correspondingly, these could be primordial circumlocutions in the lament register (Stepanova A. 2004, pp.15-16). In addition to simple one-word circumlocutions (above) in the Karelian tradition, lamenters could create very complex circumlocutions, such as *kallehilla ilmoilla piällä kannattelija kallis kandajazeni* (onto the dear world.DIM.PL bringer my dear carrier.DIM, mother) (Stepanova A. 2004, p.22). Both traditions also present an extensive use of symbolism of flora and fauna which warrants further detailed study elsewhere. Although the principles for forming circumlocutions in Lithuanian laments are basically the same, the Lithuanian tradition does not exhibit such a highly developed system that diverges markedly from the normal spoken language. Nonetheless, we see here another potential pattern of language use echoing through these two traditions of laments.[13]

Conceptions and images of death

'Death' is never used as a word in either Lithuanian or Karelian laments, although as a taboo, it becomes subject to special metaphors. In Lithuanian laments, different metaphors are used to express the death, such as a death of plants, or as a trip to the 'high hill' (Černiauskaitė 2006, pp.16-23). In both traditions, death is equated to sleeping and the deceased to a sleeping, quiet person who is not talking: for example, Lithuanian *O mano mocina, o kol tu tep žumigai* (Laurinkiene 1987, p.81) (Oh my mother, o why did you fall asleep this way), and Karelian *Mintäh olet, ylen valgijani l'ubiimoi mamaženi, vaivažen rukkažen tulokerdaziksi ylen vaikkaženi vaikaštun? Veče on udalat spoaššuzet šiuda ylen userdno uinotettu* (Stepanova, Koski 1976, p.151) (Why has my most white beloved mother.DIM,[14] for the coming of the miserable pitiful one [lamenter], become very extremely quiet? Perhaps the brave divine powers [gods] drove you very deeply asleep). In both traditions, the lamenter poses rhetorical questions to the deceased, such as 'Why did you fall so deeply asleep?' 'Why are you sleeping when it is already morning, time to get up?' The motif of waking the deceased is common both in Karelian and Lithuanian laments, as well as in Latvian *dainas* (Sprogis

or text. Each element in the phraseology or narrative thematic stands not simply for that singular instance but for the plurality and multiformity that are beyond the reach of textualisation.' (Foley 1991, p.7.)

[13] Uses of figurative language as an areal phenomenon should not be underestimated in significance or simply taken for granted: it is not a feature of every language, and distinct isoglosses of figurative language use are found elsewhere in the world. See further Sherzer (1983, pp.192-193).

[14] The use of direct terms of kinship in laments, such as 'mother' here, started to appear in laments only at the end of the 20th century, and it is considered by researchers to be an indication of the degeneration of the tradition (Nenola 2002, p.96).

1868, p.221, items 41, 42; 222, item 45) and Lithuanian folksongs (Fortunatov, Miller 1872, pp.123–127). In addition to not using the word 'death' in laments, both traditions share the feature of having no personified image of death (Laurinkiene 1987, p.81). This is noteworthy because death is personified in Lithuanian folk tales, legends and idioms (Racėnaitė 2004). In addition, a personified death appears in Russian laments (Nevskaia 1993, p.71), setting it apart from these traditions.

Another set of corresponding poetic images for expressing death is through changes occurring in surroundings which are the result of the death, for example, inside the house or in the yard. In Lithuanian and Karelian laments, and also in Latvian *dainas*, light or white changes to dark or black: for example, windows or corners of the house are turning dark or black as a result of the death of some member of the family; the yard or road is overgrown with trees etc. (Nevskaia 1993, pp.16-23; Sprogis 1868, p.226). In Karelian laments, the lamenter's heart could also turn black as the result of the death of some intimate person (Fon. 2251/5, P.S. Saveljeva).

One characteristic image in both traditions for expressing feelings of loss and for expressing a consequence of the death is related to changing from warm to cold. It could be expressed through the image of a warm bed becoming a cold one, or a warm oven getting cold, or just the feeling of cold from the rain and wind: Lithuanian *o visi šiaurūs vėjeliai užpučia, o vis ant siratėlių ..., visi skaudūs lieteliai užlyja* (Nevskaia 1993, p.15) (all cold wind.DIM.PL are blowing at the orphans …, all cruel rain.DIM.PL are pouring down); Karelian *rubetah kai pohd'azet tuuluot koskemah; rubetah näistä paikoista viluzilla viimualemah* (Fon. 1338/10, P.S. Saveljeva) (all north wind.PL will hurt, there will be cold.DIM.PL raining down).

This brief selection of examples addressing conceptions of and metaphors for death presents common sets of semantic oppositions 'to be awake/to be asleep', 'to be talkative/to be quiet', 'light/dark' 'white/black', 'warm/cold'. These are also common to Slavic laments (according to Lidija Nevskaia's study). Within these systems of oppositions, it is possible to see how communities were conceptualising death in relation to life and the living community, and it reflects patterns of mythic thinking. Noting contrasts and comparisons with Slavic traditions in this section also draws attention to the fact that although this comparison focuses on relationships between Finnic and Baltic traditions, these relationships may not be limited to these two traditions, and in fact may only be two facets of broader Circum-Baltic phenomena.

Funeral rituals and motifs

Funeral ritual practices are extremely important throughout the world. Funeral customs are often quite conservative, preserving aspects of archaic belief systems, and they do not change easily (Stepanova A. 2003, p.36). Karelian and Lithuanian funeral rituals present a number of common features. Both ritual traditions are rooted in a pre-Christian cultural environment, both have the conception of a local abode of dead ancestors, and both accompany all important parts of the funeral ritual with laments.

These funeral rites were very complex. Karelian and Lithuanian funeral rituals can be divided into three main stages: 1) preparations of the deceased after death for the journey to the other world; 2) the burial and journey of the deceased to the other world; 3) post-burial memorial feasts, such as on the third, ninth and 40th days after the burial and later anniversaries, as well as on special memorial holidays for the dead. Through her laments, the lamenter accompanies the ritual process with a form of narrative representation of the events in the lament language, which is understandable to both the deceased and the ancestral dead.

Preparations for the journey

The first part of the ritual was very important for ensuring that everything was ready for the departure of the deceased to the other world. An important part of the first stage of both Lithuanian and Karelian funeral rituals are laments which declare the death, and laments trying to wake up the deceased (Sauka 1986, p.143; Stepanova A. 2003, p.38). Other significant laments were performed in relation to preparations in the ritual, such as washing the corpse, building and preparing the coffin, and digging the grave. Offering thanks and apologies through the language of laments was also important. The first stage of preparing the deceased for the journey presents a very basic conceptual parallel between Lithuanian and Karelian traditions – a parallel which is reinforced by correspondences in the patterns of the processes of the preparations.

The primary addressee in funeral laments is the deceased, whom the lamenter attempts to wake and addresses with questions, such as why he or she died, left the family, etc. Rhetorical questions of this type are typical in the Karelian, Lithuanian and Russian traditions, and appear to be a primordial feature of ritual poetry related to death more generally (Honko 1974, p.10).

The most essential difference between Karelian lament traditions on the one hand and Lithuanian and also Rus-

sian lament traditions on the other, is a difference in the manner of referring to the deceased. In Lithuanian and Russian laments, the deceased is called 'traveller.DIM' and also 'guest.DIM', accompanied by the term for the kin relationship. For example, Lithuanian *O motinėle viešnele, o mano motinėle keliauninkėle* … (Nevskaia 1993, p.61) (Oh, my mother.DIM guest.DIM, oh my mother.DIM traveller.DIM). Terms of this sort were not used in Karelian laments, and circumlocutions associated with naming taboos were used in the place of terms for kinship relations with the deceased. However, all of these traditions avoid using actual terms for 'death' or 'the deceased'.

The next step in preparations for the journey was making the coffin. Laments were performed to the coffin makers in both traditions. In these laments, the lamenter asks them to build a new 'eternal house or home' for the deceased. Both traditions reveal the same conception of a 'new home', where the deceased moves to live in the other world. The idea of building a new house for the deceased is connected to the conception that death is a process in which the deceased moves to a new area of habitation, to the world of the dead. In the other world, he or she will meet all of his or her ancestors. He or she will need a new house in which to dwell, as well as other things which were useful or necessary in normal life.

In Lithuanian laments, the coffin is referred to as a 'new eternal house without windows, without doors'; for example, *O tamsi tavo pirkelė, nė vieno langelio nėra, nė vienų duralių* (Oh, dark is your house.DIM, without any window, without any doors) (Laurinkiene 1987, p.83). The same image is encountered in Latvian *dainas* (Sprogis 1868, p.220, item 33; p.221, item 38). However, in some Lithuanian laments from the village of Pelyasa (Belarus), the lamenter asks neighbours to build a new house with windows and doors for the deceased:

(7)

Tai aš paporisiu
Tavo susiedėliam,
Kad subudavot tau pirkeli
Su langelėm, su duralėm,
Tai kad sudėtų sciklo langelius,
Kad būt šviesiau pasdairycia
(cited by Laurinkiene 1987, pp.83-84).

'So I'll say
To your neighbours.DIM,
That they should build you a house.DIM,
With windows.DIM, with doors.DIM,
That they put in glass windows.DIM,
So that it is lighter to look out.'

In Karelian laments, the coffin is presented as, for example, a 'four cornered eternal house with a window' (Mansikka 1924, p.171). The window allows the deceased to see out of the world of the dead into this world, and communication with the dead can happen through this window when relatives come to the graveyard for a visit.

(8)

Ta vielä vet ottajaisellani opuškakorvaset oimun luajitelkua. Vet kun oneh vartuvoni oimun kualelen ottamaisista opinjaverosie oimun ečittelömäššä, niin anna ottajaiseni oimun šilmittelöy niistä opuškakorvasista (Stepanova, Koski 1976, p.85).

'And also for my taker.DIM,[15] make framed window. DIM.PL. Because when the weak body [lamenter] will eat strange dinners among strangers, so let my taker. DIM look [at me] from those framed window.DIM. PL.'

In Karelia, coffins were physically built with a small window above the right shoulder of the deceased (Stepanova A. 2003, p.186). Consequently, when visiting the graveyard, relatives would go to the right side where the deceased could see them. These conventions of visiting the graveyard have persisted into the present day, although the coffin construction has changed, the windows have been forgotten, and no one remembers why a grave should be addressed from one particular position.

The burial and journey

The ritual culminated in the second stage, because the most important function of the funerary ritual and the accompanying laments was to convey the deceased safely to the other world. The concern for safety was for both the deceased, who had to undertake the journey, and also for the community, which might be threatened if the journey was unsuccessful. On the day of burial, the lamenter would ask for forgiveness in the name of the deceased from people and objects with which the deceased had had relationships or otherwise had had contact. This included members of the family, neighbours and the house itself. Laments were also used to send regards and messages with the deceased to dead relatives in the other world. According to Lidia Nevskaia (1993, p.11), this motif is also common in Russian laments.

[15] 'My taker' is one word circumlocution for 'mother', an agentive noun derived from the verb *ottaa* (to take), which appears here with diminutive and possessive suffixes. The circumlocution refers to the mother taking her child on her lap, taking her child from the bath, etc.

Before the deceased arrives at the cemetery, the lamenter must awaken the ancestors in the other world. She asks them to come and meet the newly deceased. This is a motif found in both traditions. The lamenter calls the dead relatives to open the gates of the world of the dead. In the Karelian tradition, it is accompanied by a request that they come with candles to receive and escort the deceased into the other world, as in example (1). The lamenter can request specific dead relatives in both traditions, such as her own mother and father, to come and meet the deceased at the gates:

Lithuanian

(9)

O, sūneli, atsiskiri no seserėlių ir no savo brolelių, o tu nuveisi int aukštų kalnelį, o tu ten nerasi nė brolelių, nė seserėlių, o tik tu ten rasi mano motinėlę ir mielą tėvelį… O motinėle, vai tu išeikie ant aukšto kalnelio, ant viešo kelelio, o tu pasitikie mano sūnelį atkeliaujantį …o pasivadžiokie tu jį po aukštą kalnelį … (Nevskaia 1993, p.60).

'Oh, my son.DIM, you are separating from your sisters.DIM and brothers.DIM and going to the high hill. DIM, and there you will not meet any brothers.DIM, any sisters.DIM, you will only meet my mother.DIM and my dear father.DIM … Oh, mother.DIM, oh, come to the high hill.DIM, to the wide road.DIM, oh, meet my travelling son.DIM …walk him onto the high hill. DIM.'

According to Karelian laments, the roads to the other world are dark and unknown, and if the deceased does not have assistance or guidance, he or she will never complete the journey to the abode of the dead, where the gate must be opened and is protected by a dog.[16]

(10)

Ettäkö voi kujin ylekšennellä, Tuonelan narotakuntani, Tuonelan kulkuovien korvasih kujin vaštual'omah kujin kohtalähimmäistäni Tuonelan korvašijasilla? Anna ei Tuonelan koirat kujin haukukšenneltais (Stepanova, Koski 1976, p.95).

'Could you rise, kin of the Tuonela [the abode of the dead], near the gates of Tuonela to meet my meant-to-be-close.DIM [husband] near the entrance of Tuonela? See that the dogs of Tuonela do not bark.'

[16] The image of the dog as a mythic danger and guardian on the road to the other world is also known in Germanic traditions (Siikala 2002, p.235), and Frog (2010, p.220) observes that 'Norse conceptions of the realm of the dead (in epic) exclude the opening of its doors or gates' from outside.

Memorial feasts

In the third stage of memorial feasts, special laments were performed with the purpose of demonstrating appreciation and more generally demonstrating that the deceased was remembered. This involved waking the deceased or the dead ancestors more generally, and opening channels of communication with them. A function of this ritual pattern was to secure the living community against the hazards posed by the dead. Unfortunately the sources for Lithuanian laments available to me are limited to such an extent that I am reticent to draw comparisons in this stage of the ritual.

Laments as communication

Anna Caraveli-Chaves suggests 'that laments comprise a communicative event, whose components are manipulated by the lamenter in order to benefit the living' (1980, pp.129-130). The lamenter communicates with the deceased. On the one hand, she presents herself as an intermediary between the deceased and the world of the dead. On the other hand, she functions as an intermediary between the world of the dead and the community. A lamenter accomplishes communication with the supernatural world through her special knowledge of the mythic world, of the nature of relationships between life and death, how they function, and of the requirements of the deceased in order to successfully complete the journey. The lamenter's role in this communicative event accomplishes the transition through her narrations of the ritual and corresponding events in the unseen world. As Lauri Honko observes, 'Phenomenological comparison between a shaman and a lamenter is made possible by the fact that both of them act as psychopomp guiding the soul from here to the Beyond' (Honko 1974, p.58n).

It is particularly interesting that in some funeral laments in Karelia, the lamenter performed in the name of the deceased, performing words as though the deceased were speaking. This is an essential aspect of communication, which reveals the significance of the role of the lamenter as a mediator, in whose laments emerges not only her own voice, but also the voices of the living community, the deceased and the dead. Communication with dead ancestors can be seen in many different lament genres. For example, the lamenter asks for the support and help of the ancestral dead in wedding laments and also in military conscription laments. In memorial laments, the lamenter informed dead kin members about the life of the living community, could express her personal feelings, and also asked for help.

Communication with the deceased could also take place through dreams. In both Karelian and Lithuanian lament traditions, the dead were believed to come to the living in dreams, where they could make demands, requests, or offer advice and warnings. The ability of the dead to visit the living in dreams was a culturally established medium of communication. For example: Lithuanian *Tai tu man nor prisisapnuokie tamsioj naktelėj, kap man tynai vargelis vargtie* (Laurinkiene 1987, p.87) (So although you come in the dark night to my dream, how I there grieve my grief); and Karelian *Kuin mageih da manastyrskoih oi magavosijazih vieriin, i aino, kylmä, kyzyn hotti ozuttuagua udralla unissa* (Fon. 3378/9) (When [I] go to the sweet and monasterial sleeping place.DIM.PL, and always, cold [lamenter], [I] ask [you] to appear to the miserable's [lamenter] dreams).

Another typical way of communicating with the dead in both traditions was through a bird, usually a cuckoo, although in Karelia this also included butterflies (Söderholm 1980, pp.141-148). Lamenters requested the dead to return in these forms, which were positive and acceptable manifestations of the soul. The bird was also seen as a messenger between the world of the living and the world of the dead (Laurinkiene 1987, p.84). This concept of the 'soul-bird' or other animal is well known in many cultures and religions across northern Eurasia (Honko 2003, p.109).

III
The mythic world of laments

Pre-Christian belief systems were preserved to varying degrees and with diverse emphases in different folklore genres. Laments clearly reflect such belief systems in their motifs and language, often contrasting with images and conceptions encountered in other genres. For example, Karelian laments do not represent the river of *Tuoni* as a barrier to *Tuoni's* realm, as is familiar in the Karelian epic. Features which can be attributed to a pre-Christian belief system include the cult of dead ancestors, the journey to the realm of the dead, and the conception of the soul-bird. The lament tradition was nonetheless influenced by Christianity, and this can be seen reflected in some motifs. In Karelian laments, the two different belief systems merge in the use of the terms *syndyzet* and *spuassuzet*. The pre-Christian term *syndyzet* variously meant 'ancestors', 'the world of the dead' and 'divine powers'. The Christian term *spuassuzet* came from the Russian Orthodox term *Спас*, *Спаситель* (Saviour). However, in the language of laments, *spuassuzet* began to mean 'divine powers'. The term was synthesised into the lament register, using Karelian pronunciation, and the register's conventional diminutive and plural forms. *Spuassuzet* replaced *syndyzet* in some functions related to luck and happiness or benefits in life. *Spuassuzet* and *syndyzet* both appear in the same laments, where they each had their own roles and functions. In the latest periods of collection, these two terms were mixed, and became used interchangeably or synonymically, which may have been the result of the disappearing of the tradition. This pattern of syncretism provides a valuable example of processes which were no doubt ongoing through the history of these traditions with their many layers of cultural influences (Stepanova E. forthcoming).

The mythic world of Karelian laments is organised into three layers. The first is the world of the living. This is the immediate world of the lamenter and the world which the deceased is leaving. The second is the world of the dead, or of ancestors, to which the deceased is making his or her journey. And finally, the third layer is the world of divine powers (gods). (Stepanova E. 2004.) The world of the dead is called *syndyzet*, and in northern areas also Tuonela. The same term *syndyzet* is also used to refer to dead ancestors and divine powers, so the same term has three interrelated fields of meaning. In the Karelian lament tradition (not all traditions), the world of the dead is often referred to as 'downstairs', but has no clearly defined location. The personified being of the world of the dead (not identical to a personification of death) is called *Tuoni*, but in laments, the image of *Tuoni* has almost vanished. (Stepanova E. forthcoming.)

Within the available sources, the mythic world of Lithuanian laments appears to be structured into two layers: the world of the living and the world of the dead. There may be a third layer of divine powers, but this possibility must be explored through a more extensive corpus. In Lithuanian laments, the world of the dead is called *vėlių suolelis* (the bench of the dead), where the word *vėlės* refers to the souls of the dead, and the word *suolas* (bench) refers to the (social) status (cf. *marčių suolas* 'the bench of married women', *mergų suolas* 'the bench of girls').[17] In Lithuanian laments, as well as in Lithuanian and Latvian folk songs, the hill is a common image of the location of dead relatives or ancestors (Laurinkiene 1987, p.82; Fortunatov, Miller 1872, pp.123-127; Sprogis 1868, pp.224-225, items 61, 62, 65). A personified mistress of the other world, *Veļu māte* (Mother of the dead), is also encountered in Latvian folk songs (Sprogis 1868, p.217, item 16). The high hill of Lithuanian and Latvian tradition corresponds to some South Karelian, North Russian and some Finno-Ugric concepts about a high glass hill

[17] I am indebted to an anonymous peer-reviewer of this paper for his or her comments on and corrections to these terms, their significance and translation.

which the deceased should climb after his or her death (Haavio 1939, pp.71-72). The complexes of fields of meaning associated with these terms related to *vėlės* and the corresponding female being on the one hand, and the term *syndyzet* and also *Tuoni* with its derivatives of location on the other, present interesting potential parallels which will hopefully receive the benefit of detailed research in the future.

Conclusion

The traditions of Karelian and Lithuanian laments, as well as Lithuanian and Latvian folk songs, share numerous similar features. These features occur on all levels, from elementary aspects of the poetic language – their stylistic and grammatical features, poetic images and metaphors, building up to larger motifs and more comprehensive aspects of ritual activities. This shows that although the language of the tradition was different in each culture, they were utilising remarkably similar systems of traditional referentiality. These systems of traditional referentiality are necessarily rooted in the history of each tradition, drawing on its past in applications of 'word power' in the present.

Moreover, these traditions reflect common conceptions of death and the other world, where the ancestors of the community meet the newly deceased. These conceptions are also linked to the 'word power' and systems of traditional referentiality in each culture. The language and images of laments, and their organisation, communicate these conceptions reflected in each genre. If the sources accessible to me prove to be generally representative of the tradition, then the Karelian and Lithuanian laments appear to share certain significant features of mythology, worldview and beliefs, which are unlikely to be accidental.

This paper has focused on Lithuanian and Karelian traditions, as representatives of Baltic and Finnic cultures, respectively. However, neither culture existed in isolation. Therefore, it is essential to take into account other cultures with which these were in contact in different periods of history, exactly as A. Žičkiene (2002; 2005) has done in her musicological studies of laments across the Baltic, Slavic and Finno-Ugric traditions. There may be many layers of contact, of which Christian traditions might be a recent example. Other important cultural areas which must be considered are Slavic traditions, which have been mentioned repeatedly in this article, and also Germanic traditions. Germanic laments have not been preserved, but there is, for example, the mention of a woman lamenter performing at the burial ritual in the epic *Beowulf* (lines 3150-3155, cf. lines 1114-1118). By recontextualising the voices of Karelian and Lithuanian laments with their inherent meanings, we see that they may be two poles forming an axis on the vast historical plane of Finnic-Slavic-Germanic-Baltic contacts.

My goal here has been to open a dialogue with other researchers and to open possibilities for collaboration between scholars of different cultures, in order to make these traditions and sources available to one another for comparative research. It is extremely important for us to put these traditions into a context – not just the context of one lament among laments, or one singer among singers, but also of one culture among cultures.

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TIKĖJIMŲ ATSPINDŽIAI KARELŲ IR LIETUVIŲ RAUDOSE: BENDROS TRADICINIO REFERENTIŠKUMO SISTEMOS?

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Santrauka

Raudos yra vienas seniausių žodinės apeiginės poezijos žanrų, tyrėjų nuomone, priklausančių pirmykštėms folkloro atmainoms, ištakomis siekiančioms mirusiųjų kultą (Honko 1974, p. 9 ir ten esančios nuorodos; Tolstoj 1958, p. 25). Daugelyje kultūrų raudotojos būna moterys, o raudama paprastai per laidotuves, vestuves, jaunuolių palydas į kariuomenę ir kitokių apeigų metu. Tiesa, pasitaiko, kad raudama ir ne per apeigas.

Straipsnio tikslas – pradėti diskusiją apie karelų ir lietuvių raudojimo tradicijų, kaip ryškių atitinkamai finų (kitaip vadinamų Pabaltijo finais) ir baltų tradicijų atstovių, tarpusavio santykius. Daugiausia dėmesio skirsiu liaudiškojo religingumo, arba „tikėjimų“, atspindžiams, pastebimiems tiek karelų, tiek lietuvių laidotuvių raudų poetikos bruožuose, įvaizdžiuose ir motyvuose.

Tradicinės finų raudos paplitusios pirmiausia stačiatikių gyvenamose srityse, kur rauda išskirtinai vien moterys. Tiek apeiginių, tiek atsitiktinių raudų užrašyta iš karelų ir vepsų, taip pat Ingrijoje iš ižorų ir vodų bei iš Pietryčių Estijoje gyvenančių setų (Honko 1974; 2003; Nenola 1982; 1986). Visose finų raudojimo tradicijose pastebima savitų improvizavimo būdų. Raudų čia nesimokoma atmintinai, veikiau jos sukuriamos atlikimo metu. Kaskart konkrečioje situacijoje raudos kuriamos iš naujo, tačiau paisant tam tikrų formaliųjų tradicinių raudų registro bei motyvų ypatumų.

Esminė karelų ir kitų finų tautų raudų savybė, – kad ypatingas poetinis jų stilius jo neišmanančiam klausytojui yra nelengvai suvokiamas. Karelų raudose niekad tiesiogiai neįvardijami giminės ar artimieji, taip pat tam tikri daiktai ar reiškiniai. Vietoj tiesioginių jų pavadinimų vartojamos tam tikros užšifruotos metaforos ar netiesioginiai apibūdinimai. Ši kalbos ypatybė remiasi draudimu minėti kai kuriuos vardus ir pavadinimus, pavyzdžiui, itin vengiama tarti mirusiojo vardą. Raudų kalba ir atlikimas pasižymi savitais tradiciniais bruožais, kaip antai aliteracijomis, paralelizmais, taip pat gausybe daugiskaitinių ir deminutyvinių bei savybinių formų. Jų poetika nepaiso griežto metro. Pirminiai struktūriniai vienetai čia sudaromi remiantis nevienodos trukmės melodinių frazių ritmu ir atskiriami besikartojančių aliteracijų.

Lietuvių, kaip ir karelų, raudų tradicija yra buvusi svarbi tiek atskiro žmogaus gyvenimo ciklo, tiek ir apeiginio bendruomenės gyvenimo dalis; raudos vaidino tam tikrą vaidmenį per laidotuves, vestuves, veikiausiai – ir kitais atvejais. Jų tradicija siekia ikikrikščioniškąją praeitį, bet jos sugebėjo išlikti krikščionybės įsigalėjimo laikotarpiu ir iki pat šių dienų. Lygiai kaip karelų, tradicinės lietuvių raudos („verkimas žodžiais“) yra improvizacinės poezijos atmaina, atliekama moterų rečitatyvine melodija ir astrofine forma: panašiai kaip karelų raudų, jų poetikos pagrindą sudaro ne posmai ir ne metras, o sintaksiniai periodai. Lietuvių raudose galima išskirti tam tikras vietines tradicijas, tačiau jas visas sieja svarbiausieji poetiniai bruožai, kaip antai: paralelizmai, deminutyvinės formos, epitetai, metaforos ir retoriniai klausimai.

Raudos kaip reiškinys nuo seno domina skirtingų akademinių sričių ir įvairiausių pažiūrų mokslininkus: folkloristus, antropologus, muzikologus, kalbininkus. Nepaisant to, raudų rinkimas ir tyrimas iš esmės visą laiką lieka tarsi kitų dainuojamosios ir sakytinės tautosakos žanrų, pavyzdžiui, pasakų, sakmių, epo ir mitologijos šešėlyje. Tai pasakytina tiek apie karelų, tiek ir apie lietuvių raudas. Šiame straipsnyje aš remiuosi neskelbtomis karelų raudomis, saugomomis Istorijos, kalbos ir literatūros instituto (Karelų mokslo centro) Folkloro archyve bei raudomis iš vieno spausdinto rinkinio. Tai vienintelis paskelbtas karelų raudų rinkinys, kuriame raudų tekstai išversti ir į rusų kalbą.

Nors lietuvių raudos ilgą laiką intensyviai rinktos įvairiuose Lietuvos ir Baltarusijos regionuose bei skelbtos daugelyje spausdintų rinkinių, šie rinkiniai prieinami tik originalo kalba. Tai sudaro nemenkų sunkumų kitų šalių mokslininkams, kurie negali pasinaudoti šiais turtingais savo atliekamų tyrimų šaltiniais. Vos keletas lietuvių raudų yra buvę išversta. Šiame straipsnyje remiuosi gausiomis raudų citatomis ir keletu ištisinių raudų tekstų, išverstų į rusų kalbą, esančių Lidijos Nevskajos knygoje „Baltų-slavų raudojimas: semantinės struktūros rekonstrukcija“ bei Nijolės Laurinkienės straipsnyje „Pelesos laidotuvių raudos“, kuriame

kalbama apie Pelesos kaime, Baltarusijoje, užrašytas raudas. Be raudų, kaip papildomais šaltiniais dar naudojuosi lietuvių ir latvių liaudies dainomis, paskelbtomis rusiškai keliuose spausdintuose rinkiniuose bei studijose.

Taigi mano pateikiamas lyginimas remiasi labai ribotais lietuviškų raudų šaltiniais, kuriuos radau man suprantamomis kalbomis. Todėl būtina pabrėžti, kad mano pastebėjimai yra neišvengiamai sąlygiški tokiu pat mastu, kokiu man prieinami šaltiniai apskritai atspindi šio žanro visumą.

Anksčiau ypač rusų mokslinėje literatūroje, lietuvių ir apskritai baltų tautų folklorą buvo linkstama sieti su slavų tautų kultūra bei tradicijomis. Visos šios tautos kartu buvo laikomos sudarančiomis baltų-slavų kalbinę ir kultūrinę grupę, savo ruožtu siejamą su bendru kalbiniu ir kultūriniu indoeuropietiškuoju paveldu.

Baltų ir finų tautos turi ilgą kalbinių ir kultūrinių ryšių istoriją, ypač išsamiai tirtą kalbininkų bei archeologų. XX amžiaus pradžioje A. R. Niemi bandė tirti tradicinės baltų ir finų poetinės kūrybos sąsajas, ypač jį sudominusias po kelionių į Lietuvą 1908–1911 metais. Tačiau Niemi idėjos nebuvo išplėtotos iki išsamesnio lyginamojo tyrimo: etninės baltų ir finų grupės priskiriamos skirtingoms kalbų ir kultūrų šeimoms – atitinkamai indoeuropiečiams ir finougrams, todėl atrodo neparankios lyginti.

Regis, akivaizdu, kad tarp karelų ir lietuvių tradicijų esama bendrumų: tai ir raudojimo kontekstas, ir raudotojos, ir raudojimo stilius. Pagrindinis raudojimo kontekstas, *rites de passage* požiūriu, siejamas su ypatingais raudų motyvais, kurių reikalauja apeiginės jų funkcijos. Tačiau abiejuose apeiginiuose kontekstuose raudojimą sieja tas pats bendras registras, būdingas ir atsitiktinėms, ne apeigų metu pasitaikančioms raudoms. Abiejose tradicijose raudotojos buvo ir yra apeigas išmanančios moterys. Abiejose tradicijose raudos improvizuojamos; netgi apeiginėse raudose netrūksta su konkrečia situacija siejamų improvizacijų, įtraukiamų į poetinę raudų sistemą.

Šiame tyrime liaudiškojo religingumo išraiškos, atsispindinčios tradicinių raudų poetikoje, nagrinėjamos trimis lygmenimis: 1) stilistinių bruožų; 2) metaforinės ar formulinės kalbos išraiškos; ir 3) laidotuvių raudose esančių motyvų. Karelų ir lietuvių raudos, lygiai kaip ir lietuvių bei latvių dainos, pasižymi gausybe bendrų bruožų. Šių bruožų pasitaiko visuose lygmenyse, pradedant nuo elementarių poetinės kalbos aspektų: tai – stilistiniai ir gramatiniai bruožai, poetiniai įvaizdžiai ir metaforos, sudarantys stambesnius motyvus bei sudėtingus apeiginės veiklos aspektus. Visa tai rodo, kad nors skirtingos kultūros ir tradicijos turėjo skirtingą kalbą, jos visgi naudojo nepaprastai panašias tradicinio referentiškumo struktūras. Šios struktūros kiekvienoje kultūroje neišvengiamai būna nulemtos istorinės tradicijos, kurios praeitimi jos remiasi kaskart, pasitelkdamos „žodžio galią“. Negana to, šios tradicijos atskleidžia bendras sampratas apie mirtį ir anapusinį pasaulį, kuriame bendruomenės protėviai pasitinka neseniai iš gyvenimo išėjusius jos narius. Jeigu man prieinami šaltiniai iš tiesų atskleidžia visuminį tradicijos vaizdą, tai galima sakyti, kad karelų ir lietuvių raudas vienija ir tam tikri svarbūs mitologijos, pasaulėžiūros ir tikėjimo bendrumai, kurių toli gražu negalima laikyti atsitiktiniais.

Vertė Lina Būgienė