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RMN Newsletter welcomes its readership to support its function and value as an informational resource by submitting reports, announcements and other current information of interest to the RMN. We also encourage our readership to engage in the discourse space that we have constructed here, and promote an awareness that participation will buttress, maintain and shape this emergent venue.

For further information on guidelines for submission, please visit http://www.helsinki.fi/folkloristiikka/English/RMN/contributors.htm

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Editor's Note

It has now been two years since the pilot issue of *RMN Newsletter* was launched in response to the need for a medium of contact and communication for members of the Retrospective Methods Network (RMN). In that time, this new journal has been gaining momentum and its circulation is increasing almost exponentially. Scholars around the world appreciate *RMN Newsletter*'s strategy and goal of constructing an emergent discourse space in which you present reports and announcements of your own current activities, where information about events, projects and institutions is made available, and where you may engage in vital cross-disciplinary dialogue through discussion-oriented articles that address current research in diverse areas. The vitality of this discourse space is attested by the number of engagements between articles in the present and previous issues, and the productive discussion that has been generated between them.

The RMN itself has had a fruitful and exciting year. The RMN is an open network which can include anyone who wishes to share in its focus. It is united by an interest in the problems, approaches, strategies and limitations related to considering 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. Important international meetings, workshops and seminars were held by different branches of the RMN, including a meeting of Old Norse scholars in Aarhus, a seminar of the Austmarr Network in Helsinki and a meeting of the Old Norse Folklorists Network in Tartu only a few weeks ago. Preliminary plans for a larger meeting of the RMN are presently underway as are publications concentrated on these topics. This has truly proven a bountiful and productive year.

RMN Newsletter's vitality as a discourse space has also been seein in ongoing discussions in short articles and the success of our first special issue, *Approaching Methodology* (May 2012). A call for papers for our special issue *Limited Sources, Boundless Possibilities* will be found below. *RMN Newsletter* has been realized through your support and contributions as an interactive readership. We look forward to your ongoing participation in these stimulating discussions.

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COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Entering the Chimeraland of Indo-European Reconstruction

Emily Lyle, University of Edinburgh

Photo 1. Pebble mosaic in the Rhodes archaeological museum. Photo by TobyJ, 11 August 2010.[1]

I had the pleasure recently of attending the Old Norse Folklorists Network workshop held in Tartu where "Reconstruction" was one of the topics under discussion.[2] I was a bit startled on that occasion to see on the PowerPoint presentation unfolding behind Stephen Mitchell as he talked the word "chimera" placed opposite the concept of reconstruction in, I think, the Indo-European context. Now, if the word is taken in its common sense of a baseless fantasy, this would mean goodbye to the result of a good deal of recent scholarly effort. It seemed to imply that it is impossible that it is right, instead of saying that it is possible that it is wrong. The latter statement is the one that allows space for scholarly debate and I cannot think that Professor Mitchell would wish to remove himself from this arena. Perhaps more precisely one could say that attempted deep reconstructions in the past have proven chimerical. This is not the same as saying that all present and future attempts are doomed to fail. Instead, we can envisage the possibility of laying a more secure foundation and considering what can be raised on it.

However, the idea of the chimera is too good to let go. It suggests, for one thing, that we may wish to suspend disbelief for a while as we make our approach. And instead of treating the chimera as an insubstantial fantasy, I shall take it in its other sense of a complex creature. The proposed foundation is also complex and we cannot grasp its nature if we try to reduce it to what is familiar already, as, for example, a one-headed animal would be. We have to suspend disbelief long enough to incorporate parts of a complex

whole in our thinking, and I shall treat the topic of reconstruction under three 'heads', as one might call them in delivering a sermon, and, continuing the chimera metaphor, I shall take these to be: *a*) the lion head, *b*) the goat head, and *c*) the serpent head. The image of this tricephalous creature that I have in mind is a pebble mosaic at Rhodes which represents the chimera being attacked by Bellerophon mounted on Pegasus (Photo 1).

All of the points made in this discussion rest on a proposed relationship between mythic structure and a social order that has had no complete existence in Indo-European historical times but is postulated as having been present when the Indo-European gods first emerged in prehistory. For the lion head, I shall consider the triad of the functions as proposed by Georges Dumézil in the 1930s to 1950s and show how a more recent re-statement in other terms gives the functional triad a different and more secure base. For the goat head, I note that there may be other triads besides the functional one and that a misidentification by Dumézil of one specific triad as functional has prevented exploration of another triad which is seen as both functional and as playing a key role in a theogony. For the serpent head, I shall complement the birth of the gods with a parallel scheme of human descent.

I would like to invite scholars in the Old Norse and associated fields to take a look at the creature currently dwelling in Chimeraland, which seems to have been proving elusive. The determined hunter can track it down and, armed of course with a camera rather than a weapon in this enlightened age, can take a snap-shot of it and examine its features at leisure.

The Lion Head

The situation *re* Dumézil's theory of the three functions can be put in a nutshell. In the 1930s and 1940s, he proposed that there were three Indo-European functions of the sacred, physical force, and prosperity and fertility, and that these could be apprehended at the social level as priests, warriors and cultivators. Margaret Clunies Ross was among those who pointed out that social groups of this kind would not have been present at the appropriate period and firmly rejected Dumézil's position as regards society on these grounds, saying:

> The principal weakness of Dumézil's idea that all Indo-European societies shared an hierarchically-ordered, tripartite social structure with specialised institutions of priesthood, law-giving, warrior and agricultural pursuits, which had its reflex in a tripartite mythic ideology common to all the early Indo-European speaking communities, is that at the time when the ancestors of these historical peoples were still living in the Indo-European homeland and in some contact with one another, it is highly improbable that they would have been hierarchically-ordered, stratified societies. (Clunies Ross 1994 I: 16n.4)

Dumézil had, however, reconsidered his position by about 1950 (as he dates his revision in a later account of his work – Dumézil 1968: 15), and now argued that the concepts existed *qua* concepts and did not need to be tied down to social groups (cf. Littleton 1982: 267–275; Dubuisson 1991: 123–140). His final formulation of a trifunctional ideology existing only on the level of the ideal was vague in a way that made it all too easy to claim that the formula applied to a whole range of phenomena. It was, one might say, more 'modern' and could be worked with by scholars without their needing to get to grips with what might have been valid in a prehistoric society.

Into this scenario stepped the Irish scholar Kim McCone, who proposed that the three functions were those not of occupational groups but of life-stage groups such as are found in an age-grade society, that is to say that the three functions of the sacred, physical force and prosperity and fertility could be apprehended at the social level as old men, young men and mature men (McCone 1986; 1987; 1990). His theory has not, so far as I am aware, had much impact in the Old Norse field, but I am happy to acknowledge that it was Hilda Ellis Davidson who drew my attention to it. McCone's fullest study (1987) presented a good deal of linguistic evidence and, in the Germanic context, he commented on the well-known group of young men forming a *Männerbund*. He also saw the need

to consider the workings of an age-grade society in practice (cf. Bernardi 1985) and turned to East Africa for information. Following McCone's example, I explored the structures of age-grade societies more extensively and drew on East African material for a study that showed the triad arising naturally in a system of generation alternations that had the old and the young (1st and 2nd functions) in one alternation and the mature (3rd function) in the other (Lyle 1997). One result of the theoretical shift from occupational groups to life stages is, of course, that no objection can now be raised on the grounds that the structuring elements could not have been available in an unstratified society. Age grading could have been present.

The lion head, then, makes the claim: "We can show that Indo-European tripartition is feasible on a very old basis."

The Goat Head

The goat head speaks up and says:

> I can see that you've shown that the tripartition traced by Dumézil rests on a solider foundation than he knew himself, and that the new theory that it is derived from the divisions of an age-grade society in the remote past offers some endorsement of Dumézil's findings. So we can say that Dumézil was probably right after all, in spite of the scepticism with which his tripartite idea has been received in some quarters. But where does this leave us? Does it make any difference? Why has the concept not had a greater ability to resolve problems about the pantheon? I would say myself that it is because Dumézil was wrong as well as right. And my contribution to this chimerical composition is to say that, when Dumézil had his insight about functional tripartition, the example his case rested on for Scandinavia, consisting of Odin, Thor and Freyr (Dumézil 1994: 81, 232; Tschan 1959: 207–208), was a false one, and that we can only develop concepts of the Old Norse pantheon fruitfully if we put it to one side and consider instead the set that appears to be a true instance of the trifunctional triad: that of Odin, Vé and Vili.

Odin and his brothers, Vé and Vili, belong to the oldest stratum of beings born from a mother, but this briefly told Old Norse theogony is almost lost in the proliferation of interesting story materials, some of which deal with male pseudo-procreation, as Clunies Ross calls it (1994 I: 59, 144–186), and it has taken the intervention of the comparative approach to highlight its importance (Bek-Pedersen 2006: 331–332). The Indo-European myth concerning the three old gods treats a stage in the evolution of the cosmos (Lyle 2007), and so is something that it is quite reasonable to apply to the Old Norse first gods.

The story is briefly told in *Ynglinga saga* chapter 3, which is quoted and discussed by Karen Bek-Pedersen. Odin's two brothers lay with his wife while he was absent from his kingdom. This is a probable instance of a myth of the intercourse of a goddess with three gods, one of whom is an authority figure. The outcome is a wonderful birth and that is the point of the story. That outcome is lacking in the Old Norse context, but we can still identify the four characters. There is one goddess, Frigg. There is her husband, Odin, who is king. He is, however, an old-god king, and would in due course have yielded his place to the young king who is normally the result of this multiple mating. If the Old Norse story is an instance of the Indo-European motif, it has been skewed in such a way as to leave Odin in charge. The old-god husband has been identified as the 2nd-function figure to do with war, while the lovers are 1st- and 3rd-function figures. Of Frigg's lovers, Vé can be connected with the sacred (1st function) and Vili with desire and hence fertility (3rd function) on linguistic grounds (Bek-Pedersen 2006: 332; cf. de Vries 1970 II: 280, §517; Simek 1996: 355, 362).

Although the Old Norse multiple-fathers' story does not result in a son, there are major gods in the next generation who might, in a sense, be the missing young king, and Bek-Pedersen has speculatively suggested Baldr

for this role since he is the son of Odin and Frigg, although she is fully aware, of course, that the story does not run to its presumed conclusion.

The Serpent Head

"Yesss," hissed the serpent head (in true Hobbit fashion), "it is a possssibility that there is a trifunctional set of old gods with a truncated birth story attached to them, but doesssn't the ssstructure of the pantheon then have to involve dessscent as well as an age-grade-related triad?"

Indeed it does. Age grading does not exist in isolation and we can expect structural elements of kinship to be present also. If we consider descent in the multiple-fathers' story and have the three brothers at the temporal centre of the scheme, we can see the kinship structure as involving both the generation before them, which contained the female from whom they were born, and the generation after them. This gives a shallow lineage of three generations, and such a system occurs in Scandinavia (Vestergaard 1988). A study of lineage at the Indo-European level has proposed the existence of household units consisting of lineages of two or three generations (Huld 1997). There are also indications in the Celtic context and elsewhere that a key Indo-European kinship group consisted of four generations (Charles-Edwards 1993: 55, 187, 213–214, 471–472; Lyle 2006; 2012). In any case, whether there are three or four generations, the pantheon, as well as reflecting age grading, can be explored as a parallel to the human institution of a shallow lineage.

Concluding Remarks

"Can it be as simple as thisss?" asked the serpent head. "Is it sssimply a matter of defining a sssocial ssstructure in the generative prehistoric period that matches the indications in our mythology, and then going back to illuminate the myths from this fresh standpoint?"

"Perhaps it isn't going to be so very simple," said the goat head. "Remember that the theogony may begin with a female. That is going to raise status questions that could be bitterly debated."

"And an age-grade system like this rests on the concept of alternate generations," said the lion head, "and, although that is common enough and shows how deeply into the past the system goes, it does have implications for royal succession that cannot be totally paralleled in the East African context."

The heads fell into a reflective silence, and so let us leave them, until they are stirred by the quiet footsteps of an intrepid explorer advancing upon them with a camera, intent at all costs on securing an image of this intricate creature and bringing it back home from Chimeraland.

Notes

1. This image appears on *Wikipedia*, *s.v.* "chimera", and is reproduced from Wikimedia Commons where it is in the public domain, available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bellerophon_killing_Chimaera_mosaic_from_Rhodes.JPG (last accessed 13th November 2012).
2. The workshop was held on 1st–3rd December 2011. I would like to express my warm thanks to the organisers, Daniel Sävborg and Karen Bek-Pedersen, for the invitation to attend, and to the Swedish Riksbankens Jubileumsfond and the Department of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Tartu, for generously supporting the event.

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The Talk of the Tits: Some Notes on the Death of Sigurðr Fáfnisbani in *Norna-Gests þáttr*

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The famous *Norna-Gests þáttr*, preserved in *Flateyjarbók*, was especially popular among researchers of Scandinavian antiquities.[1] This could be partly explained by the fact that this text, recorded at the end of the 14th century, contained many direct references to a more archaic cultural layer. In the *þáttr*, one finds whole blocks of retellings and citations from poetry found in the *Poetic Edda* and informative remarks referring to it, as well as rather intriguing mention of the fact that eddic verse could be orally performed at the court of a king.

Among other parts of the *Edda* present in *Norna-Gests þáttr*, there is a song called *Guðrúnarbrǫgð hin fornu* ['The Old Perfidy of Guðrún']. It is precisely this song, in addition to the song of Gunnar's battle, that Gestr performs, playing the harp, before King Óláfr Tryggvason. Mention of the cycle of plots connected with Guðrún and Sigurðr Fáfnisbani ['Slayer of Fáfnir'] or the Dragon Slayer is not limited, of course, by the titles of the heroic songs. Indeed, Norna-Gestr is presented as a man who has lived several centuries and who has served many kings. He had been among Sigurðr's troops at the very beginning of his career, which is why Óláfr Tryggvason, the last ruler whom he meets, asks in detail about ancient times, addressing Norna-Gestr as a contemporary and eye-witness of those events.

One of the passages of this story is rather close to the text completing the *Brot af Sigurðarkviðu* in the *Poetic Edda*, where different versions of Sigurðr's death are described:

Poetic Edda

Hér er sagt í þessi qviðo frá dauða Sigurðar, oc vícr hér svá til, sem þeir dræpi hann úti. Enn sumir segia svá, at þeir dræpi hann inni í reccio sinni sofanda. Enn þýðverscir menn segia svá, at þeir dræpi hann úti í scógi. Oc

Flateyjarbók

Konungr mællti. huat uard Sigurdi at bana. Gestr suarar. su er flestra manna sögnn at Guthormr Giukason legdi hann suerde j gegnum sofanda j sæng Gudrunar. en þyuerskir menn segia Sigurd drepinn hafa

svá segir í Guðrúnar qviðo inni forno, at Sigurðr oc Giúca synir hefði til þings riðit, þá er hann var drepinn. Enn þat segia allir einnig, at þeir svico hann í trygð oc vógo at hánom liggianda oc óbúnom. (Neckel 1936: 196.)

Here it is told in this poem about the death of Sigurðr and the story goes here that they slew him out of doors, but some say that they slew him in the house, on his bed while he was sleeping. But German men say that they killed him out of doors in the forest; and so it is told in the old Guðrún lay, that Sigurðr and Gjúki's sons had ridden to the council-place, and that he was slain there. But in this they are all agreed, that they deceived him in his trust of them, and fell upon him when he was lying down and unprepared.

uerit uti a skogi. en igdurnar sögdu sua at Sigurdr ok Giuka synir hofd(u) ridit til þings nokkurs ok þa dræpi þeir hann. en þat er alsagt ar þeir uogu at honum liggianda at vuörum ok suiku hann j trygd. (Guðbrandur Vigfússon & Unger I 1860–1868: 355.)

The king said: 'How was Sigurðr slain?' Gestr answered: 'Most men say that Guthormr Gjúkason ran a sword through him when he was sleeping in Guðrún's bed. The German men say that Sigurðr was slain out in the woods. But small birds (tits?) said that Sigurðr and the sons of Gjúki had ridden to a Thing and they slew him then. But one thing is said by all, that they ventured on him when he was lying down and unprotected, and betrayed him during a truce.

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There is no word-for-word correspondence between these two extracts. Nevertheless, they are so close to each other that their textological connection is beyond question. This is related to interesting questions about manuscript transmission of these narrative traditions. It is possible that the author of *Norna-Gests þáttr* worked with some recorded text that was, at least in this part, close to the prose fragment we find in Codex Regius. The elucidation of the level and nature of this connection is not the goal of this study. Instead, I would like to draw attention to the lack of correspondence in one of the extracts of these two texts that seems more informative than some directly similar cases.

In the prose passage of the *Poetic Edda*, *Guðrúnarkviða hin forna* ['The Old Lay of Gudrún'] is indicated as a source of the information that Sigurðr was killed when he was going with Gjúki's sons to the thing. (The song named *Guðrúnarkviða hin forna* in the Codex Regius manuscript is consistently called *Guðrúnarkviða II* ['The Second Lay of Guðrún'] in all modern studies and editions of the *Poetic Edda*.) In the corresponding place of *Norna-Gests þáttr*, *igður* ['chickadees', 'blue tits' or some type of small twittering birds] are named as a respectable source of this information:

> en igdurnar sögdu sua at Sigurdr ok Giuka synir hofd(u) ridit til þings nokkurs ok þa dræpi þeir hann
>
> But small birds said that Sigurðr and the sons of Gjúki had ridden to a Thing and they slew him then

This of course seems mysterious to the modern reader.

Where on earth could those tits have appeared from that are equal in their testimonies to the Germans and to 'most men'?

When the original texts are analyzed, a clue to this mystery may appear before us. This is the wording with the name *Guðrún*: *í Guðrúnar qviðo inni forno*. In the manuscript, this reads:

> igvðrvn*ar* qv*i*þo i*nn*i forno

This word combination looks graphically rather similar to the text with the word designating these birds – the name of the birds being *igðurnar* (singular *igða*). Following this observation, the most probable explanation would appear to be that the divergence between the *Poetic Edda* and the *Norna-Gests þáttr* are, in this case, due to a mistake made during the adaptation process, during reading in the rewriting:

> ...oc svá segir í Guðrúnar qviðo inni forno, at Sigurðr oc Giúca synir... → ...en igdurnar sögdu sua at Sigurdr ok Giuka synir...

In other words, in both texts the same source was implied but its name in the younger

source was misrepresented, thus, *Guðrún* turned into 'tits' ('igvðrvn*ar*' → 'igðurnar').

These speculations seem all the more natural because of the fact that mistakes of this kind are recorded from time to time in almost all manuscript traditions of the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, this proposition must be approached very cautiously. The graphic transformations involving the formation of a new word – appropriately integrated into the context at the level of grammar – is rather an efficient phenomenon, but it occurs much more rarely than one might expect. Most often, it occurs if the word from the original text is not quite clear or unknown to the compiler/rewriter of the new text: usually, it concerns unknown names, the designations of 'exotic' things of reality, and words that indicate well-known things and phenomena that are themselves nevertheless rarities. It is in these cases where the universal mechanism of adaptation usually works, turning the unknown into the known, the strange into the familiar. The action of this mechanism is undoubtedly limited by neither the manuscript sphere, nor by the medieval epoch.

However, in our example, we deal with quite a different situation. Apparently, no one among those who made *Norna-Gests þáttr* had available the form of the material in which it is available to us in the *Poetic Edda*. Nevertheless, the name *Guðrún* and the plot aura connected with the name could not have been unknown. Even if, at some stage in the creation of the existing image of the memorial, 'tits' would have appeared by chance in the place of this name, then the error would have hardly remained in the text without special supporting explanations. Moreover, it is not likely that other parts of the sentence would be grammatically appropriate to this 'new' word usage without special reasons. In other words, the graphic similarity between 'igvðrvn*ar*' and 'igðurnar' would be insufficient in themselves for the substitution of one by the other to result in a formally correct phrase. This would instead make the extract quite senseless.

One may suppose that here the transformation is not graphic (or at least not exclusively graphic), based on a lack of understanding, but quite the opposite – based on the skillful manipulation of the heroic-poetic stories. In other words, the reference to 'evidence of the tits' regarding Sigurðr's death in Norna-Gest's narration is not made purely by chance, and is instead informed by eddic tradition. The matter is that tits or some other small twittering birds designated by the word *igða* play an important role in the stories about Sigurðr,[2] where it is told about the murder of the dragon Fáfnir and Fáfnir's brother Reginn (who was also Sigurðr's foster-father). As we recall, this is the turning point in the fate of the epic hero, the moment determining, in addition to everything else, many of the things that are to happen to him later. A prophetic role is given to the tits in this short passage.

According to *Fáfnismál*, having tasted blood from the heart of the dragon killed by him, Sigurðr began to understand the language of birds (*fuglsrödd*) and heard what tits were saying. The many-voiced dialogue of the tits told Sigurðr what he had to do immediately and what he had to do in the future. They said that he had to eat the heart of Fáfnir, kill Fáfnir's brother Reginn and acquire their gold. Having done all this, Sigurðr heard again what the tits were saying – they told him to seek King Gjúki's daughter and the hero follows their advice. Thus, it appears that it is the tits who know beforehand what will happen to Sigurðr: both his nearest and distant future are before long reflected in their dialogues. This, in fact, would seem to be the reason why it is more than natural to let the tits tell the story of one of the versions of Sigurðr's death.

The part of *Fáfnismál* under discussion is not presented in *Norna-Gests þáttr*. This small mention of the tits once more suggests that the composer of the *þáttr* knew some form of the *Poetic Edda* much better than can be judged from his direct eddic citations. As a matter of fact, he acts as a competent compiler of *Edda*, and as is practically inevitable in this kind of compilation, he, more or less, faces the task of 'criticism of the text', i.e. of the selection and, sometimes, interpretation of the evidence he had at his disposal. This process should be considered in light of the relationship of the adapted text to a manuscript exemplar more generally: the

copying process appears to have been more paraphrastic than a verbatim transcription, as is also found in variation between texts of Snorri Sturluson's so-called *Prose Edda* and prose texts of the *Poetic Edda*, as well as even in the manuscript tradition of Snorri's *Prose Edda* itself (exhibited in the Upsaliensus manuscript and *Frá Fenris úlfi* attached to *Litla skálda*).[3] If this is a generally accurate perspective on the compilation process, then 'criticism of the text' rather than rigorous subscription to exemplars would be natural and possibly even expected of the compiler.

It can be considered fairly certain that the tits did not appear as a result of a random transformation of the title of *Guðrúnarkviða*. The theme of causality is therefore admitted in these speculations. Indeed, as has been said, other sources named in the two prose fragments as the listed versions of Sigurðr's death are rather close to each other. Could the mention of stories told by the tits appear in those texts independently? Here, one should recall what the 'older' of the two extracts in question presents. This is the prose conclusion of *Brot* titled *Frá dauða Sigurðar* ['On the Death of Sigurðr']. The prose insertions in the eddic poems are the peculiar territory of story-telling, compilation, and commentaries to the poetic text they accompany. In this case, there appears to be an error in the commentary in the statement:

> Oc svá segir í Guðrúnar qviðo inni forno, at Sigurðr oc Giúca synir hefði til þings riðit, þá er hann var drepinn
>
> And so it is told in the old Guðrún lay, that Sigurðr and Gjúki's sons had ridden to the council-place/Thing, and that he was slain there

In the form that *Guðrúnarkviða hinn fornu* (*Gðr. II* hereafter) is known, there is no such tale about the murder on the way to the Thing.[4] It seems probable that this disagreement in the corpus of the *Poetic Edda* was not first noted only by the philologists or editors of the present era, but could have been observed centuries earlier.

If the composer of *Norna-Gests þáttr*, being aware of the fact that the passage of the murder on the way to the Thing was absent from *Gðr. II*, came across an opposed idea in the manuscript, it is quite probable that he would not only correct this inexactitude, but would think over its nature. The authority of the exemplar text did not allow any arbitrary change or mechanical elimination of this fact from the story. The excellent command of 'the language' of all the topics allowed him the supposition that the reference to the *Guðrúnarkviða* appeared as the consequence of an error in understanding or rewriting a mention of tits. In other words, the last commentator somehow returned to that preceding comment which seemed to him most valid.[5] He eliminated the incorrect reference, noticeable to his eyes, and apparently supposed that he was dealing with a distortion that had appeared in the manuscript he was analyzing due to the evident similarity of two alternative letter combinations – 'igvðrvn*ar*' and 'igðurnar'.[6]

Corrections – sometimes hypercorrect – by the hands of scholars such as the one discussed here are rather universal for different manuscript traditions, if we speak of the Middle Ages. Most often they appear in the course of a gradual mastering of the foreign source of another culture, be it a Bible text or a novel about Alexander the Great. In the present case, we are apparently faced with some early attempts of incorporated comments of the scribe on his own vernacular epic tradition (i.e. not abstracted exclusively from the written material). The comments were, in their way, very typical of the Icelanders: the thorough attention to the creation of a predecessor is finely combined with a spirit of competition with him, and there still existed a rather well-prepared audience to judge the products of such a competition.

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Notes

1. On *Norna-Gests þáttr*, see in particular: Hollander 1916; Harris & Hill 1989; Würth 1993; Imhoff

2006; McDonald 2011; cf. also Kaplan 2004; Rowe 2004.

2. Cf. Finnur Jónsson 1897: 201–202; Detter & Heinzel 1903 II: 418–419; von Hofsten 1957: 84–85; von See et al. 2006: 468.
3. The variation in the text as a whole was recently discussed by Heimir Pálsson (the variation between the U manuscript of *Edda* and other traditions) and by Frog (the relationship of *Snorra Edda* and the prose texts *Frá Ægi* and *Frá Loka* in the *Poetic Edda*). See Heimir Pálsson 2010; Frog 2011: 12–15.
4. For the discussion, see Zupitza 1873: 448; Kölbing 1874: 351–352; Detter & Heinzel 1903 II: 491, 493, 446–447; Boer 1922: 238, 270; Gering 1927–1931 II: 293.
5. Frog noted in his dissertation a similar revision in *Heiðreks saga* related to a change in the cultural referent providing a model for the brother-slaying (by the thrown natural object as a Baldr-slaying image to a sword equivalent to Mimingr / Mistilteinn / sword of Mimingus). Cf. Frog 2010: 273–277, 291, 296.
6. By doing so, he, perhaps, kept in mind that according to *Vǫlsunga saga* ['The Saga of Volsungs'] Sigurðr gave Guðrún some of Fafnir's heart to eat and after this 'she was much grimmer and wiser than before' (*Sigurðr gaf Guðrúnu at eta af Fáfnis hjarta, ok síðan var hún miklu grimmari en áðr ok vitrar*) (Ranisch 1908: 46). Moreover, in the prose fragment at the very beginning of *Gúðrúnarkviða I* ['The First Lay of Gudrún'] it is stated that Guðrún had eaten of Fafnir's heart, and that she understood the speech of birds (*Þat er sǫgn manna, at Guðrún hefði etit af Fáfnis hjarta ok hon skilði því fugls rǫdd*), just as Sigurðr did (Neckel 1936: 197). Cf. Finnur Jónsson 1917: 17, 26; von See et al. 2006: 467.

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Kuningamäng ['King Game']: An Echo of a Prehistoric Ritual of Power in Estonia

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Claims that the runic song tradition of the Balto-Finnic peoples has its roots far in prehistory[1] have been common in Estonian and Finnish folklore research. However, it has only been possible to argue that its trochaic metre must, according to linguistic evidence, originate from a period corresponding to the Proto-Finnic language (Korhonen 1994). Some scholars have also proposed different broad historical substrata within the archived folklore based on analysis of stylistic elements and motifs and comparative research (e.g. Kuusi 1963; see also Kuusi 1994a).

In the case of certain song genres, types or motifs, scholars have remained even less specific, giving only such superficial datings as 'very old' or 'originating in ancient times'. In this paper, I would like to demonstrate that in some cases we can use historical knowledge to project some elements of 19th century folklore into a much more specific temporal and cultural environment. In order not to have to present the entire textual corpus analyzed, I will refer to a seminar paper that I have written on this subject, where the relevant information can be accessed on-line (Siig 2012).

Introduction

The point of departure for this research was the hypothesis formulated by Aado Lintrop (2006) that the tradition of runic songs in Estonia was transferred from one generation to another during natural performance situations, but that during large-scale demographic and social turmoil (e.g. the Livonian War and the Great Northern War) parts of the tradition probably disappeared due to the absence of normal performance situations. Thus, the 13th century crusades and the replacement of the prehistoric social system with a new, foreign elite of mainly German origin might also have had a great impact on the tradition, especially concerning situations connected to power and public affairs. While, for example, wedding rituals continued to be held and managed to preserve some of their earlier traits, public ceremonies and rituals connected to power and the elite (whatever these might have been) soon went out of use when the local language and the bearers of the runic song tradition were expelled from the sphere of power.

It is not known with any certainty how central the position held by the runic song tradition may have been in the ancient public sphere. However, it appears the form of the runic song of the Finnic peoples was an advanced mnemotechnic device that provided the primary tool for stable and ritualized communication, a kind of a prehistoric code, as Matti Kuusi puts it (Kuusi 1994b: 41). In prehistoric times, and also in the Middle Ages, every notable event in the life of an individual or of a community needed to be ritually played out (Gurjewitsch 1989: 206–207). Given the role of runic song as a primary tool in stable ritualized communication, the runic song can be reasonably hypothesized to have played an important role in rituals associated with notable events in the lives of individuals, although these uses only survived in ritual activities which were not displaced, obviated or superseded in radical changes to social structures, such as wedding rituals.

This reasoning led me to pose the following questions. Let us say that, with the help of archaeology and history, it were possible to reconstruct some hypothetical performance situations or public rituals that went out of use or were forgotten during the transition from prehistoric to medieval society, i.e. as an effect of the replacement of the local elite by a new German elite starting from the 13th century. Would it then be possible to find some folklore texts from the 19th century in the archives which make no real sense in their own time, but could actually be remnants of an older tradition? If so, would it then be possible to connect these to hypothetically reconstructed performance situations?

An older Estonian song game called *Kuningamäng* ['King Game'] was selected to test this possibility. Older song games are a

group of Estonian folk games which combine folksong, dance and drama. They are characterized by a song in runic form, featuring alliteration, parallelism and the four-footed trochaic metre. Most of these songs are concerned with an ageless agrarian milieu and seem to be of common Balto-Finnic origin rather than later loans from Western Europe. Many scholars have proposed that these games have their origins in pagan rituals (especially fertility rites) and were formed in late prehistory (11th–13th century) or in the Early Middle Ages,[2] although this seems to be more of an 'intelligent guess' than based on thorough analysis. (Cf. Mirov 1996.)

This paper presents the hypothesis that the "King Game", documented by Estonian folklorists in the 19th and 20th centuries, has its roots in a Late Iron Age or medieval ritual or ceremony used to welcome a king travelling around his domain in order to collect taxes and exercise judicial power.

It should be noted that the present approach to this folklore text is clearly wholly historical. Consequently, what the game meant to people in the time when it was written down is not of interest to this investigation, although the final section will address aspects of historical continuity of use. Nevertheless, focus will be on what kind of historical data can be extracted from this traditional 'text'. The term 'text' is used here in a broader meaning than just a transcription or even a verbal entity, but rather is used to encapsulate both the verbal part of the game (the song) and the dramatic part of the game (performative activities). Although the interest of this article is historical, folklore texts will not be treated or compared in the same manner as medieval manuscripts in order to find an *Ur*-text. This would oversimplify the nature of cultural processes by not taking into account contextual and functional issues (for a new approach to cultural historical continuity see Frog 2012). Permanent and significant change in folklore texts (or in other types of cultural tradition) does not occur so much due to errors in the transmission of verbal units, but rather as a consequence of changes in the general cultural sphere (Frog 2012: 44–47). Therefore, it seems that the most stable elements of a text can be found on a level higher than a single verse. These elements carry an independent meaning and form a kind of a deep structure of the text. This deep structure is approached as an analytical construct, but the construct should correlate with a mental text or a scenario existing in the mind of the performer,[3] which is used to produce the individual performances. The present study is based on the hypothesis that this deep structure is much more constant through time than individual verses and therefore it is more reasonable to discuss genetic historical relations between deep structures (at least in cases where there has been a large span of time).

A Structural Analysis

The point of departure for this research was an analysis of all the variants of the "King Game" in the Estonian Folklore Archives.[4] The corpus is comprised of 123 variants recorded across the time period from the beginning of the 19th century until 1959. The geographical distribution of variants covers most of Estonia, but the greatest number of variants (40) originated from the western islands of Estonia (mainly Saaremaa) and the distribution density was lowest in Southeast Estonia (only one variant from Setomaa).

The text of the "King Game" was divided into elements in order to analyze the relation of individual parts to the whole. This made it possible to construct a model of the text's deep structure that could then be used in diachronic research. Statistical analysis showed the most common and fundamental traits. What then became evident as the deep structure can be described as follows.

In the beginning, players of the game are in a circle or in a row, walking or sitting. The player called the 'King' is separated from the other players, most frequently located in the centre of the circle. The game (as in most older song games) begins with an introductory song from the players that involves most of the verbal part of the game. At first, there is a vocative address to the King, followed by a reproach that he has come at the wrong time, since the current economic situation is worse than the year before or than at any other earlier time. This is

described in sharp contrast to beer flowing in rivers and wine from springs the year before: there is nothing left now, "in the poor time of spring". The players also complain that the King is now taking the last of their possessions and assets, mostly described in terms of jewellery. Both statistically and structurally, this seems to be the most crystallized and coherent verbal part of the game.

The game then continues with the King taking away possessions from the players as pledges. This part also features some singing, but it is much less coherent and more variable. Lastly, the players turn to the King and request the return of their possessions. In the associated song, they often explain the origin of their jewellery by stating that these are personal items of emotional significance. At the same time, the players express reluctance to give the King domestic animals in exchange. In the action of the game, the pledges are returned when players perform tasks given by the King.

The King in the game is particularly interesting. Being opposed to the players or, it could also be said, to the people, his role is characterized by being a guest whose visit is inevitable (the problem expressed by the people is not concerned with why he came, but why he came at this inconvenient time). He also has a right to a share of the community's wealth – if they are unable to treat him appropriately with a feast, he will take material possessions instead. This role is not just a descriptive element of decoration or setting; it is an essential part of the structure of the game. The role of the King does not correspond to any notion of a king in the modern era which could have influenced the creation of such a role and hence also the game. This invites the possibility that the role developed under social models current in an earlier period.

Only a handful of kings have ruled or claimed rule over Estonia: Magnus, (a very nominal) King of Livonia from 1570 to 1577, Danish kings in North Estonia from 1219 to 1347 and on the island of Saaremaa from 1559 to 1645, Polish kings in South Estonia from 1562 to 1625, and finally Swedish kings in the period from 1561 to 1710. However, there is no recognisable folklore about Danish kings and the traditions about Swedish kings are concentrated in legends about trees planted by them and hillocks beneath which they are supposed to be buried (Põldmäe 1940). The kings figuring in folktales are quite typical as they are characters of international story types. None of these kings present a reasonable or viable models for the King of the game and the motif of tribute to a visiting king that provides the structural center around which the game is organized.

Unless we want to claim that the role of the King and the game under discussion originate from random fantasizing or from out of the blue, it is necessary to investigate for a different, evidently older historical environment.

Itinerant Kings

At this stage, it is practical to turn to back in history and approach the issue from the opposite direction. It has been shown by linguists that the word *kuningas* ['king'] is one of the oldest loanwords of Germanic origin in the Balto-Finnic languages and was thus probably borrowed in the 1st millennium BC (Ariste 1956: 16). At that time, its meaning differed greatly from contemporary use – instead of a monarch of a centralized state, it rather meant a chieftain or a leader, a petty king at most (Ligi 1995: 215).

Due to the absence of literary sources, which came hand in hand with the formation of states, the exact nature of prehistoric or Iron Age kingship in Northern Europe generally and in Estonia in particular remains unclear. Some general traits can nonetheless be outlined. It seems that one of the key elements was that the domain of a king did not have a single fixed centre or capital; instead the king moved around his land, whereas his subjects had the obligation to host him (Gurjewitsch 1989: 262–263). In a way, this is a universal phenomenon characteristic to societies with a particular social order (chiefdom or early state) and means of communication, but it is most clearly attested in Early Medieval Europe (Bernhardt 1993: 45–84). In historical literature, this method of governing is sometimes referred to as 'itinerant kingship', although it is not

exclusive to kings, but could be practiced by whoever controlled a larger territory (see Bernhardt 1993: 45–84).

On the one hand, the presence of the king ensured the safety of his subjects and it was a matter of honour to host him. He was also the highest authority for administering legal disputes. On the other hand, travelling was important to the king himself to maintain political alliances. With the absence of officials and a state apparatus, the only possibility to maintain power over a larger area was to constantly move around that area. This system was also used to levy taxes. In the course of time, manors belonging to the king were erected at stopping points on the king's journey to make collecting taxes easier. This eventually led to the formation of administrative centres and gradually to a centralized state. (Gurjewitsch 1989: 262–263.)

Such a system is known for example from Kievan Rus' under the name *poljud'e* (Богуславский 2001). According to Byzantine writers, the Great Prince left Kiev in early winter and travelled through all the lands of the Slavic tribes that held allegiance to him. In the spring, when ice on the Dnieper melted, he returned to Kiev and shipped all the furs and other goods collected towards Byzantium. (Богуславский 2001: 183.) A similar practice (called *gästning* or *veizla*, referring to a common feast at which taxes were yielded) is also evident from Old Norse sources, although not so explicitly described (see Gurjewitsch 1989: 262–263). In Sweden, the duty of peasants to house their landlords (known as *gästningsrätt*) was in effect until the reign of King Magnus Ladulås (reign 1240–1290) (Odén 1961).

In his 16th century chronicle, Balthasar Russow describes how Estonian peasants from one administrative unit of land called a *wacke* hosted their lord with a feast every year after harvest. Taxes were also yielded during the lord's visit (Russow 1967 [1584]: ch. 49). This institution seems very similar to the itinerant kingship known from earlier periods, but the scale is much smaller and it takes place on a lower level. The visiting lord is not a king at the top of the social hierarchy, but a local-level nobleman or vassal. Although this is not itinerant 'kingship' in the sense of a 'king' as the pinnacle of the hierarchy of the social order, it is a similar practice exercised on a smaller regional level in a time when itinerant kingship had already gone out of practice at the highest level of social and political authority. It should also be noted that this is the latest description of this institution – hosting was gradually abandoned and in its place a tax yielded in natural goods was introduced. Archaeologist Valter Lang has argued that this system traces back at least to Late Iron Age Estonia (11th–13th centuries) where it likely centred around a local chieftain residing in a hill-fort (Lang 2006). Similar systems are also known from Latvia, Northwest Russia and Karelia (Lang 2006: 157–158). According to Lang (2006: 132), hosting the tax-collector with a feast is one of the defining elements of this prehistoric political system. Paying tribute to the visiting king at a ritual feast (*veizla*) was also central to Scandinavian kingship or even to Germanic kingship in general (see Sundqvist 2002: 206; Gurjewitsch 1989: 262–263). Sources on these early periods are limited, especially concerning the East Baltic. Nevertheless, it is highly probable that, at least in the end of prehistory and the beginning of the Middle Ages (11th–14th centuries), some institution of itinerant kingship was current as an institution maintaining social and political authority in territories of what is now Estonia.

This short introduction should be sufficient to indicate that this kind of a cultural environment parallels the role of the King in the "King Game" of Estonian folklore surprisingly well. In both cases, from the viewpoint of a local population, the king is not someone residing in some faraway castle, but a regular guest who has to be hosted and who takes away a share of the wealth of the population (taxes). This correspondence is too profound and exceptional to be explained only by mere coincidence. It is hardly plausible that such a role of the King would be created and sustained by players of the game in the 19th century in whose time the concept of kings was very different. Rather it seems that this ancient concept which was presumably current in the 11th–13th centuries has somehow been preserved in the structure

of a 19th–20th century game. As a supporting argument, it should also be noted that other song games of the same structure and type as the "King Game" are thought to have originated from the end of prehistory as well (see above).

There is one more element in the game which is of interest. The taking of pledges (Estonian *pandid*) seems to be the most intrigue-creating part of the game (see further below). It seems that this has been an essential part of the structure of the whole game from the beginning, and it is thematically strongly connected to the introductive song. It is noteworthy that *kihl*, the ancient word for 'pledge' in Estonian, is often considered the etymological foundation of the ancient land division *kihelkond*, meaning that giving pledges to the leader held the territory together (Lang 1996: 153). It is entirely possible that the pledges given in the game once represented pledges that were indeed given to the king in the course of this hypothetical ritual.

However, it is not sufficient to stop here, only showing that there is a striking parallel between a historical phenomenon and a folk game. A text (in this case a game) is not a thing in itself, and it cannot be transmitted across generations without people or without performances. This leads to the problem of the social situations in which this game emerged.

The song part of the game presents little in the way of narrative and instead constructs more of a dramatic situation. It is therefore hardly plausible that this verbal part of the game could have earlier been a narrative song. Instead, I propose that the song part is a reflection of social realities current in an earlier period, a dramatic situation corresponding to the circumstances described in the verbal part. In this case, the game would reflect a ceremony which was held to welcome the arrival of the itinerant king. It should be kept in mind that earlier scholars have also seen the origin of older song games in calendrical rituals (see above). We do not have historical sources to prove or disprove that there were special welcoming rituals with a fixed poetic structure performed along the king's route. However, these were periodical events important in the life of the community and most probably required a proper or even solemn introduction. Also, it is known from Old Norse sources that the hosting of the king in any given location was closely tied to local calendrical rituals and there were formalized rituals involved which had to be followed precisely to guarantee the well-being of the society (Sundqvist 2002: 204–211, 366–369). Moreover, insofar as all notable events in the life of an individual or society were marked by special ceremonies at that time (Gurjewitsch 1989: 206–207), it is reasonable to postulate that these events were also marked by special ceremonies, while the significance of these events in the affirmation and assertion of social and political authority increase the likelihood that the ceremonies were highly formalized and structured.

Due to limitations of space, it is not possible to discuss here the most probable period of time for the existence of an itinerant king system in cultural areas now identified as Estonia. Nevertheless, the Late Iron Age (i.e. the 11th–13th centuries) would be the most probable. Social and political development within the native society had reached its highest level in prehistory during this time (Kriiska & Tvauri 2002: 185ff.). However, the Early Middle Ages (i.e. 13th–14th centuries) are also possible as we do not have an abundance of written sources about this period either, and in many places the local elite probably maintained its position and old customs for some time. These persisting old traditions could also be seen in the *wacke*-institution attested in the 16th century (presented above). Whatever the case, there can be little doubt that a form of itinerant kingship had currency in parts of Estonia at least by the Early Middle Ages if not earlier, and that whatever the precise form of itinerant kingship, it was almost certainly associated with formalized and structured ceremonies surrounding the reception of the itinerant king by his hosting subjects.

Changing and Continuing Folklore

It is also important to follow the later development of the alleged ritual and show what motives people may have had to continue performing and reusing this text, and

to continue doing so in a way that still allows its roots far in prehistory to be discernible. If it were a ritual, it must have been performed in non-ritual contexts as well, in order for a transition towards a game to take place. For example, it is possible that it originates from children mimicing adults' behaviour or using the ritual song to form their own game. This is a conduct common for children's lore (Vissel 2004: 36). Whatever the non-ritual context was, the ritual use became obsolete and the original meaning of the text faded until eventually the text became exclusive to its form as a game.

Even if we consider that this ritual maintained its original function in remote areas of Estonia until the 15th century,[5] it still leaves us a 450-year gap with two devastating wars between the social realities in political practice and the first archived descriptions of the "King Game". This raises questions concerning its persistence throughout this time, especially if it had been separated from an original social and political context so that it no longer reflected any well-known realities in contemporary society. It also raises the question of why people playing it continued calling the main role 'king' and not 'baron' or 'emperor', which, though figuring in poetic parallel constructions, are statistically quite rare and are not notably connected to the poetic structure of the song (e.g. they are not alliterated with other words, which is very much the case with the word 'king') (Siig 2012: 19).

Associations with the Swedish king figuring in Estonian folklore might have had an effect on the persistence of the name 'king', but kings figuring in folktales may have as well, and last, but not least, the Church calendar and ecclesiastical literature may also have played a role in this process. For example, in one description, it is said that it was "the game of the Three Kings" and it was played on the Church holiday Three Kings' Day (Wiedemann 1876: 7, 1). In another variant, the king is addressed as "the king of Babylon", which is most probably something inspired from the Old Testament (cf. Faherty n.d.). However, these idiosyncratic connections have not altered the structure of the game. The structure as such was probably held firmly together by the idea of taking and giving pledges, which created tension and allowed something universally relevant – good possibilities for socialization between young men and women. In many descriptions, tasks for redeeming the pledges involve kissing or other courtship activities, thus they were used to show one's sympathy towards a member of the opposite sex in a coded and regulated way.

From the 19th century, sources are already available for tracking the folklore process, but it is quite clear that by then the game was already fading away, only surviving in remote areas. For example, the game was recorded most from the western islands (see above) which were far from major centres and important objects of ethnographic study in the first half of the 20th century. The last recorded variants also originate from this area (Siig 2012: 12, 43). The same process is evident in the case of other older game songs in Estonia, which were also forgotten in the process of the modernization of society and a new wave of cultural influence from towns (Rüütel 1980). Records from the end of the 19th century already describe it as an old-fashioned game, which was not in use anymore. Most of the informants have been old people and this is especially the case with the latest variants documented in the 1950s. Thus, what can actually be seen is more of a static picture. In some late cases, the song part makes no sense at all and the game part prevails. It is interesting, however, that the game part, involving giving and taking pledges, persists even after the song is lost and takes on the form of simple pledge-games, which have been recorded in the Estonian Folklore Archives in a much greater quantity than the "King Game" itself. On the one hand, this indicates the influence of new traditions and motivations (the song part becoming irrelevant), and on the other hand, the vitality of the pledge-giving (or the action part) shows its centrality to the game. Evidently, the action must have been the glue that held the structure together and gave sense to the elements so that institutions from distant centuries can be linked to it today through the archival sources.

Notes

1. In Estonian history, the end of prehistory and the beginning of the Middle Ages is marked by military campaigns by German and Danish crusaders into the territory of modern Estonia. Traditionally in historiography, these events are seen as the Ancient Struggle for Freedom (*Muistne vabadusvõitlus*), which took place between 1208–1227 and which was followed by the replacement of the native elite with a new Dano-German (mainly German) elite. In a broader regional perspective, these events were part of the Livonian Crusades (1198–1290) or the even wider Baltic Crusades that lasted from the 12th century until the 15th century and encompassed Pomerania, Prussia, Lithuania and Livonia. The terms used for historical periods in this article will be based on this chronology of Estonian history.
2. In Estonian history, the Early Middle Ages signify the 13th and 14th centuries. The Middle Ages as a whole start from 1227 and end with the outbreak of the Livonian War in 1558.
3. I am referring here to works done on the cognitive research of variability in oral tradition, where one of the main claims has been that instead of memorizing everything word-for-word there is a mental structure in the mind of the performer which is used to reproduce the text for individual performances. (See Honko 1996; Pyysiäinen 2000.)
4. Sample texts can be found in Tedre 1999: http://www.folklore.ee/laulud/erla/e55.htm#L476
5. There are more historical sources starting from the 15th century, and judging from these, most of the old local political structures had by then been replaced by newer models associated with the German elite.

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On the Case of *Vambarljóð* I: Comments on Formulaicity in the *sagnakvæði*

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In the last issue of *RMN Newsletter*, Haukur Þorgeirsson (2012) presented a case study of probable and possible formulaic language in the poem *Vambarljóð*. *Vambarljóð* is one of the *sagnakvæði* ['folktale poems'], a neglected poetic narrative genre that exhibits a potential continuity of meter and poetic system from Old Norse so-called 'eddic' poetry. Þorgeirsson focuses on correspondences in other poetry and early prose recorded in Iceland (primarily) since the 13th century, taking particular interest in the occurrence of formulaic language across different *sagnakvæði* and across poetry of different periods and of different meters. His study presents a number of valuable observations and makes accessible all examples reviewed in his data. This provides a valuable foundation for the further discussion and exploration of this tradition.

The present two-part article engages Þorgeirsson's work in dialogue on the basis of data and analyses of 55 potential formulae organized there into four categories. Three categories are developed according to the range of distribution of the potential formulae in the corpus, kennings are then separated as formulae of a special type that was also characteristic of the narrative poetry known as *rímur*. Examples will be referred to according to the indexing in Þorgeirsson's survey:

M1–13 = Attestations in more than two poems
T1–26 = Attestations in only two poems
V1–5 = Attestations only in *Vambarljóð*
K1–11 = Kennings

(All poetic citations are according to Þorgeirsson 2012 unless otherwise noted. Owing to the emphasis on structural units in this discussion, Þorgeirsson's translations have been adapted to more accurately reflect the line-breaks in the verses. This priority has sometimes resulted in syntax that is archaic or simply clumsy in English.)

The first part of the present article will outline a narrower definition of 'formula' than employed by Þorgeirsson and will then advance to consider some structural differences between identified formulae and metrical lines, alliteration and parts of speech. This will be followed by an outline of more complex verbal systems that can be described as 'multiforms'. This will all provide a background for Part II of this article, where a register-based approach is introduced to address the contextual occurrence of formulaic language across different poems. This discussion will lead to the puzzle of a lack of formula correspondences across

sagnakvæði and *rímur* poetry. A working hypothesis that could explain this will then be illustrated through the triangulation of earlier studies on medieval Icelandic poetry.

Although the final discussion turns attention to a diversity of data and other studies, this remains a response to Þorgeirsson's study and the discussion surrounding the *sagnakvæði* remains conditional on the data surveyed there.

A Note on Meter

Insofar as meter is relevant to the present discussion, the meter will be briefly and broadly introduced here, preparing the reader for the terms 'long line', 'short line' and '*Vollzeile*' that will be used in discussion.

The *sagnakvæði* appear to exhibit a reflex of the so-called *fornyrðislag* meter of Old Norse medieval eddic poetry, which was itself a reflex of the common Germanic epic alliterative tetrameter. The so-called Germanic long line had four stressed positions and a variable number of unstressed syllables that could be distributed around these. Between the two pairs of stressed positions, there was a caesura. Alliteration united the long line around this caesura: the syllable in either stressed position of the first half of the line (= short line) alliterated with the syllable in the first stressed position of the second half of the line. The final stressed position did not participate in alliteration. In *fornyrðislag*, the caesura has been considered sufficiently pronounced that modern editorial practice normally treats (and numbers) each half of the Germanic long line as an independent short line. An additional type of poetic line called a *Vollzeile* ['full line'] is occasionally relevant in the earlier poetry: a *Vollzeile* is a complete line that is only a half-line or a short line in length with two alliterating syllables.

In the *sagnakvæði*, certain rules concerning which syllables should occur in metrically stressed positions were relaxed, as were the rules governing which syllables and categories of words should carry alliteration. However, alliteration remained important and the variable number of syllables surrounding stressed positions remained. The ability to present a variable number of syllables is important for considering variation in formulaic language. This allows words which are grammatically unnecessary (e.g. some conjunctions and pronouns) and/or semantically light words to be added or omitted with no noticeable change in the meaning of the line, as encountered below.

Formulaic Expression

Þorgeirsson was centrally concerned with philological questions of correspondence in verbal expression across different oral-derived texts and the distribution (both positive and negative) of those correspondences. His study can be fruitfully complemented by approaching the data according to formal and structural aspects. Þorgeirsson used 'formula' as a general and practical descriptive term for such correspondences. In order to approach and clearly distinguish certain aspects of formulaic language, the term 'formula' will be more narrowly defined as a concept and analytical tool. Formulaic language and formulaic sequences will here be approached as a general linguistic phenomenon that happens, in this data, to occur in an oral-poetic system.

Rather than beginning with a general approach to the formula and examining how it occurs in oral poetry, discussions of formulae in oral poetries tend to begin with the identification of patterned language use in the poetry and identify these as formulae. The most common approach to oral-poetic formulae is grounded in the philological frequency-based analyses of Oral-Formulaic Theory. Milman Parry (1928: 16) defined the formula as "an expression which is regularly used, under the same metrical conditions, to express a particular essential idea." Parry falsely believed frequency was *necessarily* evidence of the functionality of formulae in rapid oral-poetic composition (cf. Finnegan 1976). In cognitive linguistics, formulaic language has become generally recognized as alleviating cognitive processing in both the production and interpretation of expressions,[1] but it does not follow that formulaic language is *only* used to alleviate cognitive demands like a box of verbal Legos (cf. Foley 1995; 2002), nor that frequency can be considered a valid criterion for identifying individual formulae (Wray 2002: 25–31). Oral-

Formulaic Theory opened this limited definition in important ways, especially in terms of the demand for metrical fixity (e.g. Hainsworth 1968).[2] Exploring patterns in oral-poetic composition and reproduction led to a sort of formula-boom: a very broad range of phenomena became labelled as 'formula' without definition according to consistent parameters.[3] This has problematized the use of 'formula' as an analytical term. One consequence is that diverse compositional strategies at different levels become grouped into a single category, making it difficult to unravel distinctions between them and their relations to one another (cf. Harvilahti 1992).

Following Alison Wray (2002), a verbal formula can be broadly defined in terms of morpheme-equivalence – i.e. a formula is characterized by a coherent unit of meaning. Wray thus defines a formulaic sequence as:

> a sequence, continuous or discontinuous, of words or other elements, which is, or appears to be, prefabricated: that is, stored and retrieved whole from memory at the time of use, rather than being subject to generation or analysis by the language grammar. (Wray 2002: 9.)

Wray's definition connects with Parry's foundation for the formula in "a particular essential idea" but without strict demands of verbal fixity or metrical binding. Although formulaic language is a social phenomenon, this definition treats the formula as a phenomenon at the subjective level of the individual connected with cognitive processing. Formulaicity therefore describes a phenomenon of how language functions without dependence on frequency, metrical position or whether that phenomenon is analysable according to rules of the grammar (e.g. by someone unfamiliar with the formula). This definition provides a valuable point of departure for considering interfaces of formulaic language with memory and memory-specialization (Rubin 1995) as well as competence in use (e.g. Harvilahti 2000) or 'native-like fluency' (e.g. Pawley 2009).

Beyond Frequency

Þorgeirsson's study has identified correspondences in expressions between eddic poetry and *sagnakvæði* suggestive of some type of continuity in the oral-poetic tradition. Even if some of these might be related to oral-written interfaces across several centuries, the general impression is that there was some continuity rather than a break and reinvention of the oral poetry tradition on the basis of medieval manuscript texts.

A significant number of expressions identified were not previously acknowledged as 'formulae' in eddic scholarship. This is because these expressions were only attested in the eddic corpus in a single poem, and in a specific context. An important aspect of Wray's definition of the formula is that it changes the frame of reference for approaching frequency and the diversity of contexts in which a particular expression occurs. The frequency-based philological studies in the background of Oral-Formulaic Theory present viable statistical methods for identifying certain formulae, yet there is also a large number of formulae that occur only rarely or in highly specific contexts (cf. English *beyond the pale* or *cabbages and kings*). Even in a very large database, such expressions might only be encountered once or not at all. (Wray 2002: 25–31.) This has implications for assessing formulaic language in oral poetries by acknowledging statistically infrequent formulae that eluded Parry's early model. This is especially relevant to oral poetry and oral-derived poetry which is much more conservatively reproduced and shorter in length than South Slavic epic and Homeric epic on which Oral Formiulaic Theory was initially developed.

Especially when approaching medieval poetries where corpora are quite limited, formulaic language is identified according to multiple occurrences within a single text or across different texts. Expressions for which multiple attestations are lacking do not become regarded as 'formulaic'. However, the definition advocated here allows for formulae that are rare or even specific to a single image or event in only one socially circulating poem. Such formulae are quite prominent in some traditions. For example, Finno-Karelian kalevalaic poetry conserves such specific uses of formulae that Leea Virtanen (1968: 55) observes: "a researcher

can usually say without difficulty to which song particular lines belong." Lotte Tarkka (2005: 65) has highlighted that such formulaic lines could also occur and be manipulated elsewhere. Nevertheless, it is precisely the conventionalized patterns of use and narrow sets of associations that construct the meaning-potential of these espressions when used in those alternative contexts (cf. Foley 1995). Within a corpus of hundreds of thousands of poetic lines, narrow conventions of use can be approached statistically (e.g. Frog 2010a: 400–405) and can potentially offer highly developed perspectives on variation in how that formula was used (e.g. Frog 2010b; 2011b).

Identifying formulae of extremely narrow use is nevertheless dependent on multiple, independent attestations. Þorgeirsson observes that there are multiple independent documentations of some *sagnakvæði*, including *Vambarljóð*. The fact that Þorgeirsson only draws attention to variation in a few cases where it is prominent suggests that it is quite minimal throughout the rest of the text. This is more interesting because the medieval corpus of eddic poetry presents several examples of independently documented passages from particular eddic poems.[4] However limited the sources, these multiple attestations nevertheless offer some perspectives on conservatism in reproduction in this poetic tradition (cf. Lönnroth 1971; Harris 1983). If the *sagnakvæði* present a continuity of tradition from eddic poetry traditions (even if of different narrative genres), exploring variation in the formulaic language of the *sagnakvæði* at the level of poem-specific formulaic language has potential to develop greater insights into how both these poetries functioned in social circulation and reproduction. This could also offer insights into potential long-term continuities in Icelandic oral-poetic traditions. Poem-specific formulaic language could be a valuable area of future exploration.

Formulae and Non-Formulae

Approaching the formula in terms of morpheme-equivalence not only opens to phenomena that are easily overlooked in frequency-based analyses: it has the benefit of allowing formulaic language to be distinguished from other types of phenomena and compositional strategies. Although Wray's definition is extremely broad, it distinguishes formulaic language from, for example, so-called purely metrical formulae (Foley 1976), structural formulae (cf. Foley 1988: 63, 69, 87) and syntactic formulae (cf. Foley 1988: 69; Mellor 1999 [2008]: 166–168). This is an essential step in considering how different aspects of composition and reproduction interact with one another.

Defining a formula in terms of morpheme-equivalence also has important consequences at the lexical level. For example, kennings (addressed below) can be approached as semantic formulae in spite of the range of verbal variation with which they may be realized (see Holland 2005). Conversely, the co-occurrence of words does not itself qualify as a formula. Thus word-pairs used to accomplish alliteration (or rhyme, etc.) do not necessarily constitute a formula according to this approach. The latter distinction can be illustrated with T22: *kappsamur konungur* ['the energetic king'], compared with *Nórgskonungatal* 4.1–2 *tók kappsamr / við konungs nafni* ['the energetic one took on the name of king'] and 14.1–2 *réð kappsamr / fyr konungdómi* ['the energetic one held the kingship']. The semantic relationship between *kappsam*(*u*)*r* and *konung*(*u*)*r* differ across all of these contexts. If there is a continuity across them, that continuity is as an alliterative collocation, not as a formulaic expression; it is not associated with a coherent unit of meaning. This does not mean that *kappsamur konungur* was not a formulaic expression in *Vambarljóð*: it seems to be realized consistently even when the context undergoes variation in different variants of the poem (Þorgeirsson 2012: 188–189) and may therefore be considered a formula potentially specific to the particular poem (although this remains conditional on the limited data set of the thin corpus).

Kennings

A kenning is a poetic circumlocution, a type of rhetorical construction of a noun modified by another noun (in a genitive construction or as a compound word) referring to a third

higher concept – e.g. K1: *bauga deilir* [‘divider of rings’ = ‘ruler’], K5: *seima Bil* [‘Bil of gold’ = ‘woman’] or K8 *língrundin* [‘the linen ground’ = ‘woman’]. Old Norse kennings are characterized by verbal variation enabled by the richly developed vocabulary of poetic synonyms called *heiti*. In spite of this verbal virtuosity, a kenning qualifies as a semantic formula according to the definition outlined above. The verbal variation made it possible to meet contextual demands of alliteration and rhyme in so-called skaldic poetry while realizing a consistent morpheme-equivalent unit of meaning. (See e.g. Meissner 1920; Fidjestøl 1997; Osborne 2012.) However, once a poem had been composed, the aspect of verbal virtuosity was crystallized in the particular composition. Within the context of Þorgeirsson’s study, kennings provide an important area for the discussion of differences in poetic language between *sagnakvæði* and *rímur*.

Eleven of the 55 formulae (one in five) reviewed by Þorgeirsson are kennings:

(1) Kennings in *Vambarljóð*

(i) ‘Ruler’-kennings

K1:	bauga deilir	‘divider of rings’
K2:	skatna drottinn	‘lord of men’
K3:	gumna dróttin	‘lord of men’
K4:	rekka dróttinn	‘lord of men’
K10:	herja stillir	‘commander of hosts’

(ii) ‘Woman’-kennings

K5:	seima Bil	‘Bil of gold’
K6:	auðar Bil[5]	‘Bil of wealth’
K7:	hlaðsól	‘lace-sun’
K8:	língrundin	‘linen-ground’
K9:	veiga þöll	‘fir-tree of beverages’
K11:	bauga þilju	‘plank of rings’

This type of formula provides a useful point of departure for considering other structural types of formula. In Þorgeirsson’s typology, kennings are identified as those that have been verbally realized within the poetic text rather than as a productive compositional template. They are thus treated as potentially crystallized verbal formulae employed as compositional text-resources. In other words, rather than kennings functioning as generative semantic formulae that could be variably realized within different patterns of alliteration and rhyme, these kennings are nearer Parry’s expressions that are “regularly used, under the same metrical conditions, to express a particular essential idea” – albeit with potentially greater metrical flexibly. The potential for kenning productivity is nevertheless illustrated in the case of variation in K6 where *Lín* appears as an alternative heiti for *Bil* (*auðar Lín* [‘Lín of wealth’]) with no discernible semantic or metrical impact: (Þorgeirsson 2012: 193). This variation appears to be semantically light or void (cf. Frog 2011a: 33–34) and such variation appears to be exceptional.

Generally, the presentation of evidence suggests that kennings became conventionally realized in a particular verbal form and these could be drawn on directly as compositional resources. Unlike the scrambled syntax of earlier skaldic poetry, the two elements of the kennings seem invariably adjacent to one another within a single short line. The two constituent nouns (heiti) do not alliterate with one another. Curiously, all kennings addressed fall evenly into only two semantic categories: ‘ruler’-kennings (1i) and ‘woman’-kennings (1ii). Although Þorgeirsson (2012: 182) observes that the *sagnakvæði* exhibit “a certain feminine sensibility and taste”, it seems noteworthy that these semantic categories of kenning were already among the most prominent in the medieval period (Meissner 1920), when masculine heroic sensibilities seem to have predominated. Jonathan Roper (2011) has discussed the development of poetic synonymy in alliterative poetry in relation to the interests and priorities of users and their social and cultural environment. It is interesting that the use of kennings here simultaneously exhibits both continuity and such narrow use in spite of probable radical changes in cultural practices and users.

Other Formulae within a Short Line

The kennings are very similar to other noun-phrase formulae such as T25: *ýta mengi* [‘a multitude of men’]. This is a genitive construction in which the base-word (*mengi* [‘multitude’]) is already reflects the concept of the whole (in contrast to a kenning). Constructions in which an adjective rather than another noun modifies the base-word are

also found, like T22 and T19. In the case of M2: *svinn seima Bil* [‘wise Bil of gold’], the kenning functions as a simple noun – i.e. as a morpheme-equivalent unit corresponding to a noun. Formula M2 thus seems to function as a two-part construction (adjective+kenning). Alliteration here unites the adjective and the noun-equivalent formula that it modifies although the listed kennings do not alliterate internally. The first word in kenning K4 carries alliteration in T14 (below), while Þorgeirsson observes that in T21: *kóngur víðrisinn* [‘king who gained renown from (*hapax legomenon*)’] with its parallel *gramr vígrisinn* [‘the king who gained renown from battle’], the varying synonym is the word carrying alliteration in each noun phrase. Only one of the possible (but uncertain) two-word formulae is distributed across short lines – T24: *mannvit meist* [‘most good sense’] – which carries the alliterative pattern in the long line in *Vambarljóð*, and in a *Vollzeile* in eddic verse (*mannvit mikit* [‘much good sense’]). An additional noun-phrase formula can be considered either a two-part or three-part construction. This is T12: *X-vaxin mær* [‘X-grown maiden’], in which X is realized variously by *ljót-* [‘ugly’] and *vel-* [‘well’], and could potentially have been completed by other attributes within the relevant metrical parameters.

(2) Other formulae within a short line

(i) Noun phrases

M2:	svinn seima Bil	‘wise Bil of gold’
T12:	X-vaxin mær	‘X-grown maiden’
T19:	leyfður konungur	‘the praised king’
T21:	X víð-risinn	‘(king) ?-renowned’
T22:	kappsamr konungr	‘energetic king’
T24:	mannviti / mestu	‘most good sense’
T25:	ýta mengi	‘multitude of men’

(ii) Other phrases

T5:	úr ánauð þegið	‘delivered from oppression’
T10:	ein á skogi	’alone in the wood’

Kennings also qualify as short-line formulae and are invariably noun phrases. Noun phrases are therefore unambiguously predominant in the short-line formulae indicated in this survey (1–2i) (cf. Mellor 1999: 83–88). Two of these noun phrases may be open-slot formulae (see below). Only two of the potential formulaic expressions within a short-line that Þorgeirsson addresses outside a long-line or larger structure are not noun phrases. T5: *úr ánauð þegið* [‘delivered from oppression’] is a verb phrase while T10: *ein á skógi* [‘alone in the woods’] presents a more complex complement to a noun.

Several of these potential formulae remain questionable owing to the limited attestations, their remoteness from one another, and the minimal number of elements combined in what could be an independent compositional grammatical construction (cf. T19). For the most part, simple noun-phrase formulae seem to occur in larger structures, as will be evident below. These formulae nevertheless only comprise a very few of the formulae discussed, or short-line formulae are only addressed as constituents in a larger compositional unit.

Syndetic Formulae

The collocation *kappsamr–konungr*, manifested in *Vambarljóð* as a formula, was addressed above. Additional alliterating conventionally collocated pairings also appear among Þorgeirsson’s data, such as *mær–maðr* (M10), *heill–hugr* (M11), *dælskr–dul* (M12) and *gull–gersimar* (T26). Three of these are realized as syndetic formulae – i.e. formulae in which two terms are organized around a conjunction (Acker 1998: 3–33).

(3) Syndetic formulae

M10	mey X / né mannz kono ‘maiden X / nor man’s wife’
M12	dælskir og dul- ‘foolish and conceited’
T26	X gulli rautt / og gersemar ‘X red gold / and precious things’

T26 could be seen as developing the traditional collocation with an embedded noun phrase formula *rautt gull* [‘red gold’] (or historically maintaining it, as the full expression appears in *Vǫlundarkviða*). Rather bearing a literal meaning, this formula probably rendered a morpheme-equivalent value of ‘wealth’ (see Frog 2011a: 30–31). This formula underwent morphological variation in relation to the verb or preposition filling the X-position. The expression in M12 presents a corresponding formula of this type,

but one of three examples presents *dælskr af dul* [‘foolish from conceit’], which does not necessarily offer an equivalent semantic unit. The third alliterative collocation is M10: *mey X / né manns konu* [‘maiden X / nor man’s wife’], in which the formula has the semantic value of ‘no woman’. Interestingly, this formula is only encountered as the object of different verbs, and in one case the slot-filler is omitted for use in producing a *Vollzeile*. The collocation *heill–hugr* (M11) appears in a formula that is structurally different: it realizes a nominative clause formed with an adjective and complementary prepositional phrase rather than the word-pair being joined by a conjunction. It will therefore be addressed with other long-line formulae.

The three syndetic formulae presented in the data all form long-line formulae in which the collocation completes the metrical requirement of alliteration rather than the syndetic collocation appearing within a short line (unless they realize a *Vollzeile* – a lone short line in which the two stressed positions alliterate). The absence an example of any of these collocations concentrated into a single *sagnakvæði* short-line is likely attributable to the limited data (cf. Frog 2011a: 30–31). Nevertheless the predominance of these formulae as accomplishing alliteration in a long line could reflect a general tendency and compositional strategy.

(4) Verb-centered long-line formulae (some variations presented in parentheses)

(i) Full formulae

M3*:	Hér sit eg hjá þér / og sjá þykjunst	‘I sit here by you / and I seem to see’
T1:	hafði hverja (á hvern veg) / hannyrð numið	‘had every sort of (in every way) / needlework learned’
T6:	Það (Þér) skulu aðrir (allir) / ýtar þjóna	‘(you) will other (all) / men serve’
T7:	Dreif drengjalið / á dreka gylltan	‘a host of valiant men rushed / onto the golden dragon-ship’
T9a:	konu átti sér / kynstórrar ættar (af kyni góðu)	‘he had a wife / from a noble family (from a good family)’
T11:	að þú fegri ert / fljóði hverju	‘that you are fairer / than every girl’
T13:	nú mun eldslitnum (álögum) / öllum linna	‘now will all [?] (enchantments) / come to an end’
T14:	reiður gekk þaðan / rekka drottinn	‘walked angry from there / the lord of men’
T18:	þó má skjöldungur ei / við sköpum vinna	‘yet the king cannot / win out against fate’
T20:	þá gaf hún honum / horn fullt mjaðar	‘then she gave him a horn full of mead’
V2:	var eigi lofðung-i(-s mær) / létt um drykkjur	‘the king(’s maiden) did not / have an easy time drinking’

(ii) Open-slot long-line formulae

M1:	X skunda (skunda X) / til skipa ofan skipa sinna/þinna)	‘X hasten (hasten X) / down to the ships (to their (til /your ships)’
M4:	X nokkuð / nýtt í fréttum	‘X (= to be) anything / new to report’
M5:	X mart við Y / mæla eg vildi	‘X many things to Y / would like to say’
M6:	Heim X Y / horskur stillir**	‘home X (= went) Y / the wise leader’
M9:	X mey (mey X) / mundi kaupa	‘X maiden (maiden X) / with bridal payment purchase’
M11:	X heill Y / með (í) huga glöðum (góðom)	‘X (= be!) hail Y / in glad (good) spirits’
M13:	X döglingur / dóttur eina	‘X (= to have) the king / one daughter’
T4:	X fljóð komið / með fagnaði	‘X girl come / with good cheer’
T17:	og um háls X / hendur lagði	‘and around the neck of X / laid arms’
V1:	valt X (óþvegin) / Vömb óþvegin (X)	‘rolled X (unwashed) / the belly unwashed (X)’
V3:	X stýrði (stýrði X) löndum / og lýði víða	‘X ruled (ruled X) over lands / and people widely’
V4:	unz til hallar kom / X að kveldi	‘until he came to the hall / of X in the evening’

(iii) Variable long-line phrasal formulae

M8:	ganga at mæla við X	‘to go to talk to X’

** Formula M3 exhibits participation in a more complex multiform that will not be discussed here in detail.*

*** For variation in the second short line of the M6 formula, see Þorgeirsson 2012: §M6.*

Verb-Centered Long-Line Formulae

In addition to the three syndetic formulae (3), Þorgeirsson presents 24 additional potential formulae that provide the framework for a long line. A verb is explicitly or implicitly integrated in all 24. These will be briefly surveyed in groups, beginning with those formulae that account for all constituents in a full line (4i), then commenting briefly on the much more variable phrasal formula (4iii) before addressing open-slot formulae (4ii).

Variation in formulae accounting for all elements of a full line is generally insignificant in the occurrences across poems, exhibiting minimal variation in phraseology or word order (T1, T6, T11, T13). (Types of variation can also readily be observed in the examples of multiforms presented below.) Such semantically light or void variation is symptomatic of the flexibility of the register (i.e. the 'language' of the poetry) within the poetic system. In T9a, a semantically equivalent short-line formula appears in the second half of the long line, but the variation does not affect the semantics of the morpheme-equivalent long-line formula (see example (8) below). A minimal variation in V2 alternates the subject. In T6, morphological variation affects person (while maintaining the acoustic integrity of the line) and verb tense in T1.

T7 is actually attested with no variation across poems, but this is likely an (inevitable) coincidence of otherwise minimal variation rather than an indicator of an exceptional quality of the particular formula. T14 is similarly found with full correspondence across two poems, but has a remarkable variation later in the *Vambarljóð* text itself (*Þá réð að reiðast* / *rekka drottinn* ['Then grew angry / the lord of men']). The opening long-line expression of M3 appears in two texts, but these appear to belong to a more complex and variable verbal system or multiform, which space prohibits discussing here.

In two cases, variation in the probable full-line formula cannot be critically assessed because the phrasing appears to have been translated to the different metrical environment of a *Vollzeile* (T18) or into saga prose (T20) (cf. Frog 2011a: 38–40, 48–50). Among formulae accounting for all elements in a long line, variation does not affect alliteration.

At the opposite extreme, the unusual expression M8: *ganga at mæla við X* ['to go to talk to X'] is attested with great variation in word-order. This can be approached as a formula in the sense of a consistent morpheme-equivalent unit. This formula may be a general constituent of the verbal register of the poetic tradition rather than a metrically conditioned formula. In other words, the formula may have belonged to the 'language' of poetry and could spread across a full line or be employed in a *Vollzeile*. This formula's potential for variation can be directly associated with the fact that the word-order of the phrase is organized in relation to the pattern of alliteration in a long line without necessarily carrying alliteration itself. Thus, individual occurrences of this phrase could crystallize into metrically conditioned formulae as more structured lines within the context of the individual poems in which it was realized.

The term 'open-slot formula' can be used for a formula in which part of the line is completed by one or more additional variable elements. In the three syndetic formulae mentioned above, two are open-slot formulae in which the variable element occurs in the first short line without additional variation in word order (M10, T26). (The possible M12: *dælskr–dul* formula(e) cannot be reliably assessed because examples are not attested in equivalent metrical environments.) Þorgeirsson lists twelve additional long-line open-slot formulae, two of which have two variable slots (M6, M11). Verbal variation in the realization of these formulae generally remains quite minimal and primarily morphological even where several realizations are attested (cf. M1). Eleven of the twelve open-slot formulae situate the slot filler(s) in the first short line, while V1 exhibits a word-order variation allowing the slot-filler to fall in the second short line. Three exhibit variation in word-order in the opening short line (M1, M9, M11). Primary alliteration is accomplished by the verbal constituents of the formula and is not dependent on the variable slot-filler except in V4 – the one example of

the slot-filler in the second short line, giving rise to a long line with double alliteration (i.e. the line would still exhibit a less desirable alliteration even if the slot-filler did not alliterate). Although the number of examples is very limited, the regularity of word-order remains striking, especially within the broader context of other formulae.

The verb is explicit (although sometimes exhibiting morphological variation) in all but four of the 24 full-line formulae addressed in this section. In the four exceptions, the verb fills an open slot that is semantically conditioned – i.e. variation is limited to a category or class of equivalents. Thus, in M13, X = a verb indicating the king was the girl's father (cf. example (8)); in M6, the slot-filling verb is equivalent to 'went'; while in M4, X is a verb of 'being'. In M11, X is an imperative verb 'be!' and Y is the vocative address (with variable word-order). Semantic conditioning of a slot-filler is not unusual (cf. T12 and T24 above; cf. also Frog 2010b).

It is noteworthy that the formulae frequently seem to be quite narrow in their use. This suggests that a formula may not only be a morpheme-equivalent unit, but could also be more narrowly conventionalized according to discourse function, limiting variation (cf. M11), or even maintained as a morphologically-equivalent or unit as may be the case in M10, in which the formula is always the object of a verb (see also the *í dyn X* formula in Part II: 58–59).

It should be stressed that the identification of an open-slot formula does not indicate that the formula was a functionally generative model. The open slot might only be realized by a limited set of variable elements that functionally crystallize into distinct (if comparable) full-line formulae in their context-specific uses.[6]

Considerations of Formula Semantics

An interesting observation resulting from the above review is that short-line formulae including kennings are generally nominal (90%), while long-line formulae are interfaced with a verb or an equivalence class of verb (89%). Approaching the oral-poetic formula according to morpheme-equivalence allows it to be roughly equated with a part of speech. Kennings and the majority of short-line formulae addressed above are noun phrases, which as units are functionally equivalent to single nouns, as are syndetic formulae like T26: *X gull rautt / og gersemar* ['X red gold / and precious things' ≈ 'wealth']. This does not mean that they *could not* be analysed according to the rules of the grammar. However, approaching them as morpheme-equivalent units would account for the suspension of opaque terms within a meaningful formula giving rise to *hapax legomena* such as *víðrisinn* (T21) and *eldslitnar* (T13).

With the exception of two kennings (K4, K5), the short-line formulae surveyed separately do not appear embedded in long-line formulae as more complex wholes. However, additional short-line formulae can be observed as dependent constituents of long line formulae (e.g. T9a, T26) and more of these will be apparent in the discussion of multifirms below. This presents the possibility that constituents of larger morpheme-equivalent units and multiforms may not have been generally adapted compositionally outside of that larger formula. (This would potentially be consistent with the larger formula circulating as a coherent, morpheme-equivalent whole.) Further investigation will illuminate whether this is merely a peculiarity of the data-set.

According to this approach, the short-line formula T5: *úr ánauð þegið* ['delivered from distress'] can be approached as potentially a complex verb participle. In other words, the formula as a whole presents a complex coherent unit of meaning from which the prepositional phrase *úr ánauð* is not divisible; the whole functions as a unit or chunk which is *not necessarily* equivalent to an analysis of its parts according to the rules of the grammar. This is more obvious in the case of T5 because its use of the verb *þiggja* is "unusual and distinctive" (Þorgeirsson 2012: 188) and can be considered idiomatic in precisely the sense of distinctive semantics. Like the examples in which *hapax legomena* are suspended, T5 is a useful example for considering morpheme-equivalence precisely because of its idiomatic quality. Formulaic functioning is far more easily overlooked or

taken for granted where we *can* readily analyse a verbal sequence according to rules of the grammar.

The majority of long-line formulae would similarly appear functionally equivalent to complex verbs. For example, M9: *X mey / mundi kaupa* [‘X (the) maiden / with a bridal payment purchase’] can be considered to function as a complex verb including both object and indirect object in its semantics. Regularities of patterns in use allow a formula such as T17: *og um háls X / hendur lagði* [‘and around the neck of X / laid arms’] not only to function as a complex verb for a literal ‘embrace’ but also the potential to develop connotative significance of the relationship and emotions of the figures involved. Similarly, if T10: *ein á skogi* [‘alone in the forest’] is considered a formula, it would be a coherent complement to a noun, analysable according to the grammar, yet able to function simultaneously as a semantic whole in which *á skogi* [‘in the forest’] might be semantically light or void, or the whole might carry connotative associations (e.g. loneliness, fear, a cue for an impending encounter) although connotative significance cannot be reliably assessed on the basis of two examples.

A long-line formula such as V1: *valt X / Vömb óþvegin* [‘rolled X / the unwashed Belly’ (X = a prepositional phrase indicating location)] probably simply meant ‘she went’. In this case, the morpheme-equivalent unit incorporates subject and verb into a complex semantic unit. Moreover, the degree to which this formula was only encountered with reference to the heroine of this particular narrative (in her magically transformed state) would import that specific identity of the subject into any other context where the formula might be used (cf. Frog 2010a: 153). In this case, the significance of the formula would far exceed what we might interpret purely on the basis of the lexicon and grammar. As a morpheme-equivalent unit, this formula is nevertheless not easily reducible to a single part of speech like a noun or verb.

As morpheme-equivalent units, formulae belong to semantic and functional categories as opposed to necessarily conforming to grammatical categories of the lexicon. Once this is recognized, it provides a foundation for reframing Albert Lord’s (1960: 35–36) description of formulae as units of verbal expression manipulated according to a poetic grammar.

Multiforms

Þorgeirsson presents several examples of complex expressions that realize half a stanza or a stanza of a poem (M3, M7, T2, T3, T8, T9b variant, T15, T16, T23), not all of which will be treated in detail here. These cannot all be readily analysed as morpheme-equivalent units and will be addressed as potential ‘multiforms’. The word *multiform* commonly functions as a noun or adjective indicating “something which exhibits many and various forms” (*OED* X: 80). Developing the approach of Lauri and Anneli Honko (1995; 1998), ‘multiform’ is here used as an analytical term which can be technically defined as:

> a collocative system made up of specific verbal units (lexemes, lexical items, formulae) and/or sets of verbal units within function-specific (semantic and/or metrically conditioned) equivalence classes which together form a coherent indexical system in the memory of an individual.

Put simply, ‘multiform’ is used to refer to that which is verbally consistent at the verbal level of expressions (although admitting e.g. synonymic variation) that otherwise exhibit “many and various forms”. Concentration is here on socially circulating multiforms – i.e. multiforms that are transmitted from individual to individual as constituents of a collective tradition. On the basis of recent research in this area, multiforms emerge on a spectrum ranging from primarily or purely form-based multiforms to primarily or purely content-based multiforms. In other words, they are organized (depending on the tradition) in relation to formal requirements and/or a meaningful unit of expressed content. Multiforms differ from formulae in that they do not necessarily function as morpheme-equivalent units; the technical term designates a system of signifiers rather than what these signify or their relationship to that which is signified (see esp. Frog 2009: 240–242).

Nevertheless, content-based multiforms in verbally conservative poetry traditions can easily give the impression of a line-sequence or meta-formula representing a specific unit of content (see Frog 2010b; 2011b). This is the impression given, for example, by T3, quoted here from *Vambarljóð* 48.1–4 (with the variations from 34.1–4 in parentheses), followed by the example from *Gullkársljóð* 66.1–4. Italic font indicates variation between poems (as also in examples below):

(5) Illt er undrum / eptir að frétta
(*og*) þó (er) enn verra / vita að (að vita *af*) sýn*um*

Bad it is wonders / to ask about
(*and*) yet (it is) still worse / to know beyond doubt

Illt er undrum / eptir að frétta
þó er enn verra / að vita sýn*na*

Bad it is wonders / to ask about
yet it is still worse / to know beyond doubt

This multiform consists of four short lines or a long-line couplet. There is no variation in line order. Each long line can be considered a morpheme-equivalent unit. These are joined by a conjunction. The whole presents a morpheme-equivalent and proverb-like expression. Variation increases toward the end of the sequence, as can be seen in other traditions (Frog 2010b; 2011b).

Multiforms may also incorporate open-slot formulae, such as in T2, where the open slot is the object of the verb (*Vambarljóð* 11.5–8; *Gullkársljóð* 51.5–8):

(6) spurt hef eg alllítt / *öðling* heilan
og mun eg brátt á því / bætur vinna

I have heard that not at all / is *the king* well
and I will soon upon that / improve

Spurt hef eg *Æsu* / alllítt heila,
mun eg brátt á því / bætr vinna

I have heard that *Æsa* / is not at all well
I will soon upon that / improve

Each long line constitutes a complete clause. As in example (5), variation in the presence of the conjunction *og* [‘and’] is a semantically void variation with implications for the pragmatics of juxtaposition in the poetic grammar (cf. Mellor 1999: 82). In this case, the relationship between the clauses is highlighted in the deictic *á þvi* [‘upon that’]. Variation occurs within the pattern of primary alliteration, which may be a conditioning constraint on the slot-filler (alliterating with “spurt” also being possible). Nevertheless, the less prominent *hef–heilan* alliteration could potentially allow other words or names to be used (cf. V4 above).

In T16, Þorgeirsson (2012: 190) notes “the poems making use of synonyms for alliteration purposes” in a similar open slot formula (*Vambarljóð* 25.5–8; *Þóruljóð* 3.5–8):

(7) *Ýtum* þótti / *hann Ásmundur* vera
í fornum sið / frægur snemmindis.

to men seemed / *him, Ásmundur,* to be
in the time of the old religion / quickly famous

þótti *þjóðum* / *Þorkell* vera
í fornum sið / frægur snemmendis

to people seemed / *Þorkell* to be
in the time of the old religion / quickly famous

In this case, each short line constitutes a meaningful unit within the long-line couplet while the clause is realized at the level of the long-line couplet. However, this does not compromise the possibility that the long lines functioned themselves as formulae. Variation in the first long-line could be described as the formula *X þótti* / *Y vera* [‘to X seemed / Y to be’] in which Y = a personal name and X = a term alliterating with Y from a semantic equivalence class of ‘people’ (or possibly more generally also a single person or personal name). Such a formula could hypothetically be followed by an alternative line, such as *kappsamur konungur / kænn að flestu* [‘an energetic king / keen in most things’] (found in T9; see below).

The limited corpus does not allow perspectives on how formulae functioned in this simple multiform or whether such variation was capitalized on by users of the tradition. However, the fact that short-line and long-line formulae within both this and other potential multiforms do not appear to be recognized as formulae outside of the larger multiform structure would seem to suggest that such variation was not a norm.

A survey of alternating long-line and short-line formulae among independently documented versions of each poem could offer greater insights into the functioning of formulae in this poetic tradition. This could also offer insights into multiforms that might be socially circulating but specific to the individual poem, as encountered in Finno-Karelian kalevalaic epic (Frog 2010b; 2011b) and Slavic *bylina*-epic (cf. Gil'ferding 1894: 24). A possible example brought forward by Þorgeirsson in T9 both illustrates this potential and also the problematics of assessing individual cases. The long-line couplet found in the T_2 and V versions of *Vambarljóð* are presented first (the word *hann* ['he'] only appears in V) followed by the variation in T_1, which appears to reflect an independent example of the poem (on the manuscripts, see Þorgeirsson 2012: 182–183):

(8) Konu átti (*hann*) sér / *kynstórrar ættar*,
kappsamur konungur / kænn að *flestu*.

A wife (*he*) had / *of a noble family*,
that energetic king / keen in *most things*.

Konu átti sér, / kænn að *afli*,
kappsamur konungur, / *af kyni góðu*.

A wife [he] had / keen [masculine] in *might*,
that energetic king / *of a good family*.

This presents a potential multiform of four short lines in variable order; variation enabled by a shared pattern of alliteration. The variation between the semantically equivalent short-line formulae *kynstórrar ættar* and *af kyni góðu* was introduced by Þorgeirsson for comparison with the long-line formula *konu átti hann sér* / *af kyni góðu* ['a wife he had / of a good family'] (T9a). This variation could potentially reflect an equivalence class of short-line formula or be a marker of variation between what I have elsewhere described as 'dialects of singing' (Frog 2010b; 2011a; 2011b). Variation in semantically equivalent formulaic expressions is also found in other multiforms (see especially the first long line in M7). The data only presents the outcomes of variation and not their cause or how such potential formula-constellations functioned. Rather than a multiform, T9 might only be an accident in documentation when a collector scribbled down a sung text. It could equally be the result of a tedious halting dictation of lines slow enough for them to be written, one by one, while the informant's thoughts moved ahead through the song. Although contexts are lacking for individual cases, a survey of variation between independently documented examples of the same poems could provide perspectives on common and uncommon patterns of variation (see Frog 2010b).

Variation in the organization of formulae in T9 above can be approached as a simple meta-formula with the morpheme-equivalent meaning 'the king had a wife', yet the reorganization of the formulae can also be considered to transfer the quality of 'good family' from the wife to the king. Although variation in this particular case could also be semantically light or void, it leads to the consideration of multiforms that realize a thematically associated unit of content but are not necessarily morpheme-equivalent.

The stanza-length multiform in T15 presents a useful initial example because it clearly exhibits a sequential pattern of long-line formulae comparable to those introduced above. In this case, both reflexes of the multiform present a dialogue exchange in direct speech, although with morphological variation depending on whether the 'maiden' is the addressee (*Vambarljóð* 23; *Hyndluljóð yngri* 46):

(9) Lát*um* við hvorugt / haldast þetta
sem eg mær við *þig* / mælt*i* af fólsku
það mun hvorttveggja / haldast verða
þó með meinum / minn sé aldur.

'Let neither of us two / make those things endure
which I, maiden, *to you* / spoke out of foolishness.'
'*Both of those things / will have to endure*
though a harsh one / my life will be.'

Við *skulum* þetta / hvorigt haldast lát*a*
þó eg við mey*na* / mælt *hafi* af fólsku.
Aldrei skal eg það / aptur taka
þó með meinum / að minn sé aldur.

'We two *should* of those things / let neither endure
though I have *to the* maiden / spoken out of foolishness.'
'*I will never that / take back,*
though a harsh one / my life will be.'

The stanza is constructed around two couplets (which could also be approached as two multiforms), each couplet constituted of two long-line formula clauses joined by a conjunction, a structural pattern already encountered above. Verbal and morphological variation in the first couplet is potentially negligible. The alternation of the third long line constructs a different significance to the dialogue exchange and to its relationship and relevance to the surrounding narrative (cf. Frog 2010b: 107–108). If the individual constituent formulae were not commonly realized across other variable contexts, these correspondences and the juxtaposition of the two couplets can certainly not be considered coincidental in the two poems. It therefore strongly suggest that a socially circulating multiform has been variously adapted and realized in different narrative contexts.

Þorgeirsson has valuably drawn attention to several examples of multiforms through their underlying thematic similarities and contexts of use, as in T8 (*Vambarljóð* 63.4–8; *Bryngerðarljóð* 14.5–8):

(10) *eg skal hvern dag* / hjarðar gæta
en *þið sæl megið* / *sitja* heima

'*I will every day* / watch the herd
but *you two, happy,* / *can sit* at home'

Þig bað hann heima / hjarðar gæta
en *mig ganga* / *hvert gaman þætti*.

'You, he asked at home / to watch the herd
but me to go / where I would enjoy myself'

The couplet exhibits the common structure of two long-line clauses joined by a conjunction. The couplet is employed in direct speech and the clauses are contrasted with opposing deictic relations of *me–you* as well as an opposition of *home–elsewhere*. A third opposition is presented between *sheep-herding–enjoyment*, in which the former is realized as a metrically consistent formula and the latter is realized with very different phrases. The probable verbal constituents of the multiform are associated with each of the oppositions (*home*, *sheepherding*, and, subject to morphological variation, the deictic terms *me–you*). Nevertheless, they exhibit different relationships: in *Vambarljóð*, the 'I' is herding, herding is elsewhere, the 'you' has enjoyment and enjoyment is at home; in *Bryngerðarljóð*, the 'you' is herding, herding is at home, the 'I' has enjoyment and enjoyment is elsewhere. In this case, the verbal disparity between expressions for enjoyment can be connected to the different relationships between oppositions, which alternately situate enjoyment 'at home' or 'not at home'. The complexity of verbal and structural parallels is unlikely to be accidental, while the common system cannot be simply reduced to a single morpheme-equivalent unit describable as a formula.

Only three of the nine potential multiforms in the surveyed data are also found in eddic poetry (M3, T23) or saga prose (M7). T23 provides a diachronic example exhibited in *Vambarljóð* 4 and *Guðrúnarhvöt* 9, bearing "the thematic similarity of a grief-stricken person going somewhere to sit" (Þorgeirsson 2012: 191):

(11) Gekk *á hávan* / *haug Alþrúðar*
morgin hverjan / *mætur landreki*.
En fyrir hilmi / á margan veg
tignarmenn hans / telja *fóru*.

Went *upon the high / mound of Alþrúður*
every morning / the worthy ruler of the land
But before the prince / in many ways
his nobles / *went* to recount.

Guðrún grátandi, / *Giúca dóttir*,
gecc *hon tregliga* / *á tái sitia*,
oc at telia, / *táruchlýra*,
móðug spioll / á margan veg:

Guðrún, weeping, / Gjúki's daughter,
went *to sit sadly / on the threshold ,*
and to recount, */ with tear-stained cheeks,*
her grievous losses / in many ways:

The verbal correspondences are limited to the formula *telja á margan veg* ['recount in many ways'] and the verb *ganga* ['to go']. The latter verb could, however, most likely easily vary within an equivalence class. The expression *telja á margan veg* exhibits the potential for flexible distribution even across multiple lines, similar to M8: *ganga at mæla við X* ['to go to talk to X'] (4iii). T23 potentially reflects a continuity in a multiform across centuries and also variation in the internal relationship of its constituents (the person going appears variously as the one

who recounts or as the addressee of the recounting). This may seem quite minimal, and Þorgeirsson also draws attention, for example, to the fact that *ýta mengi* [‘group of men’] is thematically associated with drinking in the *sagnakvæði* (and in only one of many *rímur*). This does not mean that *ýta mengi* is part of a multiform used as a social resource. It may, however, be an indicator that formulaic expressions could potentially develop associations with particular thematic content and possibly preferred use in particular contexts without any clear discernable reason why this formula should be used instead of another. On the other hand, a multiform is a collocative system associated with the realization of such content. The evidence is so scant, that it becomes difficult to distinguish whether the elements concerned are independently indexed to the theme or primarily index one another as a system for the representation of complex content. In the case of T23 in example (11), the probability of continuity is increased on the basis of the structural parallel that the main figure, location and verb of movement constitute the first long-line couplet, while the *telja á margan veg* expression is realized in the second couplet situating the verb and prepositional phrase in separate long lines.

Most of the multiforms in Þorgeirsson’s survey are only a long-line couplet (four short lines) rather than a full stanza. Some only exhibit limited verbal correspondences within a thematically similar context, and only three of nine exhibit possible correspondences in eddic verse or saga prose. However, this is not surprising if the singing tradition was not oriented to highly flexible and variable realization of narrative content as is found in long epic traditions or in the production of new skaldic verses.

If multiforms were instead more crystalized verbal resources for realizing units of narrative content, closer to what is encountered in *bylina*-epic or the still more formally conservative kalevalaic poetry, then individual multiforms might generally be much more structured on the one hand and more specific to individual poems on the other. This hypothesis is supported by the observation that individual documented versions of the *sagnakvæði* are so verbally similar that they can be approached as a single ‘textual entity’ (see Frog 2011c) rather than multiple texts rendering the same essential narrative content.[7]

The stanzaic structuring of poems in the *sagnakvæði* tradition presents formal constraints which would support the crystallization of multiforms as verbal systems for the realization of individual stanzas in production. (On the difference between this model and memorization, see Frog 2011a: 23–24). In this case, the examples surveyed by Þorgeirsson are cases where a multiform can be assumed to have a crystallized form within each poem addressed. These examples therefore most likely reflect two redactions of a common multiform resource that has found a place in different poems. Comparison nevertheless potentially reflects how such verbally complex resources could be adapted in their social circulation. The examples strongly suggest that multiforms were adapted and utilized across contexts as social resources in the composition of new poems and in the reshaping of socially established poetry. The low degree of verbal correspondence in some multiforms surveyed is thus not necessarily surprising: these would be adaptations of a socially circulating multiform to a new context and application producing a new, potentially quite different redaction of the resource (as opposed to a fluid continuity in which the multiform continued to be used in consistent, if more general and widely occurring contexts and applications). This is particularly true for parallels with eddic poetry and saga literature. The earlier examples may already reflect a different redaction from the one in which the *sagnakvæði* variant is historically rooted, and an indefinite series of radical adaptations into new contexts may have taken place during the intermediate centuries.

Perspectives

This review of the material presented by Þorgeirsson offers several interesting perspectives and possibilities for future investigation. The lack of extensive examples of variation and non-variation in repetitions of

formulaic expressions within *Vambarljóð* requires any assessment to be contextualized in a broader data-set of repetitions in other *sagnakvæði*. Nevertheless, verbal variation in formulaic expression seems in general to have been quite minimal. As can be observed in the examples presented above, minor variation did occur within individual formulae, but the variation did not generally have any impact on the metricality of the line (which allowed a variable number of syllables) or the semantics of the formula. This variation is suggestive of the stability of the formulaic language.

Across this data and including the formulae embedded in multiforms, it appears that the short-line is an important compositional unit, but that the long-line formula was more significant as a compositional resource. The latter appears particularly significant as a resource in accomplishing alliteration within the long line. Although it is possible that some formulae and their functioning as compositional strategies may have been subtle enough or sufficiently variable to elude initial observation, this raises questions concerning continuities and discontinuities in the functioning of formulaic language in this poetry tradition. In eddic verse, it has been observed that formulaic language seems to gravitate to the second short line in a long line and that there seems to have been a developed vocabulary of formulaic language for generating these short lines which would accomplish requirements of alliteration (cf. Lönnroth 1971; Mellor 1999). This pattern does not appear prominently in Þorgeirsson's survey, although examples can be found (e.g. T21) and open-slot formulae do seem to exhibit a tendency to situate the variable element in the first short line. As investigations into the use of formulaic language in the *sagnakvæði* increases, a comparison between the typologies and relative frequencies of formulae in eddic verse and *sagnakvæði* could be particularly fruitful.

Aspects of the poetic grammar emerge at each structural level, from short-line formulae and long-line formulae to the interrelations of words and formulae in multiforms. In this tradition, the relationships of words and formulae in multiforms appear to have a structural aspect in addition to being a collocative verbal system of signifiers (cf. examples (10–11) above). The association of long-line formulae with verbs is particularly striking. Whereas long-line open-slot formulae discussed independently of multiforms generally carried alliteration on stable elements, open-slot formulae in multiforms offer multiple examples of slot-fillers carrying alliteration. This initial review of the data suggests some type of interface of the structural hierarchy of short-line formulae, long-line formulae and multiforms with the intersection of semantic function and variation in the poetic grammar.

At the level of multiforms, an observation conditional on the data becomes possible: a significantly higher number of multiforms in this particular poem appear to have parallels in other texts than what might be expected in early eddic verse. Of course, eddic verse has been discussed in terms of formulae, text-loans, etc., and not multiforms *per se*, yet the essential phenomenon has been observed. This is remarkable when the eight preserved *sagnakvæði* (following Þorgeirsson 2012: 182) constitute a corpus of about one sixth as many poems as the greater eddic corpus.[9]

Where multiforms (even if not *as* multiforms) have been observed in early eddic poetry, this is generally associated with specific content and even the context of that content. For example, the description of Baldr's avenger by a seeress within a prophesy (*Baldrs draumar* 11; *Völuspá* 33–34); an insult against Þórr (*Hárbarðsljóð* 26; *Lokasenna* 60); a description of the creation of the earth from the corpse of the giant Ymir in expressions of mythic wisdom (*Vafþrúðnismál* 21; *Grímnismál* 40). The more general typological occurrence of a multiform across poems, such as the gods at assembly in *Baldrs draumar* 1 and *Þrymskviða* 14, seems potentially less common.[10] The corpus of *sagnakvæði* is so much smaller than that of medieval eddic verse that this raises the question of whether Þorgeirsson's emphasis on interfaces of formulaic language and theme has given multiforms increased visibility, or perhaps something changed in versification and how socially circulating poetic resources were

used. This is another area in which placing these corpora in dialogue could yield valuable insights.

Formulae associated with multiforms and also short-line formulae embedded in long-line formulae do not appear to be generally used as independent compositional resources. If they were, more than two exceptions from a single category of formula type (K4, K5) would be anticipated to occur among the quantity of data reviewed. This suggests that formulaic language was inclined to be associated with fairly narrow contexts of use. This is consistent with Þorgeirsson's observations of thematic associations in the occurence of certain formulae (e.g. T25) and warrants further investigation.

If multiforms develop centrally within the socially circulating textual entity of an individual poem, then a detailed investigation into multiforms in this tradition could begin with the development of a multiform typology,[11] surveying the use and variation of multiforms on the basis of independently documented versions of individual poems. This could also offer the possibility of gaining at least a limited perspective on variation across different versions of the poems against which multiforms in different poems could be situated. Such a survey could then be engaged in dialogue with the earlier eddic corpus, presenting new directions for future research.

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Notes

1. See e.g. Corrigan et al. 2009; for a short and accessible discussion, see MacKenzie 2000.
2. In retrospect, Parry's demand that an expression occur *dans les mêmes conditions métriques* in order to be considered formulaic appears to be a practical constraint for unequivocally *demonstrating* formulaic language in analysis, and this parameter employed in analysis became reciprocally conflated with the *definition* of a formula.
3. On the history and development of Oral-Formulaic Theory, see Foley 1988; for Oral-Formulaic Theory in research on Old Norse poetics, see Acker 1998: 85–110; Thorvaldsen 2006: 19–34; cf. also Frog 2011a.
4. See e.g. Jón Helgason 1953: 26–31. The possibility of manuscript-dependence of different examples is ongoing resulting in widely varying views and heated debate, especially regarding the poem *Vǫluspá* (cf. e.g. Lindblad 1978; Quinn 1990; Dronke 1997).
5. Independently documented versions exhibit the variant *auðar Lín* ['Lín of wealth'].
6. In kalevalaic epic, for example, an open-slot formula may reoccur in dialogue exchanges where the variable element is one of three objects offered or requested, one of three deaths, etc., but the variation is illusory when the open slot is filled consistently by the same limited set of three alternatives in sequence and not used generatively in other contexts (Frog 2010b: 107; cf. Frog 2011a: 51–54).
7. Þorgeirsson (2012:183) in fact acknowledges a group of variants of the same narrative that he regards as a separate and distinct textual entity not addressed in his study.
8. A correspondence of one individual multiform across two poems cannot be assumed to reflect the first socially accepted form of one or both poems in question. In either or both cases, the correspondence could be connected to adaptations, expansions, reinterpretations and recontextual-izations of the poem through the process of social negotiation in its use and transmission. (N.B. – as a poem with a socially established and conventionally stable form, it is reasonable to consider that there was some 'first' socially recognized form of the textual entity as *that* poem, even if the textual entity drew heavily on other socially circulating textual and content resources with much longer histories.)
9. I.e. including not only the poems of the so-called *Poetic Edda* but also the poetry often referred to as the *Eddica minora*.
10. It should be noted that eddic verse not concerned with mythological subjects or the Cycle of the Völsungs tends not to be included in surveys of formulaic language.
11. Cf. the initial approach to a descriptive typology of multiforms in kalevalaic epic in Frog 2010b.

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Goddesses Unknown I: Njǫrun and the Sister-Wife of Njǫrðr

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The present article attempts to fill a gap in modern Old Norse scholarship by presenting overviews of two highly mysterious figures, the apparent goddess Njǫrun and the unnamed wife and sister of the major god Njǫrðr. In doing so, this article thematically connects with previous discussion of the Vanir found in earlier issues of *RMN Newsletter*.

Njǫrun

Surviving records of Norse mythology teem with goddesses. Around thirty distinct female deities are attested in the Old Norse corpus, whereas fewer male deities, around twenty, may be tallied.[1] While many other goddesses receive some explanatory text or narrative concerning them, Njǫrun is one of few Old Norse goddesses known only by name. It is a brief affair to list Njǫrun's scant few mentions; her attestations are limited to a handful of employments in skaldic poetry, an appearance in a kenning in the eddic poem *Alvíssmál*, and a listing as an *ásynja* in the *þulur* of the *Prose Edda* (see Finnur Jónsson 1931: 106).

Njǫrun is nearly as rare a figure to encounter in scholarship. Neither the handbook of John Lindow (2002) nor of Rudolf Simek (2007 [1993]) feature either an entry for Njǫrun or appear to mention the goddess in other entries, and the *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde* (1973–2007) is similarly silent.[2] It seems that no recent history of scholarship on this goddess has been attempted. The following survey of relevant lines of inquiry is therefore presented.

The problem of the etymology of the name *Njǫrun* was examined as early as 1848 by Karl Weinhold, and Weinhold is perhaps the first to attempt to link *Njǫrun* and *Njǫrðr* (Weinhold 1848: 460–461). Similarly in this regard, Jan de Vries observes:

> the name Njǫrun which presupposes an older form **Neranö*, a form related to the root **ner*- (or even **neru*-) [...]. Then Njǫrun is derived from the originally shorter form *neru- and it is quite probable that it is a name for the earthgoddess; we may even add: here we possibly have the Scandinavian form of the goddess that Tacitus compared with the Terra Mater. (de Vries 1931: 37–38.)

The *Terra Mater* referred to by de Vries is the Germanic goddess Nerthus: according to Roman historian Tacitus's first century work *Germania*, Nerthus was a goddess held in particular regard by a cluster of Germanic peoples (cited after Stuart 1916: 20). While the two deities differ in gender, this theonym, considered to derive from Proto-Germanic **Nerþuz*, has long been held to correspond directly to the much later Old Norse theonym *Njǫrðr*.[3]

Finnur Jónsson comments that the name *Njǫrun* is mysterious (*ganske ukendt*) and that it is perhaps another name for the earth (Finnur Jónsson 1931: 106). Albert Morey Sturtevant compares *Njǫrun* to the Old Norse goddess name *Gefjon*. Sturtevant highlights that the theonyms are the only two goddess names in the Old Norse corpus that employ the suffix *-un*. Sturtevant also suggests a possible link among *Njǫrun*, **Nerþuz*, and *Njǫrðr* by way of **ner*- (Sturtevant 1952: 167).

In her study of the goddess Freyja, Britt-Mari Näsström also observes that, like the toponym-derived **Njärð*, Njǫrun appears to be a female form of Njǫrðr (Näsström 1995: 50, 53, 60). Näsström concludes that:

> Nerthus became in Scandinavia the female *Njärð, represented in the place-name or Njǫrun, appearing in kennings. The name was forgotten in favour of Freyja. (Näsström 1995: 60.)

As with *Nerthus*, a connection to the (obscure) female Latin theonym *Nerio* has been proposed (cf. Mallory 1997: 174; Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon 1989: 117).

From this survey we may conclude that academic consensus is that *Njǫrun* is potentially related to the *Njǫrðr* and so too to the Proto-Germanic forebear of the name, **Nerþuz*.

The Sister-Wife of Njǫrðr

According to Snorri Sturluson's euhemerized account of the gods in *Ynglingasaga* 4, prior to the arrival of the Æsir and while Njǫrðr was still among the Vanir, Njǫrðr was wed to his sister:

> Þá er Njǫrðr var með Vǫnum, þá hafði hann átta systur sína, því at þat váru þar lǫg; váru þar lǫg; váru þeira bǫrn Freyr ok Freyja, en þat var bannat með Ásum at byggva svá náit at frændsemi. (Finnur Jónsson 1911: 5-6.)
>
> While Njǫrðr was with the Vanir, he had his sister as his wife, because those were their ways there, and their children were Freyr and Freyja. Yet among the Æsir it was banned to wed such near relations.

A union between Njǫrðr and his sister is also mentioned in *Lokasenna* 36, where Loki taunts Njǫrðr about it (cited after Dronke 1997: 341). No further information about this goddess, logically a member of the Vanir,[4] is related – breeching a contested topic that will be returned to below. One needs look no further than these passages for a 'female Njǫrðr', a sister, much like the brother–sister relation between their reportedly incestuous children, Freyja and Freyr, also related in *Lokasenna* 36.[5]

The fact that Nerthus is female while the later figure of Njǫrðr is male has raised questions, and since at least the 19th century, a variety of solutions have been offered for this problem. A female counterpart to Njǫrðr fits well in explaining the gender incongruence between Tacitus's Nerthus and Old Norse Njǫrðr (Näsström 1995: 49–50, 52–54), and here, in a half-forgotten state, we may yet have a remnant of this; "it is however possible that the old *Terra Mater* (Nerthus) represents the unnamed sister of Njǫrðr."[6] Notably, the children of Njǫrðr and his sister-wife, Freyja and Freyr, seem to be the result of a similar process of doubling.

Goddesses Unknown?

As mentioned above, Njǫrun appears in a list of 27 *ásynjur* in the *þulur*, a collection of various lists cataloguing objects and beings (cited after Faulkes 1998: 114). The *þulur* are found in the *Prose Edda*, a work from the 13th century by Snorri Sturluson. While the *þulur* were likely added to the *Prose Edda* at a later date, the *þulur* themselves may be earlier than the *Prose Edda* and appear to have been carefully crafted.[7] With the exception of Njǫrun and Ilmr, all goddesses in this section of the *þulur* receive some explanation or narrative in the *Prose Edda*.[8]

Njǫrun is mentioned elsewhere in the *Prose Edda* but no additional information is provided. This other attestation occurs in *Skáldskaparmál* 63 and consists of a quotation of the above mentioned *Alvíssmál* (st. 30) containing the kenning *draum-Njǫrun* ['dream-Njǫrun'] referring to 'night' (Neckel & Kuhn 1962: 128; Faulkes 1998: 99). The name *Njǫrun* is not mentioned in *Skáldskaparmál* outside of the quotation nor does the surrounding text resolve the particular kenning or even identify *Njǫrun* as a personal name. If this portion of *Skáldskaparmál* was the work of Snorri,[9] it appears to be our only evidence that Snorri encountered the name. Otherwise in all works known or generally accepted to have been authored by Snorri, including *Heimskringla* and much of the *Prose Edda*, we lack evidence that Snorri was even familiar with this particular name. We have no means of identifying what Snorri may or may not have known about Njǫrun.

The narrative provided by Snorri in *Ynglinga saga* and by *Lokasenna* involving the sister-wife of Njǫrðr presents more opportunity for analysis and dialogue. It is unclear to what extent a living oral tradition existed during Snorri's or the *þulur* author's (or authors') time and what lost sources Snorri had at his disposal. According to Ursula Dronke (1997: 364), Snorri based his *Ynglinga saga* account of Njǫrðr and his sister-wife on the reference found in *Lokasenna* 36. However, it is notable that in *Gylfaginning*, Snorri quotes stanzas from an otherwise lost poem on Njǫrðr (Faulkes 2005: xxv–xxvi, 24, 64). The presence of stanzas from an apparently lost poem on the wedding of Njǫrðr and Skaði complicates the conclusion of a straightforward borrowing from *Lokasenna*.

Just as the lost poem *Heimdalargaldr* appears to focus on the enigmatic god Heimdallr and to inform Snorri's writing (cf.

Faulkes 1998: 19; 2005: 26), the otherwise lost poem he quotes in connection to the marriage with Skaði could very possibly have contained additional information about Njǫrðr and references to a broader mythology surrounding him. Snorri's presentation of additional material surrounding this union in *Skáldskaparmál* as only one part of an extended narrative cycle (Faulkes 1998: 2) is a further indicator of knowledge about intersecting networks of narratives that described and referred to Njǫrðr.[10] Whether the implied traditions circulated in poetry, prose and/or prosimetrum form(s), it is not inconceivable that these contained additional information about Njǫrðr, potentially including mention of an earlier relationship with his sister and wife even if the traditions circulating in Snorri's time centered more or less exclusively around Njǫrðr's role as a hostage in the Æsir–Vanir war on the one hand and his marriage with Skaði on the other.

The Vanir

The Vanir have been a frequent topic in *RMN Newsletter*.[11] As proposed above, the wife of Njǫrðr is logically a member of this group. If the notion of the Æsir–Vanir War and its subsequent hostage exchange is accepted, we may seek to know her whereabouts following that event.

Unfortunately, attempts to discern a cohesive narrative are complicated by disagreement in the sources. In *Ynglinga saga*, Snorri says that Freyja and Freyr are born *before* the marriage of Njǫrðr and Skaði and *after* the Æsir–Vanir War. In contrast, after discussing the dissolution of Njǫrðr and Skaði's marriage in *Gylfaginning*, Snorri says that *Njǫrðr í Nóatúnum gat síðan tvau bǫrn. Hét sonr Freyr en dóttir Freyja* (cited after Faulkes 2005: 24) ['Njǫrðr of Nóatún thereafter had two children; a son called Freyr and a daughter, Freyja']. The *Lokasenna* account further complicates matters. In *Lokasenna*, Loki states that Freyr was born while he was *among* the Æsir (cited after Dronke 1997: 341). Finally, in *Skírnísmal*, Freyr's lovesickness draws the attention of Skaði, who acts in an ambiguously maternal role, perhaps as step-mother (or, more troublesome yet for analysis, perhaps even as mother) (cited after Dronke 1997: 376).

These contradictions are too great for reconciliation without either rejection of some of the sources or without presuming contradictory or shifting traditions. Some of these differences may ultimately reflect regional developments that have influenced the works of the informants or composers, much as the toponymic **Njärð* appears to be the result of a different offshoot than *Njǫrun*, perhaps a result of temporal and spatial distance from a common female version of what would later become the god Njǫrðr, Nerthus. Such regional and perhaps conflicting sources may therefore have resulted in the differences in chronology in Snorri's accounts in *Gylfaginning* and *Ynglinga saga*.

If we allow ourselves to proceed with the material we have, potential narratives are discernible. For example, following *Ynglinga saga* and in line with *Skírnísmal*, if Freyr and Freyja were born among the Vanir, then the sister of Njǫrðr may not have been integrated into the Æsir community, remaining in Vanaheimr[12] until Ragnarǫk while Njǫrðr became the partner of Skaði among the Æsir (cf. Słupecki 2011). In this case, this figure, the sister-wife of Njǫrðr, may have remained outside the present world order according to the mythology of Snorri's time, although she may have been more significant in an earlier period and different cultural arena, such as that described by Tacitus in the 1st century.

If Freyr and Freyja were born among the Æsir, as implied in *Gylfaginning*, then this figure may have been thought to accompany Njǫrðr as a hostage (much as Freyja appears to accompany Njǫrðr and Freyr in the *Ynglinga saga* account) and may have therefore had some role in the present world order, although the relationship between Njǫrðr and Skaði leaves this obscure. That said, Skaði may have simply eclipsed Njǫrðr's earlier consort, either by way of changes in cult or attempts at systemization upon the fading of the sister-wife of Njǫrðr.

An additional possibility exists. Building upon dialogue extending from at least the mid-19th century, Georges Dumézil (1973 [1970]) proposed that the life of the figure of

Hadingus, as attested in Saxo Grammaticus's *Gesta Danorum*, was at least partially based on narratives about the god Njǫrðr. This identification is founded on a number of striking parallels between Saxo's Hadingus and narratives involving Njǫrðr from Old Norse sources.

Among these parallels, Dumézil notes that Hadingus had a quasi-incestuous relationship with his foster-sister, the shape-shifting and magic-working Harthgrepa, in this way also mirroring the *Ynglinga saga* narrative (Dumézil 1973: 50–61).[13] Harthgrepa, however, dies a violent death at the hands of mysterious monsters. After Harthgrepa's death, Hadingus rescues a princess, Regnilda, from a giant and they are wed after a leg-based choosing incident that is similar to Skaði's choice of Njǫrðr's lovely feet. However, all is not marital bliss: Saxo provides a poem wherein Hadingus complains that he has been too long away from the sea and that the sounds of wolves where he dwells with Regnilda trouble him. To this, Regnilda responds that she dislikes the sea and the shrill gulls there. This poem appears to either be the same as or very similar to the otherwise lost source quoted by Snorri in *Gylfaginning* mentioned above (Dumézil 1973: 20–22, 34–37). Regnilda later dies under mysterious circumstances (Dumézil 1973: 14).

If Dumézil's identification is accepted,[14] perhaps Saxo's source describes (or leads back to a source that describes) a narrative in which the sister-wife of Njǫrðr was killed during the conflict, perhaps at the hands of the Æsir during the Æsir–Vanir War (cf. Dumézil 1973: 74–76). On the other hand, euhemerized and jumbled as his account is, Saxo could have just as easily been unwilling or unable to provide any further information derived from this narrative and, perhaps like Regnilda, simply had Harthgrepa killed off in order to continue the tale for his own purposes or to comply with the larger narrative structures he organized.

Onward

Whatever the case, the absence of a name for the sister-wife of Njǫrðr is conspicuous in a corpus where practically all beings and objects have names, and all the more so in the *Prose Edda*, where personal names are listed and interrelated with particular attention. It is mysterious that no name is provided for a goddess who is both related to and married to some of the most important and broadly attested deities in the corpus. This curious silence intersects with the peripheral *Njǫrun* as a possible cognate name of Njǫrðr that appears to reflect a theonym employed as a poetic synonym for 'goddess'. However, the designated figure is not addressed in narratives nor even mentioned by Snorri and, in fact, never encountered outside of poetic circumlocutions. This raises the question of whether uses of the name reflect knowledge of a goddess or the name was more ambiguously handled as little more than a resource in the poetic vocabulary in the sources that have come down to us.

On the other hand, this also intersects with the account of Tacitus according to which a female counterpart of Njǫrðr appears to have been much more prominent more than a thousand years earlier. Some of the issues presented in the data may reflect significant historical changes in the role of this figure in the mythology.

A more detailed examination, including further linguistic analysis of the apparent theonym *Njǫrun* and analysis of comparative material, may be fruitful for further dialogue and conclusions.

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Notes

1. This is a conservative estimate that does not address the issue of whether or not certain beings are to be considered 'deities' or some other type of supernatural being. An example of such a being not included in this tally is Hel, who is nowhere referred to as a goddess, yet is referenced in a mythological context as early as *Ragnarsdrápa* and *Ynglingatal* (for discussion on the validity of Hel, see Abram 2006). Additionally, the question of whether or not various figures may be considered aspects of Freyja or other goddesses will not be addressed in this article, but see Näsström 1995: 98–123, Näsström 1996, and Grundy 1996 for discussion.

2. Andy Orchard's handbook (1997) does provide an entry for Njǫrun, but the entry says little more than that Njǫrun is a goddess who is both "mysterious" and "possibly fictitious" (Orchard 1997: 119). Orchard does not elaborate on why this may be, nor does he address the skaldic corpus.
3. For analysis of scholarship and discussion on the topic of Nerthus, see Näsström 1995: 47–54.
4. The wise being Kvasir is also attested as a member of the Vanir group in *Ynglinga saga*. The reasons for this are unclear, but it appears likely that this was done for the purposes of euhemerization. Other figures have also been theorized as members of the group, such as the god Heimdallr by way of an ambiguous stanza in *Þrymskviða* (st. 15) and other links, the god Ullr by way of toponymy, and the goddess Iðunn by way of iconography and other links; cf. Davidson 1964: 106, 165–166, 175; Tolley 2011.
5. Since at least the 19th century, it has been proposed that Freyja ['Lady'] and Freyr ['Lord'] were originally titles for an earlier version of male and female 'Njǫrðrs' respectively, possibly the result of onomastic taboo (cf. discussion at Näsström 1995: 50). The Old Norse masculine noun *Njǫrðungar* ['?Njǫrðlings'] – always found in the plural – is of particular note in this regard. Further, it is notable that while Freyja and Freyr are the only 'divine pair' to explicitly appear in narrative, there are traces of others, such as Old Norse Ullr and Ullin and Fjǫrgyn and Fjǫrgynn, and also potentially Old High German Phol (*Vol) and Volla (cf. Ellis Davidson 1964: 106, 183; Polomé 1989: 58-60; Näsström 1995: 52–53; Frog 2010: 181–185).
6. Polomé 1989: 117. However, it must be noted that around a decade later Polomé came to reject connections between Nerthus and Njǫrðr on linguistic grounds (Polomé 1999). Polomé's new conclusions do not seem to have been generally accepted. For my part, I disagree with Polomé's reversal in that even if an etymological link is rejected, continuum may be argued on the grounds of associations with wagons, bodies of water, and fertility.
7. For brief discussion of the *þulur* and their retention of information, see Hopkins & Haukur Þorgeirsson 2011: 15–16.
8. For discussion of Ilmr, see Hopkins "Goddesses Unknown II: Ilmr", forthcoming.
9. For analysis of authorship and sources employed in *Skáldskaparmál*, see Faulkes 1998: x–xxv and Frog 2009: 270–278.
10. It is notable that approximately half of the eddic poems quoted by Snorri are not independently preserved outside of the three wisdom poems *Vǫluspá*, *Vafþrúðnismál* and *Grímnismál* (Frog 2009).
11. The Vanir began as a thread of inquiry in *RMN Newsletter* in the pilot issue of *RMN Newsletter* with Rudolf Simek's "The Vanir: An Obituary" (2010). Simek's article was followed by responses in *RMN Newsletter* 2 by Clive Tolley ("In Defence of the *Vanir*", 2011) and Frog & Jonathan Roper ("Verses *versus* the 'Vanir': Response to Simek's 'Vanir Obituary'", 2011). *RMN Newsletter* 3 contains two additional articles on the topic of the Vanir: Leszek P. Słupecki's "The Vanir and *ragnarǫk*" (2011) and "The Ship in the Field" (2011) by Haukur Þorgeirsson and the present author.
12. And/or perhaps Nóatún, a location or locations associated with the god Njǫrðr. *Nóatún*, a neuter plural noun, is generally translated as some variant of 'ship(s)-enclosure(s)' and thus interpreted as 'harbor(s)', but in light of observations made regarding boat burial customs and the Vanir in Hopkins & Haukur Þorgeirsson (2011), an interpretation of 'enclosures/fields of ship graves/ship settings' may be worth considering. (Cf. *Vafþrúðnismál* 41: *Allir einheriar Óðins túnom í hǫggvaz hverian dag* ['All Einherjar in Óðinn's enclosures battle every day'], cited after Neckel & Kuhn 1962: 52. I am grateful to Haukur Þorgeirsson for this observation.)
13. Saxo's *Harthgrepa* derives from Old Norse *Harðgreipr* and/or *Harðgreip* ['hard-grip'], both of which are found in the *þulur*. The former, a feminine noun, is listed as a *jǫtunn* and the latter, an adjective, appears in a list of troll-women (Faulkes 1998: 112, 114; & Finnur Jónsson 1931: 228). No Old Norse narrative is known for either form.
14. Excluding the use of the passage closely following the stanzas present in *Gylfaginning* regarding the geographic marital discontent of Skaði and Njǫrðr, Dumézil's identification is notably rejected by Ellis Davidson (1979 [2008] I: 12–13, II: 29) but defended by North (North 1997: 268–269).

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Crossing the Bridge: Liminality, Group Identity and Continuity

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All societies have both internal and external boundaries that define the society and the members of that society, including their relationship to each other. The boundaries within a society often have a physical basis, such as birth, death, sexual maturity, widowhood or procreation. The importance of such boundaries is emphasized by the various ceremonies and rituals that accompany the physical manifestation that marks the boundaries. Most of these ceremonies mark a particular age or level of maturity: a newborn child is welcomed into the community; an adolescent is given the chance to prove his competence; a sexually mature girl is initiated into the duties of womanhood, and death is marked by ritually closing the gap thus created. While such markers are basically physical, they also denote a social status. The individual has crossed a dividing line between two states, and with the change in status there is a change in identity as seen by both the individual and society.

Group Identity and Inclusion/Exclusion

This sense of identity is both personal and of the group and is defined not only by what people see themselves to be and by what they are seen to be by others, but also by what they are not. These boundaries are not purely physical but inherent in a particular social organization and determinants for the individual’s place in that society, and consequently they provide a basis for inclusion and exclusion. In the passage or journey between states, a path or bridge has to

be found and successfully traversed. This is often the ritual itself or an equivalent success in a test or challenge: the changed physical state in itself is not sufficient to gain acceptance into the new identity. This applies also to the society or group as a whole: these too are defined partly by what they are not and by whom they include and exclude, whether a newcomer is tolerated, accepted or rejected. While individuals obviously belong to both the larger society and to groups within that society, there is a good deal of overlap and differentiation on various grounds – sex, race, age, nationality, religion, profession, level of education, marital status, hobbies, interests, social and economic position, and so forth. While the boundaries of some of the most basic of these are rarely crossed – although this, or at least the acceptance of this, is becoming more common today – other boundaries are created and maintained and associated rites of passage and ceremonies of acceptance or rejection along with these. Boundaries are perceived – perceived as obstacles or as safe havens – and this gives them importance. The idea of belonging or being outside is a fundamental preoccupation of all those who live within a society, and this applies to the subgroups who see themselves as outside the larger society.

Much of the importance of the group lies in the sense of security and superiority that it gives: to be accepted by the group means that one shares, to a large extent, the characteristics of that group. Being a member of a group is a justification of what one is. It is also a statement of the rightness of what one is and the hope of achieving that for which the group strives. Perhaps the most fundamental striving is for life and a sense of spiritual or psychological security. The group can fulfill the first by mutual help and support. The second cannot be ensured by material support alone, but only by a degree of certainty that one is 'right', a 'good person'. We see not only ourselves in relation to society and the larger world, but society and the world in relation to us. In this sense, we are all self-centered: we cannot really conceive of a world without us. Even if we imagine what would happen after our death, we do not wipe our 'true' selves from this imagined existence, and it is still colored by our emotions and the dominance of our somatic perceptions. Since we find it difficult to encompass the idea that we, as individuals, as persons, will cease to exist, it is not surprising that ideas of an afterlife have developed. A secondary factor here is the idea of justice: in the after-life, at least according to most religions and frameworks of ideas, we will get the existence we deserve – and what we deserve, whether good or bad, may vary significantly across different ideologies, places, and periods. In many religions and philosophies, the idea of continual improvement is a basic premise, implying a standard that must be reached by the individual (soul) before achieving a perfect existence. However, as in the other monotheistic religions, Christianity embraced an essentially linear view of existence. Justice will be dispensed on the basis of the life lived once, although the views on justice and mercy and the relationship between the two differ greatly over time and across different groups. In the same way, the view of the 'good' life, the life qualifying as 'good' according to divine ordinance, varies enormously. What these beliefs have in common is their sense of inclusion/exclusion: only those members of the group who are deemed worthy will achieve the perfect afterlife (eventually): members of other groups are almost invariably irrevocably damned. In this sense, the idea of the boundary between the saved and the damned was a fundamental aspect of the Christian Middle Ages.

Crossing Boundaries in the Middle Ages

Religion by definition is spiritual and immaterial, but such concepts are hard to grasp. Theologians and philosophers talk of abstracts, but still clothe these in physical metaphors and concrete symbols. The majority of people need to have things expressed in terms that they can understand and to which they can relate. Abstract terms carry little emotional weight and certainly do not inspire devotion. For the average person, now as well as in the Middle Ages, concepts need to be expressed through and symbolized by material objects. Medieval Christianity was driven by the material objects that

expressed religious devotion. Miracles were associated with a particular place, statue or object: relics were revered and given their place not only in the churches but in the religious life of the people. In particular, pilgrimage demonstrated this material aspect: people sought particular places related to either the life of Christ or to some saint or miracle. By seeking these locations, they crossed physical boundaries not only to reach unfamiliar places, but also to reach a mental space in the hope of sharing in the spiritual or divine element of such a place, and by doing so crossed spiritual and psychological boundaries. The pilgrimage itself, amongst other things, was also a rite of inclusion. A person who had been to Compostella, Rome, or to Jerusalem was different from those who had not. A great number of pilgrims sought to visit as many other places of pilgrimage as possible, whether on their way to a major site or on longer or shorter journeys, and many recorded proudly that they had visited these sites. Miracle books recorded the prayers answered by the particular saint or image venerated at a site: the residents clearly having a sense of pride and identity with 'their' image or relic, while the recipients of the miracles could see themselves as members of a special group.

In a broader sense, this identity between place and spirituality found expression in the church as a building. Hermits, saints and ascetics might find God in lonely places, or everywhere, yet for the majority of medieval Christians, God was found in church. Many churches were built on pagan sites, continuing the idea of an especially holy place. While it probably goes back to animistic beliefs, the idea that a certain place was dedicated to God and was indeed God's house made the expression of religious devotion easier and more comprehensible. It was also anchored in the idea that such places 'belonged' not just to God, but also to the devotees. God was given anthropomorphic form and medieval Christianity concentrated on the second person of the Trinity, thereby making God approachable and comprehensible: to speak to Him, to be in His presence meant entering a church, which was the home of 'their' God. There, the Mass was held, and this was also a rite of inclusion: those who were present at the Mass partook, albeit in the high and late Middle Ages by proxy, of the Host and the Eucharist and thereby took to themselves a part of Christ: they belonged to Christ. The Mass was not the only ritual re-enactment that included the Christian in a fellowship or group: the whole liturgical year was a symbolic journey marking not only the events of the life of Christ, but the progress of the soul through its stages, from initiation at advent to culmination at Easter. By definition, those who did not participate in such rites were excluded, outsiders, beyond the Church and therefore beyond redemption.

The iterative aspects of these rituals emphasized the need to renew the commitment to the group and thereby to God. It could be said that each time one entered a church one crossed not only a physical but also a symbolic threshold. It was in the church building that one entered the presence of God and one's fate – salvation or damnation – was in God's hands. Because a church symbolized God and the presence of God, it was important that the church expressed those elements that emphasized inclusion and exclusion, salvation and damnation. The doctrine of the True Presence was a theologically founded concept, but it appealed to people who wanted to believe that they were indeed in the presence of God and that this could be found in a church at the moment of the Elevation of the Host. This gave a sense of immediacy, of comprehensibility and emotional engagement. The same could be said of the 'special' images of Christ, saints and particularly the Virgin: the fact that these were images made them real and immediate; people could identify with them, feel that they prayed to something concrete and real rather than to an abstraction. The cults that grew up around particular statues of the Virgin, for example, point to the fact that it was the image that was seen as miraculous, rather than the Virgin working through the image. Today, such attitudes can still be found, whereby people have a particular devotion to 'their' Virgin, or approach the local image of the Virgin for certain things while going to others with different requests (Derks 2009).

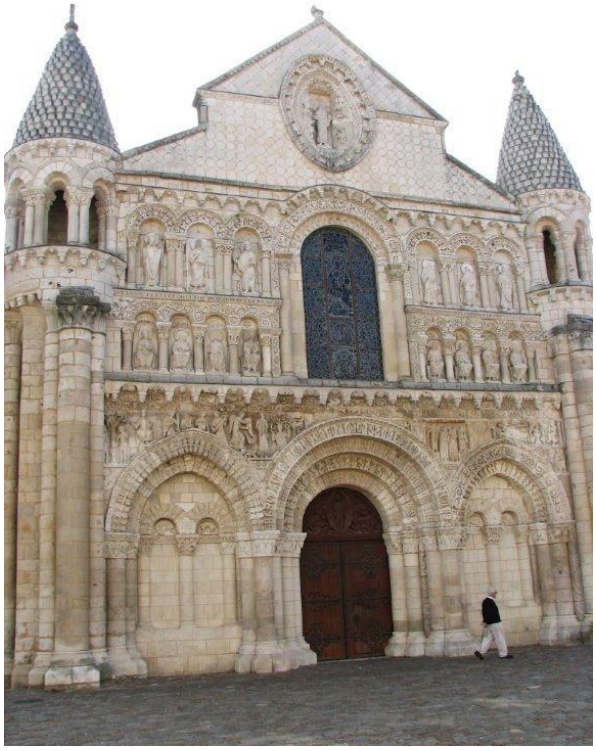

Photo 1. Notre Dame la Grande, Poitiers, façade. Photograph, author.

Insiders Welcome – All Others Keep Out!

The idea that the church was a special place in which God could be found and addressed was an aspect that found expression in images, not only in the great tympana of such churches as Chartres, Amiens, and Autun with their depictions of the Last Judgment, but also in other ways. The apotropaic function of phalluses, monsters and other motifs on church buildings are part of 'territory and marking iconography' (Bedaux 1989), but these are not the only markers. In addition to the inclusion/exclusion aspects of the Last Judgment scenes, many main portals have, either as a part of such scenes or as an independent motif, a Majestas, a Christ in glory. On the façade of Notre Dame la Grande in Poitiers, the mighty Christ seems to float above the scenes below, ruler and ordainer of all (see Photo 1). Even in small village churches such as that of Adel, near Leeds, Christ shows his power and his might. In this sense, he protects the church, both as an institution and a building. Crossing the threshold of the church put the believer under divine protection: evil could not enter. Incidentally, Adel has a second line of defense: the arch leading to the chancel is ringed with perhaps one of the finest series of beakheads, almost seeming to be fantastic teeth guarding the altar (see Photo 2). Here, the Christian took a long road from the world outside to the safety of the altar and the presence of God. Entering the porch under the protection and might of Christ, past the font, symbol of acceptance into the society of Christians, and then under the apotropiac grotesques, the Christian made a symbolic journey, changing his status from being of the world to being of God. This was a journey repeated each time he attended mass, a constant reaffirmation of his status and right to salvation. These sorts of images were the visible markers of social and psychological boundaries – insiders welcome, all others keep out.

The Bridge and the Guide

Christian journeying rituals took many forms, not just the physical pilgrimage, but also symbolic and metaphorical journeys, such as paintings showing the events of the Passion so

Photo 2. Beakheads on the chancel arch, St. John the Baptist, Adel, UK. Photograph, author.

that the viewer could share Christ's final earthly days and meditate at each stage. Other 'journeys' took the form of dream quests such as *Pélerinage de la vie humaine*, or the accounts, such as that of Tundal, of traversing the realms of the afterlife. In many cases, the visionary is led by a guide – a being who can move between states, though usually not all. In most of these accounts the protagonist must cross a river, sea, or chasm, or even several, so bridges and boats are a feature. The horrors below and around emphasized the peril of such places, demonstrating that moving from one state to another was not permitted to all. Frequently the guide has something familiar to ease the passing, to bring recognition from one state to the next. In the same way that individuals are initiated by a mentor, task or ritual, it can be said that communities and societies move from one state to the next. (This does not imply a hierarchy of states, merely that there is change, often due to circumstances and to which societies adapt.) Such (metaphorical) crossing of boundaries can be primarily economic, political, societal, or cultural, but will affect all domains. While such transformations are widely recognized and a great deal has been written on the mechanics and causes of such change, less attention has been paid to the bridges and guides of such changes. History tends to put things into (chronological) categories, even while acknowledging that such categories are fluid and no change or transition is clear and absolute. In the literary and oral versions, the chief function of the metaphorical guide is explanatory; the protagonist, and thereby the reader/ listener, learns the significance of strange or new things. Artifacts, images and tales can function in the same way for the historian if they are seen as explanatory and not just leftovers or remnants of the former state.

Every change is accompanied by a change in modes of thought, belief and ideology and these tend to be more subtle, slower and less obvious. Just as an individual does not cast away everything when moving from one state to another, societies in change take with them their (mythic) past. It is this common past that provides the cement that holds together the group identity, and that defines its limits. When these limits are crossed or changed, new issues and new attitudes grow and develop, sometimes superseding the old, but still rooted in the past as it is perceived. In this way, not only do old beliefs and attitudes persist, but they help shape the future history of the group.[1] In this way conceptual continuities (see Frog 2011) provide a solid basis for the continuity of communal or group identity, but formal continuities give expression to this and allow it to be recognized. They provide the perceived link between the old state and the new, giving both familiarity and sense to things that are only poorly understood by many. What is carried on and what is rejected, what is absorbed or adapted, whether syncretisation occurs and to what extent, says much about the society and its sense of identity. It is precisely in this area that the functions of 'bridge' or 'guide' are important. This raises the question of what elements of older attitudes and beliefs act as vectors or indicators to new ideas, how they function and why they are so persistent.

The persistence of a 'special' holy place has already been mentioned, but older 'pagan' symbols continue(d) to be used to express Christian ideas. In the Middle Ages, this was especially true of visual symbols and metaphors: Cerberus guards the gates of hell in the 9th century French Utrecht Psalter, but such metaphors have a long life. Charon ferries the dead in works, among others, by Signorelli and even in Buffet's 1976 representation of Dante crossing the Styx (Blanc 2004: 190–191). The metaphors still hold, but these are more than expressions of a simple liminality, of crossing the boundaries between life and death: they also form a bridge to the past, giving the historian a foothold in trying to understand a society very different from that of today. The apotropaic beakheads, gargoyles, sheela-na-gigs are surely remnants of older (malevolent) spirits, set to guard against their like, while the powerful lord and the monster-slaying hero – Christ, Michael or Sigurðr (Bradley, forthcoming), or any of the saints whose power over evil takes this very basic form – protect the group and the accepted individual.

Because such metaphors are still understood today, used with caution (see

Bradley 2011), they can provide a bridge to understanding how societies understood their own identity and where they drew their boundaries.

Notes

1. I would like to thank the Very Reverend Gerald Stranraer-Mull, not only for an interesting discussion on 'making history', but for the splendid example of rooted identity defying the efforts of professional historians and political correctness in the re-enactment of the Battle of Culloden.

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On the Case of *Vambarljóð* II: Register and Mode from Skaldic Verse to *sagnakvæði*

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This is Part II of an article responding to Haukur Þorgeirsson's (2012) case study on intersections of probable formulaic language between one of the late medieval *sagnakvæði* called *Vambarljóð* and other poetry and early prose recorded in Iceland. Part I of this article gave consideration to the formulaic language surveyed by Þorgeirsson. The present article turns attention to the problem of the distribution of formulaic language across different poems, using a register-based approach. One outcome of Þorgeirsson's study is observing a gross disparity between interfaces in formulaic language occurring in other *sagnakvædi* (and eddic verse) and formulae in *rímur* poetry, where correspondences are notably few. Building on the register-based approach, this article will outline a working hypothesis that could offer a solution to this curious riddle. This hypothesis extends Michael Halliday's (1978: 61–64) approach to mode of expression as a determinant on register to propose a hierarchical relationship between mode and register in language use. If this hypothesis is correct, the lack of interfaces between poetic systems would be attributable to the respective registers being interfaced with different modes of expression. The outline of this working hypothesis will be constructed at the intersection of earlier studies on eddic and skaldic verse (Frog 2009b; 2011a) and a survey of patterns of verse quotation in Snorri Sturluson's *ars poetica* called *Edda* (Frog 2009a).

Register and Formulaic Language

The present discussion takes a usage-based approach to language and considers the use of formulaic language according to poetic 'registers'. Register is a term that developed in linguistics to designate language as it is used and realized in particular communicative contexts (see e.g. Haliday 1978). The term 'register' was adapted from linguistics to the analysis of oral poetries centrally by John Miles Foley (esp. 1995; 2002). Asif Agha (2007) has outlined a valuable approach to the phenomenon of register by turning attention from ideal monolithic entities called languages (Saussure's *langue*) to systems of elements and features that provide semiotic resources in communicative contexts. These resources form constellations that become (consciously or unconsciously) socially

recognized as belonging together, at which point they can be described as 'registers'.

Language patterns and lexical resources are internalized in relation to social practices. Registers are therefore reciprocally conditioned by social practices. The ongoing process of individuals internalizing registers and engaging them as social resources leads registers to be involved in continuous processes of social negotiation (resulting in 'enregisterment', to use Agha's term). Thus, any language can be seen as a vast plurality of coexisting and interacting registers rather than registers being particular variations of an idealized language. Consequently, individuals do not have a single, unified understanding of 'language' as a coherent and uniform system: individuals internalize registers as constellations of these semiotic resources, which in turn provide a framework for emergent expressive behaviours (rather than defining them). The term 'register' can thus be used to describe a vast array of semiotic resources that characterize different types of verbal behaviours. The language of oral-poetic genres and broader poetic systems with their associated semiotic resources can be practically approached in terms of registers that are aesthetically marked.

Part I of this article addressed the verbal formula defined in terms of a socially circulating verbal unit of utterance that develops morpheme-equivalence as a unit of expression in the mental lexicon of (competent) language users. Formulae and formulaic systems belong to registers and may even characterize registers. Although the emphasis here is on varieties of formulaic language, it should be stressed that register is used to describe a full spectrum of semiotic resources and not limited to formulae.

Formulae and Fields of Use

Þorgeirsson's survey of formulae in *Vambarljóð* gives consideration to the thematic contexts in which formulae appear. The relationship between formulaic expression and narrative content received further attention in Part I of this article. Discussion concentrated on the association of particular formulae and more complex systems of verbal expression with content that I approached as multiforms. These discussions raise questions about the relationship of specific content, themes and broader subject domains when represented through language. On the basis of her work with the register of Karelian laments, Eila Stepanova (2009; 2011; cf. Stepanova, this volume) distinguishes the 'essential lexicon' from 'context-specific lexicon' in the register of that poetic system. This has proven a useful tool in approaching kalevalaic epic (Frog 2010b: 101–102) and could be of value when considering the distribution of formulae across different poems here.

The *essential lexicon* of a poetic system or genre is the lexicon of fundamentals used in expression generally across diverse contexts. Although words and formulae may be quite specific in their function or significance, they are not more or less exclusive to a subgroup of generic products. For example, in Old Norse saga literature, *er X* (*nú*) *ór sögunni* ['X is (now) out of the saga'] can be considered to belong to the essential lexicon because it is not employed in conjunction with specific themes, images, motifs or subject material. Similarly, in kalevalaic poetry, the line *oi emoni kantajani* ['oh, my mother, one who carried me'] is used as a vocative phrase to address one's mother across genres to the degree that it appears to belong to the essential lexicon of the whole poetic system. Stepanova gives particular attention to the relative competence of performers in different areas of the register. Even performers who only focus on certain areas or aspects of the tradition develop competence in the essential lexicon. Among the formulae surveyed from *Vambarljóð*, kennings for 'woman' and 'ruler' look like they may belong to the essential lexicon of the genre as semantic formulae and would thereby be internalized at a fundamental level of competence in this poetry.

A *context-specific lexicon* of the register is, in contrast, (generally) only realized in narrower areas of the broader system. In kalevalaic epic, for example, the various formulae associated with naming and describing the mythic figure Väinämöinen belong to the context-specific lexicon of the cycles of narratives in which Väinämöinen

appears; they are not found in the Christian epic cycles nor in other genres such as lyric that share a common meter and mode of expression. A context-specific register may also be thematically indexed. Several of the formulae surveyed from *Vambarljóð* are concerned with aspects of drinking. Parallels to some of these are only found in eddic poetry and saga literature (M7, T20, T25, V2). This could reflect a context-specific register only relevant to a few particular poems or a small subgroup within the tradition. This would then present a context-specific field of the broader register in which not all performers would necessarily develop competence. More narrowly still, formula V1: *valt X / Vömb óþvegin* ['rolled X / the unwashed belly'] appears to be specific to the particular (magically transformed) heroine of this particular poem. It therefore can be considered to belong to a very narrow context-dependent lexicon of the single poem. Individuals less familiar with the poem thus might develop only a limited competence in its use and conventions (cf. Part I: 29).

Although accurately assessing a context-specific register is highly problematic in a corpus as limited as that of the *sagnakvæði*, acknowledging a difference between an essential and context-dependent lexicon raises valid questions concerning how formulaic correspondences across poems should be regarded. It also highlights the need to situate correspondences in larger contexts of the corpus and tradition. This contextualized perspective could be enhanced by assessing the distribution of relevant thematic or other content across the corpus. This would help to suggest the probability that certain themes, subject domains, images or motifs are more likely to be connected with the essential lexicon. It would also provide a context in which formula occurrences could be considered in terms of relative frequency – a ratio of attestations to relevant contents or contexts in which the formula might have been realized. This relative frequency could then be compared with the relative length of the passages concerned (e.g. one in three lines or one line in thirty stanzas). A formula only occurring within short verbal sequences in both of two possible contexts will appear differently than one found in only two of twenty longer descriptions.

The Problem of Uneven Distribution

Consideration of an essential versus context-dependent lexicon foregrounds the lack of evidence for an essential lexicon of formulaic language in the data presented. Although kennings for 'woman' and 'lord' seem to belong to the essential lexicon as semantic formulae, only one kenning is encountered as a verbal formula in two or more additional *sagnakvæði* (K5). Remarkably, this kenning invariably appears with an alliterating adjectival complement producing the larger formula M2: *svinn seima Bíl* ['wise Bíl of gold']. This is one of only three formulae attested in two or more other *sagnakvæði*. The other two are M4: *X nokkuð / nýtt í fréttum* ['X something / new to report'], which is perhaps not terribly striking; and M1: *X skunda / til skipan ofan* ['X hurry / down to the ships'], which, if part of the essential lexicon, would suggest that activity surrounding ships is fundamental to narratives in the genre. When these are the only three formulae encountered across *multiple* other *saganKvæði*, their semantic distribution looks potentially arbitrary.

What becomes striking is what is *not* found among these formulae. Certain semantic fields are conspicuously absent. Introductions to direct speech would be expected to have a prominent position in the poetic diction of a narrative tradition and an established position in the essential lexicon.[1] M1 and M4 are predominantly realized in direct speech, as are a significant number of other formulae addressed. Nevertheless, inquit formulae are conspicuously absent from the material surveyed. Although some formulae may have been too fine for Þorgeirsson's sieve, sifting for formulaic strings,[2] it seems remarkable that such formulae do not even emerge as repeating through *Vambarljóð* itself. Although the precise semantics and functions of formulae of the essential lexicon vary according to the priorities, themes, subjects and functions of a genre, there seems a conspicuous absence of more widely found formulae related to fundamentals of narration and the central subjects of this genre.

The paucity of formulae encountered across multiple other *sagnakvæði* is still more peculiar when it is observed that nine verbal formulae are attested in two or more of the earlier sources (M1, M3, M8, M9, M10, M11, M12, K2, K3). This is three times the number attested in two or more other *sagnakvæði*. Although there may be a continuity of the broader poetic system, this contradicts anticipation for *a*) a synchronic corpus as opposed to a corpus hundreds of years removed; and also *b*) a corpus from a common genre as opposed to earlier genres with different orientations and different intended audiences. The relative size of each corpus is probably a factor in this disparity. Another factor could be that investigations into formulaicity in the *sagnakvæði* are only just getting underway: certain types of formula may not yet have been identified. Nevertheless, it is not clear that these factors fully account for the disparity. In addition, two of the three formulae found across multiple other *sagnakvæði* were not found among the earlier materials (M2, M4; on K5, see Þorgeirsson 2012: 184) while six of the formulae found in two or more earlier sources were not found in other *sagnakvæði* (M8, M10, M11, M12, K2, K3): two out of three multiply attested formulae were not found across both groups of sources. In other words, there is not only a disparity of proportions, but the distribution of attestations appears more exclusive than inclusive. This raises significant questions about the synchronic functioning of the tradition.

Considering essential and context-dependent lexicons of the register highlights that formulae are not necessarily freely occurring in an oral-poetic system. Approaching the significance of formula distribution and frequency therefore requires contextualization in the corpus, taking into account how formulae may or may not be relevant for the general use or functioning of the particular genre or poetic system. The review of formulae presented by Þorgeirsson draws attention to thematic connections between formulaic verbal expression and thematic content. This could offer the possibility of developing perspectives on dynamic context-dependent semantic networks running through the corpus. However, the same review also lacks indications of a developed essential lexicon within which a context-dependent lexicon would be situated. The initial survey would seem to suggest that individual *sagnakvæði* are primarily characterized by a narrow, poem-specific context-dependent lexicon (according to the approach to the formula in Part I). It would not follow from this that the *sagnakvæði* were composed in a written rather than an oral tradition, but rather suggest that the essential lexicon does not necessarily function at the level of formulaic strings and that compositional strategies and conventions outside of the lexicon, or conditioning the lexicon, were more significant in the production and reproduction of this poetry.

A Working Hypothesis on Register and Mode of Expression

Although little evidence of a formulaic essential lexicon of the *sagnakvæði* is apparent, interfaces of formulaic language and formulaic language use are clearly evident across the *sagnakvæði* and between *Vambarljóð* and the earlier medieval traditions of eddic poetry. *Rímur* poetry is an Icelandic narrative poetry tradition at the oral-written interface with which the *sagnakvæði* coexisted in oral singing traditions. This trochaic, alliterative and end-rhymed poetry likely emerged in the 14th century, roughly a century after the greater part of preserved eddic poetry was committed to writing. This poetry appears to have emerged as an oral form, yet the early narrative genres show a clear predilection for adapting subjects from manuscript text and socially circulating songs, including eddic poems and later apparently even drawing on *sagnakvæði* (Þorgeirsson 2011: 189). In spite of this interface with written culture, *rímur* exhibit clearly definable metrics, poetics and poetic language with a long history in the oral traditions of Iceland.

Rímur poetry undoubtedly circulated for centuries in the same communities alongside *sagnakvæði* and also alongside Scandinavian ballads. In contrast to the networks of formulaic correspondences among *sagnakvæði* and eddic verse, the degree of formulaic interfaces between *sagnakvæði* and

rímur poetry is so low that Þorgeirsson (2011: 193) observes: "There is a clear tendency for poetic formulas to be limited to a particular type of poetry." This presents a different problem than questions of essential and context-specific lexicons and raises questions about interfaces between different registers and the semiotic resources they offer.

These two poetries have different meters, yet Þorgeirsson (2011: 193–194) draws attention to several examples of kennings which nevertheless would provide metrically viable resources for the *rímur* tradition, and several formulaic expressions observed in *Vambarljóð* would be compatible with *rímur* meters. This is striking where the formulae are consistent with the register of *rímur* such as kennings (cf. K1–3). On the other hand, the syllabic flexibility of the *sagnakvæði* meter can readily accept trochaic rhythms: even if the movement of formulaic resources from *sagnakvæði* to *rímur* might be inhibited by metrical incompatibilities, the opposite movement from *rímur* to *sagnakvæði* could likely have been realized more fluidly. Even if these poetries were predominantly associated with different groups in communities where they were used – e.g. *sagnakvæði* with women and *rímur* with men – it is unclear why they did not draw on common resources where these overlapped, especially when there is evidence of more direct *conscious* adaptation from one to another in other contexts (Þorgeirsson 2011: 189).

To frame this in term of registers as outlined above: *a*) the register of each poetry can be considered in terms of constellations of features and semiotic resources; *b*) verbal formulae present specific semiotic resources that can belong categorically to the constellations of both registers; *c*) although both registers share certain categories of semiotic resources (such as kennings), it is unclear why specific resources (such as individual verbal formulae) do not seem to move between them where their constellations appear overlapping. This presents the possibility that categories of resources (such as kennings) characteristic of a register are not engaged generally as a freely mixing pool, but rather that the specific verbal resources engaged within that category are significantly narrower for each register.

The fact that registers are characterized by preferred use of certain semiotic resources and not others is undisputed. Preferred association of particular verbal expressions with thematic or specific content has been discussed in Part I and is similarly relevant to the discussion of context-dependent lexicons above. The division across registers presents a similar phenomenon at a higher, broader level of communicative resources. However, this raises the question of where and why different registers are more and less interpermeable. For example, the mutual separation of formulaic language use between *sagnakvæði* and *rímur* can be contrasted with the more fluid movement of verbal expression between genres of Kalevala-meter poetry (see Tarkka 2005; forthcoming) and fluid, unmarked shifts that can emerge in unmetered expression as between legends, *Märchen*, etc. This seems to suggest some form of hierarchy to which meter appears relevant. I would therefore like to take the opportunity to lay out a working hypothesis that has the potential to offer insight into these phenomena.

Michael Halliday (1978: 60ff.) proposed that the mode of expression acts as a determinant on register and with "the textual component of the semantics" in particular (Halliday 1978: 64). Mode can be considered the medium for accomplishing expression. 'Oral' and 'written' are two very broad categories of mode of expression, but each of these presents numerous sub-categories. Thus the written mode conditions registers and potential sites of variation differently in hand-written calligraphy, the scribbling on post-it notes and even preparing documents with a modern word-processing program – which can offer a hundred different fonts without practical possibilities for uniquely stylizing lettering. Put simply, an oral-poetic mode conditions register as a special mode of expression. The conditioning of the register by this mode of expression is particularly apparent owing to structuring mechanisms of meter, rhythms and acoustic patterning.

Linguistic analyses of register were centrally concerned with æsthetically unmarked discourse. Traditional meters

therefore stood outside of consideration. John Miles Foley's (esp. 1995) adaptation of register to oral-poetics was an innovative leap. Foley used register in a very broad, inclusive sense, treating poetic meter as a feature of register. Foley was working centrally with meters that were regularly repeating, hence every line provided the same metrical environment. The interface of register and meter was therefore uniform. However, this is not the case with all poetries. For example, Old Norse *ljóðaháttr* presents alternations of a variation on the Germanic long-line and the so-called *Vollzeile* (a short line incorporating a complete alliteration pattern). Certain formulae may 'migrate' directly between the different types of lines in this poetry where they are formally compatible (Sverdolov 2011: 56–57). However, the role of meter as a determinant on formula resources of the register becomes apparent in formula variation according to metrical environment (Frog 2011a: 38–40). Similarly, Old Norse skaldic verse offers rich examples of registers associated with other genres within the complex *dróttkvætt* meter. These strategies for the production of meanings range from generally engaging the register of oral laws[3] to scrambling conventional expressions from narrative prose into a metrical stanza.[4] These are all cases in which a register is activated metonymically through semiotic resources associated with it within a different medium of oral expression. Although meter and mode may also carry associations and rhetorical force, the same meter and mode of expression may be associated with several conventionally distinguished registers and a single meter may be associated with multiple modes of expression.[5] Register, meter and mode do not function interchangeably.

When different modes of expression are interfaced with the same essential meter, these should not be regarded as exclusive. Modes of expression sharing a common meter can range along a (potentially very fluid) continuum: a shift in mode affects the rhythmic-melodic templates through which register is realized in the more abstract meter. This approach to the realization of meter through rhythmic-melodic templates of mode is consistent with observations that meter may be more rigorous or looser in a spoken recital of oral poetry than when actualized through performative singing (e.g. Salminen 1934: 200–203; Honko 1998: 81–88), as well as observations that skaldic uses of eddic meters exhibit inclinations to syllabic rhythms – presumably associated with rhythmic-melodic templates of the mode of expression – in contrast to narrative eddic poems (cf. Turville-Petre 1976: xvii). On the basis of these observations, I consider it more appropriate to regard meter as an aspect of a mode of expression or of multiple modes of expression along a continuum. Meter generally, and more particularly the rhythmic-melodic templates through which meter is realized, will therefore be considered a determinant on register rather than part of the register itself.

The differentiation of mode from register in relation to meter presents grounds to consider that the long-term historical lack of extensive interfaces between formulaic language in the registers of *sagnakvæði* and *rímur* may be associated with modes of expression which lack a connection along a continuum of interfaces with a common meter. In other words, the modes of expression lack a connection that would readily allow them to 'flow' into one another. This working hypothesis requires that mode of expression is not simply a determinant on register, but rather that there is a hierarchical relationship between them which impacts how registers are engaged at a cognitive level.

In the following sections, I will outline and triangulate perspectives gained from three earlier studies on Old Norse poetics as evidence of mode as a hierarchical determinant on register. This will be done by presenting a dynamic approach to the formula and relating it to eddic verse, followed by a discussion of pedagogical strategies in Snorri Sturluson's *ars poetica Edda*, and finally by turning to composition in Old Norse skaldic verse. The working hypothesis proposed here offers a unified explanation for the diverse phenomena addressed in these complementary studies as well as for the riddle of limited exchange between the formulaic lexicon of *sagnakvæði* and *rímur*.

Formulaic Aspects Beyond the Lexicon

It is common to think of formulae in terms of lexical units only, yet the social realities of formulae are much more dynamic even in unmarked spoken language. Formulae often include, for example, literal meanings, discourse functions, pragmatics and associations, phonology, melody and rhythm (cf. Pawley 2009: 6–7). In other words, a formula is a bundle of elements and features that are considered to belong together in a logical relation allowing for a morpheme-equivalent unit of communication. Lexical items may only be one part of this bundle. The elocution of poetry is generally characterized by a perceptible distinction from unmarked speech (Tsur 1992). Oral-poetic modes of expression reflect precisely this type of distinction. In traditions of oral poetry, "verse is generally sung verse" (Banti & Giannattasio 2004: 290), even if the mode of presentation is distinguished from 'song' and 'singing' within that culture (cf. Gade 1994 on the delivery of skaldic verse). This means that performance is marked by rhythmic-melodic templates. Consequently, within an oral environment, Milman Parry's (1928: 16) requirement that a formula fill "the same metrical conditions" would in fact refer to the formula being associated with a particular rhythmic-melodic template (or an equivalency class of such rhythmic-melodic templates). Rather than verbal elements only, it is reasonable to consider that rhythm and/or melody could be an established aspect of oral-poetic formulae.

This dynamic model of the formula appears to have been relevant to Old Norse poetics. In a case study of the eddic poem *Alvíssmál*, I recently showed an 'inclination to non-variation'[6] in the repetition of formulae within the poem (Frog 2011a). With the exception of variation attributable to use in different metrical environments, variation in the repeating formulae surveyed was associated with their first use, whereafter they received a stable form (a pattern of variation that, on the basis of analogical evidence, can be associated with difficulties in accurately recalling repeating poetic expressions; cf. Frog 2010b: 99–100). The flexible eddic *ljóðaháttr* meter would easily accommodate variation in elements that have no semantic significance. For example, the conjunction *ok* ['and'] may appear or remain implicit (cf. Part I: 32). Comparing formulae in *Alvíssmál* revealed that the presence or absence of such a conjunction varied regularly according to a formula's stable form: whether *ok* appeared or was implicit in a certain line of a stanza depended on which formula was used to realize that line. Such variation is irrelevant to both meter and semantics and would only affect the syllabic rhythm of expression. I argued that non-variation in semantically light or void elements is best explained by the internalization of the rhythmic-melodic template as an aspect of the formula (regularizing its formal realization) rather than the formula being purely verbal and subject to free compositional use independent of the rhythmic-melodic template.

According to the findings of that study, formulaic language in medieval Icelandic eddic poetry appears to have been bound up with a rhythmic-melodic template or templates. Although this perspective may appear new and innovative, connecting formulaic language with rhythmic-melodic templates simply complements the philological concentration on verbal aspects of formulaic language with the multimodal perspectives on formulaic expression that have been developed in linguistics and linguistic anthropology.

Skaldic Pedagogy and Recall

In his *ars poetica* known as *Edda*, Snorri Sturluson invested the time, energy and cost of quoting 350–400 stanzas, helmings (half-stanzas) and couplets of skaldic verse from a remarkably broad range of poets (Fidjestøl 1985: 323; Faulkes 1998: lv–lix; Frog 2009a). Each of these quotations normally only illustrates a kenning or the use of individual poetic synonyms called heiti that can be used for lexical variation in generating kennings (on kennings as formulae, see Part I: 25–26). The number and range of quotations is unique and rather mysterious. There is no reason to believe that 'preserving' particular verses for posterity was in the scope of the author's concern: quotations exhibit no interest in presenting whole poems, relating different

quotations to one another or even quoting syntactically complete clauses when illustrating a particular kenning or heiti. The treatise also appears generally to assume that poem titles and names of poets will already be recognizable and familiar to the work's audience rather than that requiring introduction or clarification (e.g. because this information had largely dropped out of oral circulation). This presents the question of why the author would invest the time, energy, attention and financial expense of manuscript production on this cascade of decontextualized poetic fragments rather than simply providing lists of kennings as examples, with perhaps one or two illustrative verses (as opposed to six, ten, or more).

Snorri's composition of a written *ars poetica* was no doubt under the influence of foreign models. Its existence is dependent on a technology of writing and manuscript production that was imported with the establishment of Christian institutional centers. These centers established a new authoritative mode of communication dependent on this technology. The use of this written mode for a pedagogical treatise on an already established art of oral poetry within a center of learning was undoubtedly engaging in contemporary discourses associated with the relatively new written mode of expression and its relationship to pedagogy. Foreign models also appear evident in Snorri's construction of systematic categories, interpretations of certain kennings and kenning-types, and probably also the invention of at least some kennings and perhaps even kenning-types. (See e.g. Clunies Ross 1987; 2005; Nordal 2001.) Although the creation of this written work is dependent on foreign models, such foreign models cannot account for the sheer number of poetic examples quoted. It is also noteworthy that areas where Snorri was likely asserting something new, such as a whole category of kennings, this can be assessed precisely because supporting verse examples are not provided nor attested elsewhere. This would indicate that Snorri did not invent verses to affirm such claims in his treatise, with the implication that verses were not seen as necessary for making claims or affirming the validity of particular kennings, which returns us to the question of why so many quotations are included illustrating specific, concrete examples when the emphasis of the treatise is on verbal variation.

In a survey of patterns of verse quotations in *Edda*, I observed that Snorri's competence in the poetic system would necessarily be dependent on extensive exposure to and participation in the oral-poetic system (Frog 2009a). However Snorri's explanations and interpretations might be judged, his awareness of and sensitivity to syllabic and phonetic patterning in his descriptive analysis cannot be reasonably attributed to a significant dependence on manuscript texts. Although verbal art and oral poetry were no doubt interfaced with a wide range of social practices, Snorri appears to be representative of an advanced and specialist part of the tradition – skalds as 'court poets', who could potentially even live off of the patronage of their lords. The rich vernacular vocabulary surrounding this poetry (even if Snorri may have elaborated on it) is an implicit indicator of discourse surrounding poetics and poetic composition. Versified lists of poetic synonyms called *þulur* appear to have circulated orally in the tradition and provided resources for combining synonyms that would produce kennings as semantic formulae appropriate to particular metrical conditions. When evidence of this sort is situated in relation to the representation of skaldic composition as a highly respected, economically beneficial, and also specialist art, this implies that versification and the language of poetry was taught and learned. It is therefore reasonable to consider that Snorri's treatise is not wholly dependent on foreign models. Like his use of vernacular terminology, meters and rhetorical structures as well as rooting referential strategies in vernacular heroic and mythological traditions, it seems probable that aspects of his presentation and pedagogical strategies are as rooted in the oral culture as the verses he quotes.

The role of socially circulating 'texts' in this tradition makes it probable that Snorri's sensitivity and competence in handling the language and meters of the poetry included a

recitative knowledge of a corresponding repertoire of poems and verses. The quantity of verse quoted in *Edda* would not be inconsistent with such competence. Lists of quotations generally vary by both quoted poem and poet. If Snorri had been dependent on some sort of index of slips developed from diverse manuscript exemplars, the sequences of quotations would likely either be random or exhibit consciously consistent patterns. Instead, examples repeatedly appear selected on a much narrower basis than the kenning or circumlocution addressed. Moreover, the patterns of association are not consistent across lists: they may reflect common narrative content, common thematic content, or advance to quotations where a kenning is exclusively on the level of surface texture – i.e. the relevant heiti or kenning illustrated is a modifier in a larger kenning structure. For instance, 9 of 12 examples of 'sky'-kennings follow the semantic and structural pattern of 'ruler of/under the sky(-kenning)', such as presenting *tiggi hjálms sólar* ['lord of the helmet of the sun' = 'God'] to illustrate *hjálmr solar* ['helmet of the sun' = 'sky'] (Faulkes 1998: 33–35). Emergent patterns among lists of quotations in *Edda* are consistent with associations made in the process of recall, as is, for example, the quotation of *Eiríksmál* 1 among examples of kennings for Óðinn, although the god is only referred to as "Óðínn" in the verse and a relevant poetic circumlocution is lacking (cf. Faulkes 1998: 159). Quotation from memory would be consistent with the competence implicit in Snorri's sensitive analysis of poetic meters and also his handling of meters and language in his own poetic composition.

The ability to derive quotations of stanzas where the relevant circumlocution is exclusively on the level of surface texture would be indicative of memory specialization consistent with a high level of competence (cf. Rubin 1995: 146–174; Harvilahti 2000). Observing that kennings are oriented to verbal virtuosity in order to meet metrical demands, it seems improbable that Snorri would first remember or compose kennings and then recall stanzas in which these occur. Starting with a *verbal* kenning would also be inconsistent with thematic links among some series of quoted examples. The pattern of quotation suggests that Snorri recalled stanzas incorporating a kenning as a semantic formula or even a more sophisticated structural type and introduced this as an illustration of the particular kenning. More interestingly, this would imply that memory specialization involved indexing examples of individual kennings. Such indexing would be communicated implicitly in the pedagogical strategy of listing examples of use for each kenning within an equivalence class, and could reflect an aspect of vernacular educations in skaldic composition. This possibility is more interesting observing that versified lists of the poetic synonyms that could be used in the verbal variation of kennings circulated orally as *þulur*, but not equivalent versified lists of kennings, which – judging from Snorri's treatise – were learned through concrete examples. Accordingly, exemplar resources of kenning formulae would be internalized in conjunction with the corresponding rhythmic-melodic templates in which they occur. If patterns in Snorri's quotations reflect strategies of indexing memory, his patterns of extensive illustrative quotation may reflect vernacular pedagogical strategies for teaching the poetic tradition and developing these indices in memory.

Although vernacular pedagogical strategies for skaldic versification cannot be reconstructed, this would account for Snorri's extensive (and otherwise potentially excessive) quotation of illustrative verses. If this model is roughly accurate, it has significant implications not only for developed specialization of recall for individual poets, but it also has significant implications for poetic composition.

Kennings and dróttkvætt *Composition*

The case study on Snorri's patterns of verse quotation suggests that poets may have internalized and indexed kennings in memory according to the lines and stanzas in which they occur. In other words, kennings as variable semantic formulae would have been internalized in relation to a repertoire of verbally realized examples within their metrical contexts. If this is situated in relation to the dynamic approach to the formula

outlined above, it would mean that exemplars of kennings were internalized and indexed in conjunction with a particular rhythmic-melodic template. Of course, this remains only hypothetical when approached exclusively through Snorri's text. However, it implies that the developed indices of kennings would provide resources in poetic composition, from which it follows that evidence of this may be detectible in the corpus.

If poets thought 'through' indexed models of poetry for the realization of the register in composition, this implies that the poetic register was not always freely realized in the rhythmic-melodic templates through the process of composition. Consequently, the tradition would likely give rise to patterns in the occurrence of constituents of the register through the corpus. At the level of larger structures, lines and couplets of skaldic verse that are verbally and phonetically close to lines and couplets of other poems have been widely observed, although scholarship has remained generally uncertain what to do with these as a broad pattern (normally addressing them on a case by case basis). Such cases could reflect precisely the types of processes of composition within a register through socially circulating poetic models. This sort of adaptive use of socially circulating resources in the poetic tradition was discussed with regards to multiforms in Part I of this article (as improvisation strategy, see Sykäri 2011).

At the level of more minimal resources, certain lexical items of the poetic register do appear narrowly associated with particular metrical positions in the *dróttkvætt* meter, exhibiting patterns of use that lack metrical or semantic explanation (Frog 2009b: 234). However, if the above approach to Snorri's pedagogical strategy is roughly correct, then a site where this would be exhibited is the realization of kennings as semantic formulae.

A survey of the noun *dynr* ['din'] in *dróttkvætt* revealed that, outside of compounds, this word appeared exclusively as a base-word in battle kennings, identifying 24 examples (see further Frog 2009b). Of 24 examples, 21 situated an inflected from 'dyn' in the fourth metrical position of the six-position line. With one exception, this always occurs in an even line (presenting slightly different metrical conditions. Also with one exception,[7] this use was followed by a two-syllable word (or valkyrja-name) in the genitive forming a 'battle'-kenning (e.g. *dynr hjálma* ['din of helmets']). In other words, the 24 examples not only invariably situated *dynr* as a base-word in the same semantic formula; 20 of these situated the full kenning formula in an equivalent rhythmic-melodic template, 19 of which were in even as opposed to odd lines (if the rhythmic-melodic templates for these differed). Moreover, in 17 of these 20 examples, the formula was preceded by the preposition *í*, presenting a four-position open-slot formula *í dyn X* producing a prepositional phrase with a morpheme-equivalent meaning 'in battle'. The metrical, structural and semantic regularity of this term's use suggests that it was not employed freely within the register but rather internalized as an element of a kenning formula and especially connected with a particular rhythmic-melodic template. This case is consistent with the internalization of kennings as semantic formulae through situated verbal examples such as Snorri may advocate in his pedagogical treatise.

The proposed internalization model should hypothetically allow variation in a base-word as well as in the modifier. This is corroborated by 35 examples of the formula (*í*) *gný X* ['(in) the roar of X' = '(in) battle'], in which *gnýr* ['roar'] is a heiti equivalent to *dýnr*. This formula exhibits the same fixed metrical positions (with variation between odd and even lines: Frog 2009b: 236).

The same phenomenon also seems to be attested for kennings formed as compound words, such as a group of two-syllable compounds meaning 'battle' opening a *dróttkvætt* line and followed by a syntactic break. This structure accounts for the two examples of the kenning compound *hjördynr* ['sword-din' = 'battle']. Both examples complete the line with a form of *brynja* ['armour']). The single example of *sverðdynr* ['sword-din'] appears accompanied by *brynja* in the same metrical positions. In all three cases, the term for 'sword' carries alliteration and *brynja* accomplishes rhyme with *dynr*. The structural similarity of a syntactic break

along with the *dynr–brynja* collocation are unlikely to be accidental, with the implication that variation in the sword-heiti is the result of adapting a social resource to compositional requirements. (See Frog 2009b: 237.) The adaptation of resources may not have been exclusive to a single semantic formula (i.e. 'X-noise' = 'battle'-kenning) but rather within semantically networked equivalence-classes, producing, for example *hjǫr-veðrs* ['sword-storm' = 'battle'],[8] *sverð-éls* ['sword-storm'],[9] *felli-veðr* ['destructive weather' = 'battle'],[10] and so forth. The number of examples significantly increases when only the metrical position in the line is considered irrespective of its syntactic structure (e.g. no break following the kenning). These examples suggest that the kenning was metrically entangled in the process of composition while the correlation with a syntactic structure of the line suggests thinking 'through' socially circulating models.

Although kennings as semantic formulae were capable of incredible verbal virtuosity, this evidence suggests that kennings were not *necessarily* generated freely and uniquely within a given composition. This review invites further investigation of kennings as both verbal and semantic formulae in *dróttkvætt* and other Old Norse meters.

Like the formulaic language in *Alvíssmál*, kennings could be internalized in concretized verbal structures bound up with rhythmic-melodic templates, and these provided a metrically entangled resource to which the lexicon of poetic synonyms could be applied in composition. If this was an established strategy, it would offer an explanation for Snorri's extensive presentation of poetic examples in *Edda*. More significantly, this discussion suggests that an oral-poetic register is not merely conditioned by the mode of expression, but that it is bound up with and potentially subordinated to the mode of expression. This supports the working hypothesis of a hierarchical relation between register and mode at a cognitive level – thinking 'through' the mode of expression.

Perspectives

The first sections above addressed the distribution of formulaic resources within the registral lexicon. This addressed methodological issues concerning the use of formulae across themes and subject domains, highlighting the need to contextualize these in the corpus. More significantly, this discussion highlighted that there is very little evidence of *sagnakvæði* sharing an extensive formulaic language as an essential lexicon. Reflecting on the discussion of formulaic language in Part I of this article, an outcome of this discussion was a possibility that the *sagnakvæði* may have been centrally developed on formulaic language specific to the individual poem and specific to individual verses within that poem. This was consistent with the discussion of multiforms in Part I, where the multiforms generally appeared to be poem-specific adaptations of socially circulating poetic resources rather than a more common flexible framework variously realized in diverse contexts.

Part II turned to the problem of the apparent division between formulaic language use in *sagnakvæði* and *rímur* poetry. This was addressed through the triangulation of three earlier studies on aspects of Old Norse poetics in support of a working hypothesis that there is some type of hierarchical relation between register and mode of expression. This hypothesis proposes that thinking 'through' the mode of expression significantly delimits the semiotic resources of the register rather than the constellation of features and resources comprising the register being open categories that are more freely generative. This does not mean that the hierarchy is necessarily exclusive or that it would not be possible to 'think outside the box' of the mode of expression. The ability to adapt semiotic resources from other registers (mentioned above) would contradict such limitations. Moreover, the semiotic resources of a particular register are not necessarily evenly distributed (as was emphasized in the discussion of context-specific registers), nor will a register necessarily be equipped to handle all possible representations and communications. Under such circumstances, other registers would most likely be activated as semiotic resources that might be associated with the particular theme or subject domain more generally (e.g. about ships and sailing in

a register where these are not conventionally addressed). Like formulaicity in language, the hierarchical relation between mode of expression and register might be largely attributable to economy in cognitive processing: it is simply more 'work' to think outside the mode of expression and adapt resources to it where such resources already exist. This would not mean that individuals do not or cannot do so, nor does it mean that adapting resources from outside the mode of expression could not be a valuable and interesting rhetorical or æsthetic strategy. Rather it would imply that these alternatives would be the exceptions rather than the rule. Although further evidence is certainly needed from a diversity of other types of cultural expression, the hypothesis would explain why formulae and especially kennings seem to resist movement between the registers of *sagnakvæði* and *rímur* poetry. Although the *sagnakvæði* are centuries removed from skaldic verse, the evidence of adapting formulae in relation to rhythmic-melodic templates may be relevant to all of the preceding discussions of this article.

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Notes

1. Cf. the eddic formula *þá kvað þat X* ['Then said this X' (X = speaker)] in eddic verse (cf. Thorvaldsen 2006: 278). Such formulae are correspondingly prominent in prose, such as the saga formula *þá kvað X vísu* ['then said X the poem' (X = speaker)].
2. Cf. the Kalevala-meter formula *sanoi X* ['said X'], in which X = a six-syllable formula identifying a character: this is a formula easily overlooked both because it is comprised of only one word and also because it is co-occurring with more prominent formulaic strings that tend to receive more attention (see also Frog 2011b: 51, esp. n.3).
3. This can be seen in the "extended legal image" of Þjóðólfr Arnórsson's stanzas about Haraldr Sigurðarson's levy (*leiðangr* – itself a legal action, hence the relevance of playing with legal language).
4. An example of a traditional expression from oral narrative prose is found in *Jómsvikingadrápa* 36 (see Strömbäck 1954: 284n; cf. Lindow 1982: 111).
5. Kalevala-meter, for example, is not only associated with multiple genres, but those genres and their uses are conventionally associated with different modes of expression, from rhythmic speech in riddles and proverbs, aggressive chant in some incantations to full melodic expression in lyric or wedding songs. Similarly, medieval Icelandic skaldic poets were not restricted to the *dróttkvætt* meter, but rather could employ meters conventional to eddic narrative poetries in the production of skaldic verse and these verses likely had variations in actualization that could be considered 'mode'.
6. I have elsewhere discussed the inclination to non-variation in relation to kalevalaic epic poetry, where the corpus is significantly larger (Frog 2010b; 2011b). In *Alvíssmál*, the number of lines constituted of a formula + variable element make it apparent that formulae are consistently realized with an inclination to avoid variation even in elements that have no semantic significance.
7. Notably, the exception preceded *dynr* with a three-syllable kenning for its genitive complement to form the battle kenning while the final position was filled with a plural nominative otherwise common for the kenning construction, but in this case connected to a separate syntactic statement (*málmskúrar dyn – hjálmar* ['metal-shower's din – helmets']). This exception is attributable to Snorri Sturluson (*Háttatal* 39.4), whose exceptional use follows a common structural pattern for the interweaving of syntactic statements. Rather than some sort of 'mistake', this may be an artful frustration of expectations (dependent on the audience recognizing the formulaic pattern to be appreciated).
8. Einarr skálaglamm, *Vellekla* 13.4; skaldic poems cited according to the Skaldic Database.
9. *Óláfs drápa Tryggvasonar* 2.4.
10. Anonymous *lausavísur* from *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar in mesta* 5.3.

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Events

Conference Report – Old Norse Mythology in the Digital Age

19th–20th October 2012, Bonn, Germany

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The annual autumn conference on Old Norse mythology, a fixture in many calendars since its inaugural years in Århus in the late 2000s, was this year to be found at the University of Bonn, considering the thorny issues surrounding changing technologies: from oral tradition to handwritten manuscripts, from printed editions to digital texts, eBooks and databases. Organised by Rudolf Simek as a two-day workshop of the COST (European Cooperation in the Field of Scientific and Technical Research) Network, the 'ONMYNDA' conference was part-traditional Old Norse mythology conference – with papers on the teaching of runic knowledge and Óðinn's mythic ancestors – and part-digital humanities symposium, with papers exploring the semantic web, database construction, and indexing methods. These two halves were firmly bridged by the involvement of several speakers (including Simek himself) in the Pre-Christian Religions of the North research project, which, the attendees were told, aims to produce (alongside traditional printed volumes) an online database of primary source material relevant to the study of pre-Christian religious beliefs and practices in northern Europe, a database which formed the basis of much of the debate and discussion during the two days of the conference.

The conference was held in the Festsaal of the University of Bonn's main building, the former Residence of the Elector of Cologne, a suitably grand, historic setting for a historical discussion. Attendees were welcomed by not one but three opening addresses, first by Simek, then by the Vice-Dean, Marion Gymnich, followed by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Paul Geyer. After these warm welcomes, the conference itself began in earnest, with a paper by Luke John Murphy (University of Iceland / Snorrastofa), presenting the Pre-Christian Religions of the North (PCRN) project in more detail, outlining its development, organisation, goals and scope, concentrating in particular on presenting the context within which the PCRN's database will be developed. In the discussion that followed, particularly following a question raised by Judy Quinn about the availability of variant manuscript readings on the database, it was established that the database would have to be constructed with pragmatic, rather than ideal, solutions in mind.

Following this introduction to the topic of mythologically-concerned databases, there followed a double paper presented by Tarrin Wills and Lisa Nitsche (University of Aberdeen), drawing on their extensive previous experience with digital humanities projects (Wills on the Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages project; Nitsche due to her joint-honours History/ICT background), entitled "Designing and Managing Projects with Complex Data: The Experience of the Skaldic Project and a Way Forward for the Myth Project". This introduced to those present many of the basic building blocks of the digital humanities – touching on everything from ontologies to webcrawlers and natural language processing – with the two speakers offering their advice to those involved in the PCRN's database subproject on the construction of their database. The questions that followed focused largely on concerns that an ontology (as a set of 'truths' accepted by the software) would be too restrictive in a field for which the primary evidence is so patchy, hard to understand, and even occasionally contradictory. Wills and Nitsche responded eloquently that such software would not replace serious academic thought, but would function as a tool to help filter data as part of the research process.

After a break for lunch, the papers resumed with a talk by Margaret Clunies Ross (University of Sydney), who presented a case study demonstrating the usefulness of databases as analytical tools. On the basis of kenning-evidence drawn from across the skaldic corpus, accessed through the Skaldic Poetry project's database, Clunies Ross rejected the idea that a genuine tradition of *hieros gamos* lies behind the skaldic poem *Háleygjatal* account of the god Óðinn's marriage to the goddess/*jötunn*-woman Skaði. The discussion that followed produced ready agreement on the usefulness of databases in such circumstances, although there was some disagreement regarding the exact nature of euhemerism in the sources under discussion and pre-Christian sacral kingship. The next paper was given by Jari Töppich (University of Bonn), and was also concerned with the practical application of digital humanities principals: "Putting the Ghost in the Machine: Building Ontologies Exemplified by Latin Sources". Töppich presented a model semantic network, consisting of the works of Adam of Bremen, Thietmar of Merseburg, and Rimbert's *Vita Anskarii*, proposing that certain passages of these works are so similar that machine-learned ontologies would be unable to distinguish between them, and that a system of human-designated tags should be applied instead. Given the topic of the next paper, discussion was put off until Frog (University of Helsinki) had presented his paper on "Interpretation, Hierarchy and Scope: Challenges for Cross-Disciplinary Indexing and Indexing Methodologies", in which he drew on his experience in folklore studies working on numerous multidisciplinary projects to present various methods of indexing, warning that any indexing system reciprocally shapes the thinking of those who use it, and presenting a system of multiple indexing currently under development in Finland. The discussion that followed discussed the difficulties inherent in creating such systems, with John McKinnell arguing that over-interpretive indices would produce idiosyncrasies, but it was generally agreed that defining a common lexicon of shared terms would be an excellent starting point for binding together archaeological and textual entries in the PCRN's database.

The final session of the day, after a much-needed coffee break, opened with a paper by Leszek Gardeła (Snorrastofa), who presented his thoughts on the challenges of incorporating archaeological material into the PCRN project's database. He argued that due to the huge and constantly growing archaeological corpus, as well as the difficulties in interpreting any given archaeological find as relevant to ritual or religious belief, archaeological entries in such a database should take the form of representative categories of evidence, with each entry's inclusion justified by careful referencing. These conclusions were welcomed by the audience, with discussion focusing on what sort of material should be included in the first version of the database: Gardeła himself proposed including both well-known, often-referred to artefacts and virtually-unknown pieces, while some others present felt that the former should take priority to ensure the database's usefulness as a research tool. This was followed by John Lindow's (University of California, Berkeley) paper "A Machine-Aided Search for Mythic Echoes", where he presented the results of applying his co-authors' (Peter Leonard, University of Chicago, and Tim Tangherlini, University of California, Los Angeles) experimental STM algorithm – designed to find common topics across large corpora of texts, regardless of whether those texts share common wordings or not – to medieval texts such as *Snorra Edda* and *Heimskringla*. Although this process is still highly experimental, and that the algorithm was not designed for such texts, the reception was highly enthusiastic, with discussion focusing on its possible application to more strictly-delineated corpora such as skaldic verse.

The first day of the conference was concluded with a panel discussion, chaired by Neil Price (University of Aberdeen), on the difficulties inherent in incorporating archaeological and textual material into the same database. The panel (Gardeła, Simek, Wills and Murphy) offered brief opening statements before engaging in debate with each other and members of the audience.

Topics covered included the desirability of extensive context for archaeological entries and an intuitive cross-disciplinary lexicon; the advantages of establishing cooperation with other institutions and projects running their own databases of archaeological material; the importance of making links to pre-existing data already available online; and potential copyright difficulties. After the conference itself, a pleasant conference dinner was held at Restaurant Dalmatien in the shadow of Bonn Minster.

The second day began with a talk by John McKinnell (University of Durham), acting as a bridge between the previous day's digital humanities and the Saturday's more conventional mythology papers. His presentation, "Heathen Gods and Christian Kings: A Sketch for Digital Analysis", not only laid out the current design of the textual entries in the PCRN's database, but also followed a case study for the use of such electronic resources in tracing the development of a narrative episode through eddic poetry, kings' sagas, and into much later folklore. During the discussion of his paper, it was argued that it was only McKinnell's own extensive knowledge that had allowed him to construct his development schema, which he did not refute, arguing instead that the completed database would allow any user to make such connections without the benefit of his lifetime of experience. This was followed by Jens Peter Schjødt's (Aarhus University) methodological paper "The Notions of Model, Structure, and Discourse as Tools for the (Re)Construction of Old Norse Religion", in which he argued that all three instruments could provide useful and relevant interpretations of source data. The debate in the questions focused mainly in the concept of discourse, including a discussion on whether certain sources could be seen to transgress discourse, or to manipulate their audience's discourse-based expectations.

After a short coffee break, Stefan Brink (University of Aberdeen) spoke on the development of *Inge-* components in place names, linking them to the development of sacral kingship and early royal estates in pre-Christian Sweden, arguing that these elements represent sacral-rulership titles derived from the name of the god Yngvi-Freyr. It was then proposed in the questions that other theophoric elements in toponyms might also originate, not directly from the name of the god in question, but rather from a filtering layer of human society; and Brink went into some detail regarding the possible origins of the oldest royal estates. This was followed by a paper by Anna Kaiper (Polish Academy of Science) on "Fafnir and Others: The Motif of Transhuman Changes in the Body of a Hero", in which she drew comparisons between heroes of saga literature – such as Sigurðr the Dragon-Slayer and Böðvar Bjarki – and the superheroes of modern comic books, including Captain America, Iron Man, and Spider Man. Discussion focused on the position of such heroes in the society they are (or are not) part of, and the changes of state that these heroes must undergo to achieve heroic power.

The second lunch break of the conference was largely enjoyed outside in the unseasonal warmth and sunshine, which Simek assured the attendees were a result of the antisympathetic magic he had practiced in providing umbrellas for the speakers' conference packs. Once back in the Festsaal, the papers recommenced with a talk by Judy Quinn (University of Cambridge) on "The Usurping of Wisdom: *Sigrdrífumál* and the Teaching of Runic Knowledge", examining different traditions regarding the passing on of runic knowledge reflected in eddic poetry. The questions focused largely on close readings of the texts under consideration, leading to a debate on how best to translate rare terms into modern English. The next paper, given by Karen Bek-Pedersen (University of Southern Denmark), followed this translation theme, with Bek-Pedersen presenting extracts from her new highly poetic translations of the heroic eddic poems, arguing that dynamic equivalence should be equated as much importance as formal equivalence. The heated debate following this paper was largely concerned with whether or not a 'poetic' translation is a useful tool for a researcher, particularly when more philologically-focused translations already exist. Opinion was divided on the matter,

although it was agreed that no translation would ever be a substitute for reading the original poetry itself.

The final session of the conference was opened by Sabine Walther (University of Bonn), who presented a paper titled "What is a Myth? – On Defining Myth for Thirteenth Century Iceland", in which she explored different definitions and functions of myth. This latter focus was picked up in the questions after the paper, with numerous members of the audience discussing the purpose for the creation and transmission of the two *Eddas* in medieval Iceland. The next speaker was Bergdís Þrastardóttir (Aarhus University), who presented a Proppian analysis of 'conversion' and 'pagan contact' *þættir* in Flateyjarbók, arguing that such structural readings could reveal otherwise unseen subgroups of texts. Discussion was concerned largely with the appropriateness of applying Propp's morphology to texts other than Russian folktales – such as Icelandic *þættir* – with Bergdís arguing that, although it might be possible to draw up a morphology of *þættir*, there was no need, as Propp's worked well enough as a tool for analysis. The conference was drawn to a close with an engaging paper by Henning Kure (independent scholar), who spoke on "Son of Bestla: Family Ties and Figures of Speech", considering the different genealogies presented for Óðinn's descent by the extant sources. The questions focused largely on the close reading of the sources Kure made use of, with Clunies Ross and Lindow casting doubt on his reinterpretation of certain kennings in particular, and Schjødt arguing that scholars were perhaps too quick to dismiss Snorri Sturluson's understanding of his subject material, although there was general agreement that Kure had effectively highlighted the difficulties of working with limited and ambiguous sources, and the ease with which we take interpretations for granted.

The conference was drawn to a close with a brief address by Simek, thanking not only the speakers and his assistants, but all of those who had attended, and making the case for the increasing consideration of digital resources in the humanities. From much of the informal discussion taking place over the weekend, it was clear that this conference was the first real exposure many attendees had had to the topic, and as such the conference has already met one of its goals – that of raising the profile of digital humanities in the field of Old Norse studies. It was announced that next year's annual conference on Old Norse mythology will be held at Harvard University from the 30th of October to the 1st of November, but that no guarantee of antisympathetic umbrellas for attendees could be given at this early stage.

Conference Report – Transcultural Contacts in the Circum-Baltic Area: 2nd Meeting of the Austmarr Network

8th–10th June 2012, Helsinki, Finland

Mart Kuldkepp, University of Tartu

The second meeting of the Austmarr Network was organized by Folklore Studies, Department of Philosophy, History, Culture and Art Studies and the Department of Finnish, Finno-Ugrian and Scandinavian Studies of the University of Helsinki. It took place over the course of two days (with a cultural program on the third) at the Metsätalo building of the University of Helsinki. In comparison with the previous meeting in Tartu in the spring of 2011 (see Kuldkepp 2011: 43–44), this was a different event in several ways. The number of presentations had almost doubled, the concept of hour-length keynote lectures was introduced and – last but not least – generous financing had been bestowed upon it by University of Helsinki. However, the essence and function of the network meeting was nevertheless the same: to bring together philologists, folklorists, historians and archaeologists who are interested in transdisciplinary perspectives on pre-modern Circum-Baltic issues, and who find it valuable to learn from each other,

leading to a dialogue with colleagues in related fields of study. Thanks to the tireless organizing efforts of Frog (University of Helsinki) and Janne Saarikivi (University of Helsinki), both of these aims were accomplished spectacularly. If the second meeting of the Austmarr Network is any indication, further broadening and intensification of the Network's activities can certainly be expected in the future.

The first day of the meeting was devoted entirely to keynote lectures, each of which explored some problems inherent in combining different kinds of sources (e.g. literary, archaeological and folkloristic) for the purpose of developing more holistic perspectives on particular objects of study. Academician Anna-Leena Siikala (University of Helsinki) spoke about "Baltic-Finnic Mythological Poetry: Dialects, Layers and Significance". Siikala introduced the idea of "dialects" of mythic poetry, which means that oral mythology is something akin to oral language: ever-changing, intertextual, highly context-based, and regionally variable. In order to properly analyze mythic narratives, they have to be approached as a cultural discourse, taking into account all relevant contexts, genres, performance methods, poetics, content and meanings of texts. However, in spite of this apparent instability, a broader perspective reveals that discourses of mythological poetry still form relatively consistent wholes, "the poetic cultures", that can be related to each other and to other historical processes.

The second keynote lecture was given jointly by Professor of Archaeology Mika Lavento (University of Helsinki) and Professor of Finno-Ugric Linguistics Janne Saarikivi (University of Helsinki). Their lecture was titled "The Reconstruction of Past Populations and Their Networks: Considerations Regarding Interdisciplinary Research on Linguistic and Archaeological Material". Lavento and Saarinen focused on ways that linguistic and archaeological methods and data could be combined in ethnogenetic research without accidentally misrepresenting either field of study. As an example of how this might be done, they presented their joint research project "Early Networking in Northern Fennoscandia". This project correlated toponymic and archeological data with reference to pre-historic Sámi-speaking language groups. Although the step from areal synthesis to establishing wider correlations is a difficult one to take, it is nevertheless possible to do so on the levels of local areas, communities and networks of communities, finding different types of connections between linguistic and material features of the reconstructed culture.

Professor of Scandinavian Studies Daniel Sävborg (University of Tartu) held the third of the first day's keynote lectures, "King Ingvar's Campaign: The Old Norse Sources and the Salme Findings". There, Sävborg raised the question of whether and how the large Iron Age ship burial site recently excavated at Salme, Saaremaa (northeast Estonia), could be related to the sparse, yet significant Old Norse sources on the campaign of King Ingvar of Sweden to the same region, which, to the best of our knowledge, can be dated to the same period as the archaeological site (8th century). Although it is obviously difficult to say anything conclusive about the connection to Ingvar in particular, the Salme findings nevertheless demonstrate that such voyages and battles could and did take place, leaving open the possibility that medieval literary accounts of pre-historical Circum-Baltic contacts might be more reliable than is often thought by source-critical scholars.

The second day of the conference opened with Professor of History Jukka Korpela's (University of Eastern Finland) presentation on "Baptized and Un-Baptized *nemcis* in 16th Century Muscovite Society". Korpela introduced a part of a larger project investigating slave trade in Eastern Europe and the Near East. Focus was on the trade of so-called *nemci* slaves in Muscovy. These were a luxury item primarily imported from Northern Europe and often specifically blind women. He showed that the idea of baptism played an integrative role in the development of the centrally-controlled Muscovite state to which *nemci* were foreign.

Mart Kuldkepp (University of Tartu) introduced a prospective research project in a presentation on "Distance as a Heuristic

Concept in the Study of Old Norse Literature". Kuldkepp presented some ideas about how literary geography could be used to approach Old Norse literature from fresh angles by giving it anchoring points in the extra-textual reality of landscapes. For example, depictions of travel over physical distance might be correlated with the occurrence of supernatural motifs, telling us not only about Old Norse literature, but also about the broader imagination of the culture that produced it.

Mervi Suhonen (University of Helsinki) held a presentation on "Archaeological Research on Late Iron Age and Medieval Sites and Landscapes in Southern Finland: What Are We Currently Learning?". Suhonen provided an overview of the kinds of research done in that field, what kind of facts are being gathered and in what kinds of frameworks these are being conceptualized. Like many others, she stressed the importance of communication between researchers and different disciplines, something that is hard to achieve not only due to intellectual, but also to institutional constraints.

Ilkka Leskinen (University of Helsinki) presented his PhD project "Sweden, Hansa and Core-Periphery Networks in the Late Medieval Baltic Sea Region", concerned with delineating interpersonal networks between Hansa merchants across the whole Baltic Sea region during the Late Middle Ages. Even though Finland and Sweden belonged to the periphery of the Hanseatic world (centered on the great towns of Northern Germany), the merchants stationed there nevertheless had remarkable international connections reaching even beyond Northern Europe, as witnessed by their correspondence with each other.

Ante Aikio (University of Oulu) gave a paper on "The Interaction of Proto-Norse and Proto-Saami Communities: Reconstructing a Prehistoric Trade Network" about the possibility of using loan words from Proto-Norse into Proto-Saami in order to draw conclusions about pre-historic cultural contacts between these language groups. As the absolute chronology of linguistic innovations in Scandinavian can be established thanks to runic material, it is possible to determine with some accuracy the time when different Scandinavian words must have been borrowed into different Sámi languages. This provides fascinating information about both the chronology and possibly also the nature of the contacts that facilitated the borrowing.

After lunch, the day continued with Mikko Bentlin's (Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität Greifswald) presentation titled "Traces of Low German Influence on Finnish in the Middle Ages" concerned with the possibility of finding independent Low German loanwords (not Swedish-mediated) in Finnish. There are indeed some phonetic, semantic and distributional criteria that make it possible to determine that certain words must have come directly from Low German. By looking at what kinds of words were borrowed and where, new perspectives are opened on Medieval cross-cultural contacts in the Baltic Sea area as well as on the history of both languages.

Next, Kendra Willson's (University of California) paper titled "Prosodic Typology and Metrical Borrowing" looked at the borrowing of *Knittelvers*-meters into Late Medieval poetic cultures around the Baltic Sea, displacing earlier alliterative meters in the process. It is possible that the popularity of these new, end-rhymed meters, based on the ideas of a constant number of stressed syllables, could be responsible for the syllable re-structuring in Finnish dialects that is usually attributed to Germanic influences, whereas the new consonant clusters and foreign phonemes borrowed were partially incompatible with the old alliteration system and probably also contributed to the decline of alliterative poetry.

Maths Bertell's (Mid-Sweden University) presentation on "Finno-Ugrian and Scandinavian Myth in the Light of a Possible Comparative Retrospective Method" discussed some conceptual problems inherent in using retrospective methods for investigations in comparative mythology – it is easy to come across as superficial, to focus on similarities, but not differences, and to draw false conclusions from instances of analogy. Using the fire-striking Hrungnir myth as an example, Bertell suggested that the lesson to take away from his presentation

would be to avoid using retrospective methods for the purpose of filling in blanks in our knowledge about a culture's mythology.

Karolina Kouvola (University of Helsinki) introduced her PhD thesis project in a presentation titled "Warriorhood and Supernatural Beings". Kouvola's research focuses on the representations of warriors in Old Norse context in comparison with parallel cultures. She focused particularly on comparing Odin and Väinämöinen and the similar roles they play as mysterious, elitist instigators of battle and protectors of warriors who often seem to be caught in an almost supernatural frenzy, perhaps using some kind of shamanistic techniques. She intends to draw further parallels with the Celtic culture and its warrior heroes.

The last presentation was given by Frog (University of Helsinki). It was titled "'Relevant Indicators': A Cross-Disciplinary Indexing Tool? – Examples from Mythological Thinking" and tackled the issue that in some form or another was essential to nearly every previous presentation, namely: how to critically and fruitfully relate data from different disciplines. To that end, Frog proposed the creation of a digital database with an indexing tool that would make it possible to navigate and correlate different "relevant indicators" in data from different fields. The purposefully all-encompassing term of "relevant indicator" would allow different kinds of data to be tagged as significant in multiple respects but without resolution as to causes, consequences or symptoms. In this way, multiple and diverse theoretical models could be developed and compared.

The very last event of the second day of the conference was a discussion session led by Janne Saarikivi and Frog. The discussion focused on organizational issues and future plans of the Austmarr Network. In particular, the development of some web resource was felt to be necessary and Kendra Willson volunteered to be responsible for website design. It was also decided that the next meeting of the Network would be held in the following year at Mid-Sweden University in Härnösand, with Maths Bertell as the main organizer of the event. A committee was established to better coordinate the network's future activities. Members of this committee include Daniel Sävborg, Maths Bertell, Frog, Kendra Willson, Mikko Bentlin and Janne Saarikivi. The day was then rounded off with a very pleasant conference dinner.

The third day of the conference was devoted to a city tour and a museum visit in Helsinki under the expert guidance of Janne Saarikivi and Frog.

All in all, the second meeting of the Austmarr Network was most certainly a success in all possible respects, making one already look forward to the third meeting in the spring of 2013 with great expectations.

Works Cited

Kuldkepp, Mart. 2011. "Conference Report: Cultural Exchanges across the Baltic Sea in the Middle Ages Symposium and Workshop: First Meeting of the Austmarr Network". *RMN Newsletter* 3: 43–44.

Conference Report – VAF III: Identity and Identification and the Viking Age in Finland (with Special Emphasis on the Åland Islands)

3rd–4th September 2012, Mariehamn, Åland

Sirpa Aalto, University of Oulu

The third Viking Age in Finland seminar, Identity and Identification and the Viking Age in Finland (with Special Emphasis on the Åland Islands), was organized in cooperation with the Åland Museum and was recently held in the Åland Museum in Mariehamn. The two-day event involved presentations by fourteen speakers representing different countries, institutions and wide-ranging disciplines, all surrounded by lively discussion.

The Viking Age in Finland project (VAF) organized two seminars in 2011 dealing with definitions of the Viking Age from the prespectives of different disciplines (28.–29.4.2011, Helsinki) and contacts in Finland

during the Viking Age (11.–12.11.2011, Helsinki), thanks to support from the Finnish Cultural Foundation. These two seminars opened interdisciplinary discussion on these neglected topics and as a result, a collection of articles developed on the basis of these seminars will soon appear (Ahola & Frog (eds.) forthcoming). In the discussions during these seminars, it was observed that the Åland Islands seem to have had a significant position in regions to the east of Sweden. Nevertheless, Åland is often treated separately from Finland and Sweden in research discourses concerning Viking Age and consequently has generally been marginalized and neglected from these discussions. Therefore, the third Viking Age in Finland seminar was held in Mariehamn (3.–4.9.2012) and Åland and its significance in the Viking Age was given emphasis in discussion.

VIIKINKIAIKA SUOMESSA

VIKING AGE IN FINLAND

This seminar was organized in cooperation with the Åland Museum the venue being the museum building itself. The central theme of the seminar was identity and identification, approaching the issues of defining groups of people from within and externally, and how identity and identification function within groups and in relationships between them. As is characteristic of the VAF seminars, the presentations covered diverse disciplines, although the types of data available concerning the Åland Islands in the Viking Age led archaeology to be particularly strongly represented. The seminar was organized to facilitate and promote cross-disciplinary discussion. This was done by opening the seminar with two generally orienting presentations with shorter discussions and then organizing each full session with 20-minute presentations followed by 40-minutes for discussion – and a short break for coffee and stretching the legs after each discussion.

The event was opened with a speech by the Director of the Åland Board of Antiquities, Viveka Löndahl, who welcomed the international participants and highlighted the importance of opening international cross-disciplinary discussion on the Viking Age. Jenni Lucenius (Åland Board of Antiquities) then started off the presentations of the day with a general introduction to evidence of the Viking Age in Åland, the potential of available resources and also an overview of research and conservation work that is ongoing in Åland. Lucenius provided all of those in attendance with an essential background and frame of reference for subsequent discussions. This introduction to resources and research within Åland was followed by a invigorating introduction to the situation and relevance of Viking Age Åland in the broad context of social networks in the Circum-Baltic region and in Europe more generally by Lassi Heininen (University of Lapland) from the perspective of geopolitics. According to Heininen, concepts of geopolitics can be innovatively applied to the Viking Age if it is acknowledged that the actors in the Viking Age were not modern nation-states, but rather networks of peoples, settlements and localized power structures involved in the politicization and negotiation of spaces and identities.

These introductory discussions were followed by the first session, beginning with a presentation by Frog (University of Helsinki) dealing with the connection between mythology and identity. Frog offered an overview of mythology's centrality in identity-formation and the negotiation of individual and social identities. Mervi Suhonen (University of Helsinki) then took the floor to provide and overview and discussion of the challenges of carrying research in the east in the field of archaeology while emphasizing the importance of research and resources further along the *Austrvegr* – the 'road east'. Suhonen highlighted the importance of Russian-language research and

the importance of opening international dialogues on the Viking Age. Olle Sjöstrand (Uppsala University) then gave an overview of what is known about the Åland Islands in the Viking Age. Sjöstrand pointed out how problematic it is to find continuity from the Viking and to the Later Middle Ages: although the place names in Åland all appear to post-date the Viking Age, archaeological evidence shows that it is nevertheless unlikely that the islands were ever abandoned and uninhabited. The lively discussion concerning the closeness of connections between Åland and cultural areas both east and west extended from the first session to lunch in a wonderful local restaurant.

The second session was dedicated to archaeology and paleoecology. The session opened with a presentation by Marcus Lindholm (Åland Board of Antiquities) who presented a fascinating discussion on Iron Age settlement and Viking Age harbors in Åland. Lindholm's discussion offered an overview of the problematics surrounding the archaeological investigation of harbor sites in pre-modern Åland – of which none have been identified from the Viking Age – and discussed this in relation to the probable number of harbours and boats in Åland during the Viking Age on the basis of settlement sites in relation to analogical data from later periods. Ulf Strucke (Swedish National Heritage Board) then spoke about ancient field systems in the coastal regions in Uppland evident through walling structures and discussed how the cultural groups characterized by these stone structures could be identified as migrating by the abandonment of one settlement site correlating with the establishment of another. Strucke outlined structural differences between the construction of these barriers in inland and shore-line environments, prompting the question of whether the final abandonment of these structures or their maintenance may have been connected with a further movement of one of these groups to Åland. Teija Alenius drew the first day to a close with a stimulating discussion of changes in the ecology in the centuries surrounding the Viking Age both in Åland and along the southern coastal regions of what is now Finland. On the basis of pollen analyses, Alenius outlined changes in land-use attributable to human cultural activity variously related to increased animal husbandry and the advancement of agricultural practices, highlighting, for example, the rapid disappearance of alder trees and evidence of new and increased domesticated grains in these territories. After a short interlude, the seminar participants came together for a pleasant evening with a tour of the only major beer brewery in Åland, which was also a restaurant for a conference dinner well-suited to the tastes of any connoisseur.

The second day opened with an energetic presentation by Joonas Ahola (University of Helsinki) on diachronic reflectivity of kalevalaic poetry, discussing the interplay between collective tradition and individual expression with consideration for the insights such inherited traditions can offer into the remote past. Ahola suggested that the traditional poems were maintained around a core that could be repeatedly reinterpreted, and that the investigation of such cores does not reveal individual, historical events (as some early scholars argued) yet the deep structures of poems can maintain reflections of interests and mentalities of social environments in earlier ages. Rudolf Gustafsson (Åland Board of Antiquities) then discussed the importance of seal as a game animal in Åland, which was attested after the Viking Age by medieval seal tax collected only in Åland and Norrland in Sweden. Gustafsson related this discussion to archaeological excavations of sites for preparing seal oil, and the insights that these could offer into social and cultural practices. Jan-Erik Tomtlund on "Iron Age Settlement Development on the Åland Islands", which carried the participants through the whole history of settlement on the Åland Islands from their first emergence in the Baltic Sea. Tomtlund contextualized the diverse ebb and flow of cultural influences and contacts on the Åland Islands in and around the Viking Age in an extensive and dynamic historical and geographic context and stimulated a rich discussion. Jan Storå (Stockholm University) maintained this high standard of interest as he brought the session to a close with a

discussion of what osteoarchaeological research in Åland informs us about social and cultural identities, asserting in particular that hunting has been neglected in research on the Viking Age, although such hunting must have involved socially organized activity potentially with ritual aspects. Storå outlined evidence of cultural practices ranging from burials to evidence of the preparation and consumption of animals, and correlated the distribution of different practices geographically in relation to settlements and sea routes: he offered evidence for the stimulating proposal that it may be inaccurate to approach Åland as a coherent and unified cultural area rather than two dynamic and interacting areas associated with routes north toward Ostrobothnia and east toward Lake Ladoga, respectively.

Following another lovely lunch in a local restaurant, Daniel Anderberg (Åland Board of Antiquities) opened the fourth and final session of the event with an introduction or a newly discovered Iron Age settlement site that was found in Åsgårda, Saltvik. Anderberg's presentations opened a rich discussion of the relationship of settlement sites and their distribution to the landscape, especially as the shorelines and waterways changed as the land continued to rise from the sea across the centuries. Sirpa Aalto then brought the seminar to a close with her presentation on the ethnonym *Finnar* in Old Norse sources. Although the word often refers to the Sámi people, it cannot be excluded that in some cases *Finnar* or *Finlendingar* could refer to the inhabitants of present-day Finland. This was followed by a closing discussion, at which it was decided that the seminar will provide a foundation for developing a coordinated multidisciplinary volume on Åland in the Viking Age, edited by Joonas Ahola, Frog and Jenni Lucenius. The publication is expected to become available in 2014.

All in all, the third VAF seminar efficiently continued multidisciplinary discussion concerning the Viking Age, exploring new and neglected areas of research and offering new insights and directions for future investigation. This event highlighted the value and untapped potential of archaeological evidence from Åland and the new information that it can bring to discussions of cultures around the Baltic Sea and the Viking Age more generally. It is hoped that this seminar will open the road for future research and international cooperations to these ends in the future.

Pre-print materials for the event including abstracts of presentations are available on line at:
http://www.helsinki.fi/folkloristiikka/FT18_VAF3_Identity_and_Identification.pdf

Works Cited

Ahola, Joonas & Frog (eds.). (Forthcoming.) *Fibula, Fabula, Fact: Defining and Contextualizing the Viking Age in Finland*. Helsinki.

Conference Announcement – *Alliterativa Causa*

18th–19th January 2013, London, England

Jonathan Roper, University of Tartu

The conference Alliterativa Causa is organized by The Folklore Society, the University of Tartu and the Warburg Institute. The event will be held at the Warburg Institute in central London.

Alliteration, the repetition of the initial sounds of words as for instance in 'sessions of sweet silent thought', is a widespread feature of verbal art. Yet its 'rules' and meaning vary greatly in different languages, periods and genres. This conference, which is a follow-up to a 2007 conference 'Alliteration in Culture' also held at the Institute, attempts to investigate some of the uses alliteration has been and is still put to. Presenters will discuss alliteration in verse in a variety of languages, including Icelandic, Georgian, Karelian, Estonian, Russian and English. And alliteration in prose will not be neglected either, with coverage of Finnish, Latvian, and Irish Gaelic examples amongst others. Genres under discussion will include proverbs,

Lutheran hymns, laments and Arthurian legends.

The conference organizers are Jonathan Roper (Folklore Society / University of Tartu) and Caroline Oates (Folklore Society / Warburg Institute). Speakers at the event include: Will Abberley (Exeter), Daniel Abondolo (London), Ragnar Ingi Aðalsteinsson (Reykjavik), Frank Boers (Wellington), Susan Deskis (Dekalb), June Eyckmans (Ghent), Etunimetön Frog (Helsinki), Māra Grudule (Riga), Helena Halmari (Huntsville), Kristin Hanson (Berkeley), Judith Jefferson (Bristol), Tuomas Lehtonen (Helsinki), Seth Lindstromberg (Hilderstone), Mihhail Lotman (Tallinn), Maria-Kristiina Lotman (Tartu), Marcas Mac Connigh (Belfast), Ad Putter (Bristol), Jeremy Scott Ecke (Little Rock), Eila Stepanova (Helsinki) and Marine Turashvili (Tbilisi).

For the full program and more information on this event, please visit: http://warburg.sas.ac.uk/events/colloquia/alliterativa-causa/

Conference Report – Register: Intersections of Language, Context and Communication

23rd–25th May 2012, Helsinki, Finland

Ilkka Leskelä, University of Helsinki

The first multidisciplinary colloquium devoted to the term and concept 'register' took place 23rd–25th May in Helsinki, Finland. The colloquium was organized by Folklore Studies of the University of Helsinki and the Academy of Finland research project Oral and Literary Culture in the Medieval and Early Modern Baltic Sea Region: Cultural Transfer, Linguistic Registers and Communicative Networks of the Finnish Literature Society. Some 80 folklorists, historians, linguists and linguistic anthropologists gathered to discuss 'register' in five plenary sessions and nine smaller sessions with 26 paper presentations. The participants came predominantly from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, the U.K. and the U.S.A., with several scholars also arriving from the Russian Federation, Canada and Iran. Although Finnish folklorists were well represented, the majority of speakers came from institutions abroad.

The colloquium was opened by Kaarina Koski (Folklore Studies, University of Helsinki) and Tuomas M.S. Lehtonen (Secretary General of the Finnish Literature Society). The atmosphere was friendly, informal, and focused on the issue at hand right from the start. The organizers provided a smooth and well-guided experience for the foreign guests, with enough breaks and coffee, and the warm Nordic spring weather and rather Mediterranean azure skies playing their part as well. One seat was empty, however: John Miles Foley, one of the planned keynote speakers and a colleague and personal friend of many of the participants, had passed away shortly before the conference.

The keynote speakers sought to share the interpretations and general results of their specific fields, and to define and expand the basic concept of 'register'. The opening keynote lecture was given by Asif Agha (University of Pennsylvania). Agha introduced the concept of commodity registers, the way how people express, communicate and represent themselves through and with items. Agha's approach to registers and ongoing semiotic processes of 'enregisterment' challenged those present to think about registers beyond the verbal and to consider the social processes that make registers meaningful in particular times and places. Susanna Shore (University of Helsinki) took the term back to its roots and discussed register in systemic-functional linguistics. Shore's presentation was seminal for the whole conference, because the definitions and vocabulary created by Michael Halliday and James Martin provide the fundamentals of register theory. It was also useful to realize that, from the very beginning of the theoretical discussions, there have been some subtle but continuous disparities in the

meaning given to the term. Whoever uses the concept 'register' in linguistic sense especially is wisely advised to verify the terminology.

The second day of the event opened with a keynote lecture from Ruth Finnegan (Open University). Finnegan discussed the great variety in communication in general, and challenged the audience to broaden the concept to include even the subconscious. Lauri Harvilahti (Finnish Literature Society) introduced the folklorists' conceptual framework of register in oral traditional phraseology. He paid homage to the late John Miles Foley with a concentration on Foley's innovations to the concept of 'register' and associated theories of text production, reproduction and 'distributed authorship'. On Saturday, Jim Wilce (Northern Arazona University) took the opportunity as the last keynote speaker to continue the discussion with illustrations from his studies on laments, and to organize the avalanche of data and interpretations on this stimulating topic. Wilce's lecture opened the last day in a densely programmed colloquium, yet it was difficult to break up the discussion which continued to weave through the duration of the last parallel sessions.

The 26 papers held in the colloquium were divided into nine sessions running parallel in two rooms. My experience of the 26 papers is necessarily incomplete and partial, because one could only listen to half of them. Thus, rather than to give detailed accounts of any single paper, I would like to give some general observations regarding the potential in 'register' studies. The time was so well moderated that it was possible to move between rooms in order to listen to individual papers. However, there was a slight danger of people primarily listening to papers from their own fields: I think the collection of so many different disciplines would have promoted even denser interdisciplinary encounters if it would have been possible for the participants to remain in the same room and share everything together. On the other hand, it would have been a shame to cut such a large number of the excellent presentations. The plenary sessions, the coffee breaks and the buffet lunches offered ample time for meetings and discussions even among those who had missed the opportunity of listening to each other's presentations. All those participating found the event an enriching experience which led to new and more dynamic understandings of the term and concept 'register'.

All communication, oral or written, active or passive, mental or physical, can be approached through the concept 'register'. Registers can be found everywhere, but what is important is that the words, tones, gestures etc. that imply a specific register or registers tend to be small, momentary and inherently tied to the contexts in which they are produced. This poses serious challenges for data acquisition and interpretation in situations where the people who use or used the 'registers' are not there to explain their behavior. Research on tradition, folklore and history are good examples of disciplines where questionnaires are often no more an option. If the subject is sensitive, even data gathered from the flood of information on the internet might prove problematic to interpret. Anthropologists are also very much aware that western eyes and ears need long training before an understanding of foreign cultures and the nuances of their communication can be approached.

On the other hand, when specific registers are recognized, their study and indexing seems to be relatively easy, even straightforward. The participants of the colloquium found it unproblematic to realize what and when was a register, in any field. This suggests that interdisciplinary work is not only possible, but probably unproblematic and tremendously fruitful. While each discipline tends to classify registers in a different manner, our central concepts of speech and other kinds of communication are recognizable and usable over disciplinary barriers. Thus register studies are able to fruitfully incorporate widely varying data and depth of interpretation. The concept of 'register' carries a potent and scalable indexing tool within itself.

These notes suggest that human beings, and the human brain, are especially alert when it comes to recognizing and indexing communicative registers. It seems that with

'register', research has been able to conceptualize a universal and important part of human language, culture and social existence. Contrary to some other concepts in academic vocabulary, 'register' is easy to understand and relevant in all kind of human studies. This promises much from interdisciplinary projects. It would be interesting, perhaps necessary, to add neurological and cognitive studies to the palette of research on 'register'. This could open a functional channel to dismantle the unnecessary and unreal barrier between humanities and science.

The colloquium demonstrated that while the concept of 'register' has found diverse uses in various academic research fields, it remains widely and similarly understood, and thus allows truly interdisciplinary, fruitful comparisons across the different fields. The plenary sessions gathered the participants together at regular, close intervals, alternating with parallel sessions, and this strategy succeeded in promoting and continuing general discussion throughout the conference. It seems that students and researchers interested in 'register' possess exceptional skills in communication and definition, allowing for rapid conclusions and flowering of conceptual interpretations. The colloquium was an immediate success, and both the organizers and the participants eagerly agreed that further discussions are needed. The discussion will continue at the colloquium "Register II: Emergence, Change and Obsolescence" to be held in Helsinki, 22nd–24th May 2013.

The Register colloquium was made possible thanks to support from the Finnish Cultural Foundation, the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies, and the Academy of Finland research project Oral and Literary Culture in the Medieval and Early Modern Baltic Sea Region (2011–2014) of the Finnish Literature Society. Abstracts from the event have been published at: http://www.helsinki.fi/folkloristiikka/FT17_Register.pdf

Conference Announcement – Register II: Emergence, Change and Obsolescence

22rd–24th May 2013, Helsinki, Finland

Ulla Savolainen, University of Helsinki

'Register' originated as a term in linguistics for contextual variation in language, or language as it is used in a particular communicative situation. This term and concept has become important across several intersecting disciplines, particularly in discussions of genre and approaches to language in written versus oral communication. As a consequence, 'register' has been used by folklorists, linguists and linguistic anthropologists with varying fields of inclusion and exclusion, ranging from the purely verbal level of communication to all features which have the capacity to signify (props, gestures, etc.). Uses of 'register' have become highly diversified across these fields and also within the scholarship of each field without opening a cross-disciplinary discourse on this topic.

The present colloquium, "Register II: Emergence, Change and Obsolescence", is organized by Folklore Studies of the University of Helsinki and the Academy of Finland research project Oral and Literary Culture in the Medieval and Early Modern Baltic Sea Region of the Finnish Literature Society. The event will be held in the main building of the Finnish Literature Society in the city center of Helsinki.

This colloquium is a direct continuation of our initiative to open cross-disciplinary discussion on this vital topic through the international multidisciplinary colloquium "Register: Intersections of Language, Context and Communication" (23rd–25th May 2012, Helsinki, Finland). The objective of this colloquium is to build on these foundations in opening cross-disciplinary discussion (especially) among folklorists, linguists and linguistic anthropologists. The colloquium will bring together representatives of the different perspectives and the insights offered by each discipline with their diverse focuses. It will also draw representatives of different

perspectives within each discipline. By opening communication across these diverse perspectives and understandings, the colloquium sets out to produce new information, new knowledge, new insights and to deepen understandings on all sides.

The theme of the second Helsinki Register Colloquium turns attention to an aspect of registers that has received little attention in any discipline. All of these different fields have concentrated on registers and social resources and their uses in meaning-making, and all have looked at different aspects of variation across and within registers, but attention has generally remained on registers in synchronic contexts. Registers are accepted as a social reality, and their appearance, change and disappearance are accepted as a historical reality. However, very little attention has been given to interfaces of social, societal and semiotic processes that *a*) give rise to registers as meaningful constellations of communicative features; *b*) affect existing registers and their constituent features; and *c*) lead registers to become obsolete for certain functions or to drop out of use. The present event will further open and foster cross-disciplinary discussion by bringing these neglected areas forward for multidisciplinary discussion while advancing knowledge and understandings of all disciplines toward more dynamic and shared interdisciplinary perspectives.

The language of the colloquium will be English and it will be open to the public. A conference fee of 50€ will be charged to registered participants covering lunches and receptions. Prospective speakers are being asked to make their presentations accessible to participants from other fields and to orient their presentations toward cross-disciplinary discussion. Anchors for discussion will be provided by five keynote lectures from internationally recognized representatives of different disciplines and approaches to 'register'. Keynote lectures will be given by:

- Douglas Biber, Regents' Professor of Applied Linguistics, Northern Arizona University, USA
- Charles Briggs, Alan Dundes Distinguished Professor of Folklore and Professor of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley, USA
- Ruqaiya Hasan, Emeritus Professor of Linguistics, Macquarie University, Australia
- Timo Kaartinen, Adjunct Professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Helsinki, Finland
- Lars Boje Mortensen, Professor of Cultural History of Antiquity and the Middle Ages, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark

For more information about this event please visit the conference website at
http://www.helsinki.fi/folkloristiikka/register/

If you would like to attend this event, please contact the conference secretary Ulla Savolainen (ulla.savolainen@helsinki.fi) by March 15th.

Conference Report – The 6th Nordic-Celtic-Baltic Folklore Symposium: "Supernatural Places"

4th–7th June 2012, Tartu, Estonia

Kait Lubja, University of Tartu

Seven is a prime number – not only in its mathematical sense, but it is a splendid one as well. And it was exactly seven years that had to pass from the last Nordic-Celtic-Baltic Folklore Symposium, before the sixth symposium took place in Tartu, Estonia on 4th–7th June 2012. The 6th Nordic-Celtic-Baltic Folklore Symposium was organised by the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore, the Department of Scandinavian Studies, University of Tartu, and the Tartu NEFA group in cooperation with the Centre of Excellence in Cultural Theory.

The symposium focused on the subject of supernatural places. The symposium aimed to explore the supernatural dimensions of natural places in the cultural landscape and study the supernaturalisation of places as a narrative

practice. How these practices make it possible for fantasy and imagination to interact with social realities and belief narratives was also discussed.

Bengt af Klintberg had the honour to hold the opening keynote lecture, immediately following the organisers' opening words. Professor Klintberg gave his lecture on bracken and its role in the traditions and beliefs surrounding midsummer's night.

The first full day of conference began with two plenary lectures: one from Tartu University's very own Ergo-Hart Västrik and the other from Lina Būgiene (Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore). Lina Būmgiene concentrated on how the supernatural landscape can be traced in oral tradition, whereas Västrik shed light on how a researcher can approach this kind of material and what conclusions can be drawn.

John Lindow (University of California, Berkeley) delivered the next keynote speech on the churchyard and how legends emerge from its liminal nature. Terry Gunnell (University of Iceland) then dedicated his time to contemplating the dynamics of the so-called power spots, i.e. certain places people believe have supernatural traits.

Timothy Tangherlini (University of California, Los Angeles) kickstarted the second day with his lecture on the mapping of different topics from the Evald Tang Kristensen collection. Tangherlini won the audience over and enabled them to have a glimpse of the future. The lecture demonstrated how humanities research can be supplemented and aided by computational expertise. The other plenary lecture of the day was by Jonathan Roper (University of Tartu), who discussed how 'folk' is not a homogenous or naive entity, but needs to be analysed more carefully.

The third day began with Daniel Sävborg's (University of Tartu) lecture on encounters with the supernatural in the Icelandic family sagas. He argued that meeting the trolls in Iceland is described differently as opposed to coming in contact with the supernatural overseas. Irma-Riitta Järvinen (Finnish Literature Society) then took a closer look at how Christian saints were transformed and domesticated in the folk tradition.

Each day, the symposion followed the keynote lectures with three parallel sessions, each consisting of four presentations before and four after lunch. The bittersweetness of the simultaneity lies in how one must choose between sessions and by deciding to attend one while missing the other two. The presentations covered a wide range of topics, from the devil in folklore to how people have perceived or are perceiving the surrounding landscape.

The presenters were as diverse as their subjects. There were both established researchers and budding young scholars. Firstly, participants either had a background in Folklore or Old Norse, or both. This in itself opens up a wide range of topics indeed – from the aforementioned digital maps of Tangherlini to rituals in the Tibetan sacred mountains (Valentina Punzi, L'Orientale University of Naples / Minzu University of China) and to how distance makes supernatural occurrences more believable (Mart Kuldkepp, University of Tartu). In addition, the symposium did not confine itself to Northern Europe – many of the participants came from mainland United States, whereas others came from Hawai'i and China.

For experienced speakers, an event like this can be seen as a way to present existing or forthcoming research, but as a student, I valued even more the possibility to use the presentation as a springboard and training ground. Several young researchers presented their work, of which I would like to highlight Eva Þórdís Ebenezersdóttir's (University of Iceland) presentation on depictions of disability in folkloric material and its connections to liminality. A valuable lesson was given by Merrill Kaplan (Ohio State University), who lost her physical voice, but despite this inconvenience (if it can be described so lightly) delivered a distinguished presentation on *kvernknurr*. This example should inspire young researches, who are still searching for their voices or are yet to step out of their elders' shadows, to find their own path and style.

I do believe that the symposium was very fruitful and that its fruits will continue to ripen for years to come. The working atmosphere was productive during the day

and the plentiful social gatherings further supplemented each day's labours.

In closing, although seven is a prime number, I would like to express my hope that the 7th Nordic-Celtic-Baltic Folklore Symposium will take place before another seven years pass.

Legends are Alive: Review of the 2012 Belief Narrative Network Symposium

28th–30th August 2012, Novi Sad, Serbia

Zoja Karanović and Borislava Eraković, University of Novi Sad

The third Belief Narrative Network (BNN) Symposium, organized by the International Society for Folk Narrative Research (ISFNR) and the Centre for Folklore Research at the Department of Serbian Literature, took place at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Novi Sad in Novi Sad, Serbia, from the 28th to the 30th of August of this year. The general title of the conference was "Belief Narrative Genres", aiming to cover both the presentation of different types of belief narratives and also to delineate the boundaries of the term 'belief narrative' itself. To this end, papers were presented in English, Russian and Serbian by thirty scholars from twelve countries – Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Republic of Srpska), the Czech Republic, Estonia, India, Israel, Latvia, the Netherlands, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Serbia and the Ukraine.

The Symposium was opened by the president of the Belief Narrative Network, Willem de Blécourt (Netherlands/UK), who focused on the problem of the possible delineation of belief narratives by genre. After the plenary session in which de Blécourt, Nada Milošević-Đorđević (Serbia) and Ülo Valk (Estonia) were the speakers, nine sessions were held for the participants to present their topics. At the end of the second day of the conference, all the participants took part in a roundtable discussion on the topic of "Legend as a Genre Category of Narration", which was led by Eli Yassif (Israel). The third day ended with a closing session centred around future directions for the work of the BNN. The papers presented at the symposium dealt with different problems of legends and belief narratives. They focused both on general and specific questions, starting from the definitions of central concepts and the space they occupy in relation to other prose folklore categories. Discussion then moved on to the interplay of reality, fiction, faith and religion in legends, their genre categories, the problems related to particular topics, characters, narrators and their attitude toward heritage.

As the conference was organised by the Serbian branch of the Belief Narrative Network, in the plenary session, Nada Milošević-Đorđević, a member of the ISFNR since nearly its beginning, presented the results of legend research in Serbia beginning with the attempts of the first compiler of folk narratives, Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, in the 19th century, and ending with contemporary research. Willem de Blécourt spoke about

Photo 1. Speakers at the opening of the symposium. From left to right: Zoja Karanović (standing) (Serbia), Willem de Blécourt (Netherlands/UK, President of the Belief Narrative Network), Pavle Sekeruš (Vice-Rector for Science and International Relations, University of Novi Sad), Ivana Živančević Sekeruš (Dean of the Faculty oh Philosophy, University of Novi Sad).

belief elements in fairytales and dealt specifically with the appearance of the Devil in the work of the Brothers Grimm. He primarily concentrated on the question of whether the inclusion of the Devil was part of the narrator's strategy to incorporate more elements of everyday life into fairy tales. In the plenary presentation entitled "Legends of Narratives of Alternative Beliefs", Ülo Valk used the folkloric discourse of the supernatural to show how legends express frictions, tensions and contradictions between official and unofficial discourses of belief in different religious and social contexts and time periods. In relation to this, he emphasised the importance of considering the social, historical and religious context of the time in which legends were recorded, with special reference to what had not been said.

Notions of belief and faith were analysed in relation to religious elements in legends, especially in terms of meaning that is relevant to the poetics of legends or is reflected in them. Dilip Kumar Kalita (India) thus presented belief-tales from Assam, which are passed down both orally and in written form, and speak of the origin of certain ethnic groups, their local rulers and sacral objects, all of which are associated with divine beings. These narratives belong to a hybrid genre, a conglomerate of mythical stories and interpretations of the official religion in a northeastern state of India.

A separate group of presentations dealt with Christian legends. Andrei Nikolaevich Vlasov (Russia) focused on narratives about sacred and miraculous icons in oral and written tradition. He used the example of written and oral texts of lives (žitie) and legends from the 16th to the 20th centuries from the Ustyug region (Fools-for-Christ Procopius and John, St. Longin, Christopher, Simon, Leonid, the thaumaturgic icon of the Holy Mandylion, the icon of Mary Mother of God, St. Nicholas, etc.), showing that their interpenetration is often caused by the peculiarities of the region's historical memory, folklore, pragmatics of literary texts and the methods of stylistic inversion.

The relationship between oral literature and history was addressed by several speakers. Eli Yassif (Israel) argued that legends are examples of a participatory discourse, since they do not just reflect reality, nor describe even a grain of historical truth. According to Yassif, legends take part in history by providing a definition of the identity and the place of the community within another community. Nedeljko Radosavljević (Serbia) discussed the legends he collected among the inhabitants of Užička Crna Gora (Serbia) not only as proof of the origins of this ethnic group but also of how an oral narrative tradition is developed. Boris Stojkovski (Serbia) analysed two contesting historical representations of one of the most famous saints in Christianity, St. Demetrius. Using legends about the origin of the dances Seraikella Chhau and Purulia Chho, Rabindranath Sarma (India) showed how these narratives explain the development of traditional dances in the states of Jharkhand and West Bengal in India.

Photo 2. Rabindranath Sarma (India) and Ulo Volk (Estonia, Vice-President of ISFNR), enjoying coffee and conversation between sessions.

Zoja Karanović (Serbia), Danijela Popović (Serbia) and Tatjana Vujnović (Serbia) shed light on the particular characteristics of legends belonging to different genre categories. By describing etiological legends about the origin of locations in Serbia which bear the name of St. Sava in Serbian folk tradition, Karanović demonstrated how the function of the legends is related to the

question of identity. She explained that the main characters in these and similar legends about location obtain attributes of mythical creators because they participate in the shaping of some elements of the environment, which is equal to cosmogony for traditional people. At the same time, these narratives are a specific testimony to the physical and spiritual presence of Serbian people in the areas which these locations mark – i.e., they are parts of the sacral geography and a version of their history. Vujnović also discussed etiological belief tales, concentrating on those about different plants or features of certain plant species which originate from the excretions and body parts of humans and supernatural beings. Popović examined the inner time-space structure of demonological legends, focusing on the way time is expressed, the levels of formulaicity, and the function of temporal expressions.

Photo 3. Thirty participants from twelve countries presented their research and engaged in international discussion.

Several speakers brought to the fore different topics of legends. Natalia Kotelnikova (Russia) talked about perseverance of traditional images in treasure stories. Etiological motifs were discussed by Galina Lozanova (Bulgaria), who spoke about folk interpretations of the biblical motif of the Great Flood (Noah's Ark). Nikolina Zobenica (Serbia) showed how the legend of the Swan Knight was transformed from its Celtic roots through Irish, French and German mediaeval versions to the present day, without changing the symbolic core of the narrative. Sonja Petrović (Serbia) discussed legends about the Virgin Mary's miracles related to the Monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai, the Great Lavra on Mount Athos, and the monastery Mrzenica in Serbia. Jasmina Jokić (Serbia) dealt with the presence of ancient beliefs in legends and how they are related to the myth of holy waters as healing places, whereas Oksana Mykytenko (Ukraine) analysed examples of oral narrative tradition in funeral rites. Nemanja Radulović (Serbia) devoted his presentation to legends about destiny (AT 930, 930a, 931, 934, 735+460b+737b), and made a case for delineating new subgenres on the basis of the subject of the text, as the subject alone can shape the ideological worldview of the genre.

The functions of legends and their importance in the articulation and preservation of a community identity were discussed by Gabriela Boangiu (Romania) and Valentina Pitulić (Serbia). Boangiu highlighted several aspects of the relationship between identity and symbolic imagination in the legends about certain locations in the Romanian village of Aref. Pitulić examined the current situation with respect to the legends in Kosovo and Metohija from records made in situ and in the context of present-day global politics.

Sandis Laime (Latvia), Jelenka Pandurević (Serbia) and Anastasya Astapova (Estonia) shed some interesting light on how legends reflect different social conflicts. Laime used the example of belief legends about a man called Pēterītis from the village Ķenču to show that different genres of narratives combined into a single story can be used to resolve a social conflict existing within the community. Pandurević focused on the Second World War and contemporary life stories of the narrators who remember events from the war differently than the official,

dominant historiography. Astapova described use of legends concentrated around the mysterious third part of the novel Ears under Your Sickle by the Belarusian writer Vladimir Korotkevich as an instrument of political struggle.

Some speakers focused on the narrators of legends. Snežana Marković (Serbia) talked about cultural and historical legends from the angle of present day story-tellers in the Serbian region of Levač, especially in relation to the extent the narrators believe in the stories they tell as well as which historical characters they describe. Jana Pospišilova (Czech Republic) analysed the most vibrant parts of children's communication – humorous or mocking verses, sayings, and horror stories – in order to establish the presence of superstition and belief in supernatural phenomena and beings. Pospišilova argued for a more systematic approach to collecting and studying traditional children's folklore. Lyudmila Vitaljevna Fadejeva (Russia) analysed the relationship between the text and the traditional pattern, focusing specifically on the relation between fabulous religious elements of Judaism, Zoastrianism, Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam and the genres based on them.

An example of the role that legends can play in written literature was presented by Sofija Košničar (Serbia), who demonstrated that some dialogical aspects of the Gregory Maguire's fantasy novel Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West were related to demonological and etiological legends. The question of the definition and re-definition of the notion of legend from the standpoint of present-day urban culture was analysed by Ambrož Kvartič (Slovenia), who used an example of an urban legend subjected to a pseudo-scientific test of validity.

The first day of the conference ended with a performance by the Sonja Marinković Academic Ensemble of Folk Dance and Songs. The participants of the conference had the opportunity to hear traditional songs from Serbia as performed by a mixed vocal group. Attendees could witness several dances from Serbia by the Great Folk Orchestra and listen to one of the oldest musical instruments, the bagpipe or gajde.

At the end of the second day of the conference, there was a lively roundtable discussion, which was primarily focused on the need to define a common ground for the variety of angles and topics presented by the participants of the BNN conferences. The roundtable began with Eli Yassif's invitation to discuss the difference between legend and belief, the meaning of belief today, and the way new media influence folk beliefs. Zoja Karanović stressed the need to clarify what a belief faith/religion is in the framework of belief narratives and how the notions of belief narrative and legend are to be understood.

The conference ended with a closing session discussion which centred around the need to introduce new activities to the BNN apart from conferences. Ülo Valk noted that no data has been compiled regarding the membership of the Belief Narrative Network, and an agreement was reached that all the speakers present at this conference would send a list of members from their respective countries to the president of the Network. In terms of possible future activities, Willem de Blécourt proposed projects on a larger scale which would include twenty to thirty scholars. Valk stressed the necessity of developing a younger academic community in the field through the organization of summer schools for MA and PhD students.

The conference ended on the evening of the third day when twenty or so remaining participants had a unique opportunity to enjoy Serbian traditional cuisine and folk music on a raft docked on the bank of the Danube in Novi Sad.

Conference Announcement – Historical Infrastructure of the Baltic Sea: Means, Reasons and Consequences: 3rd Meeting of the Austmarr Network

5th–6th April 2013, Härnösand, Sweden

Maths Bertell, Mid Sweden University

Welcome to Mid Sweden University in Härnösand 5th–6th April 2013 for the third meeting of the Austmarr network!

The purpose of this multidisciplinary symposium and workshop is to gather scholars from different disciplines working on the pre-modern (ca. pre-1500) contacts between cultures in the Baltic Sea region including Germanic, Saami, Karelian, Finnish, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Slavic cultures with particular attention to medieval Norse cultural contacts in this dynamic area of the globe. Invited scholars from diverse fields will have the opportunity to present their research on this topic, and the symposium will follow each presentation with a workshop discussion.

The focus of this 3rd Meeting of the Austmarr Network is the sea itself as a *Mare nostrum* of the Baltic Sea region. The title of the meeting is "Historical Infrastructure of the Baltic Sea Region: Means, Reasons and Consequences". The term 'historical infrastructure' is here used to refer to that which enables and allows the maintenance of travel, alliances of power and trade over time and across the sea itself. Infrastructure is that on which conventional connections and routes for cultural contact depended, that which enabled political apparatuses to function and network, as well as the technologies and their products relevant to social practices and the functioning of societies more generally. The region is considered a cultural area connected on several levels through history. Proposed themes of the workshop include different aspects of infrastructure:

- Ships, travel, war and trade
  - Allies and enemies across the water
- Material culture
  - Archaeological evidence of contacts
  - Technologies as enabling infrastructures
- Iron Age social and political infrastructures
  - Peer-polity interaction
  - Cross-cultural networks interfaced with beliefs, religion or ritual practices
- Infrastructures and transformations through time, space and politics
- Etymology, placenames and loanwords associated with the above

Abstracts will be circulated to participants prior to the event. In order to help stimulate multidisciplinary discussion, we have asked that abstracts include questions posed to other disciplines, and where possible, also to offer (at least some) relevant examples of material to be discussed, such as images or descriptions of archaeological findings, iconography, passages of primary text, some relevant potential lexical loans, etc. The abstracts may also contain some suggested reading to enable participants to be well prepared when arriving in Härnösand. This international meeting is not simply intended to bring together representatives of different disciplines; priority is placed on opening the richest possible multidisciplinary discussion.

At the symposium, each paper will have 20 minutes at it's disposal for presentation, followed by an additional 40 minutes for discussion. This follows a modified version of the Viking Age in Finland project seminars. In order to facilitate multidisciplinary discussion, we have asked that presenters make their presentations accessible to participants from diverse fields who may not be intimately familiar with the methods, materials and specialized vocabulary of the presenter's discipline.

The Austmarr Network is planning a peer-reviewed publication in English. Articles in the volume will be developed on the basis of selected presentations from the three meetings of the Austmarr Network.

Concerning accommodation and travel to the workshop: for those traveling to Sweden from abroad, the most convenient way to travel to Härnösand is to arrive at Midlanda airport and take an airport taxi to Härnösand. (One taxi could be shared with other participants.) Information on reasonably priced hotels and hostels in the city will be

made available in the near future. Participants will be responsible for their own travel and accommodation costs.

For registration and questions, please contact Maths Bertell at Mid Sweden University maths.bertell@miun.se.

You are all most welcome to Härnösand in April 2013!

Projects

Interpreting Eddic Poetry Project and the Eddic Network

Carolyne Larrington, University of Oxford

The Research Centre of St John's College, University of Oxford has funded the initial phases of a new international and interdisciplinary research project: Interpreting Eddic Poetry. The principal investigators are Dr Carolyne Larrington (St John's College and English Faculty, University of Oxford) and Dr Judy Quinn (Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, University of Cambridge). The Project will commence in July 2013 with the first of two planned workshops, "Interpreting Eddic Poetry: Interdisciplinary Perspectives" to be held at St John's College Research Centre, 4th–6th July 2013. A second workshop, "Eddic Myth and the Heroic", is planned for July 2014. Details of a one year (in the first instance) position as Research Associate at the post-doctoral level on the project will be advertised shortly.

The project has also formed an Eddic Network. Carolyne Larrington, Judy Quinn, David Clark (University of Leicester) and Brittany Schorn (ASNAC, Cambridge) comprise the steering group of this network. The Eddic Network's aim is to revitalise and reconfigure the study of eddic poetry, taking into account new scholarly developments in related areas. The Eddic Network will participate in a series of workshops, as future funding permits, redefining the eddic corpus, theorising eddic poetics and fostering collaborations on eddic research topics.

The programme of speakers at the First Network Workshop has already been finalised, but there will be a limited number of places available for other participants. Further information about registration and costs will be published on the St John's Research Centre website shortly. Informal enquiries may be sent to: carolyne.larrington@sjc.ox.ac.uk.

Oral Poetry, Mythic Knowledge, and Vernacular Imagination: Interfaces of Individual Expression and Collective Traditions in Pre-modern Northeast Europe

Lotte Tarkka, Frog, Karina Lukin and Eila Stepanova, University of Helsinki

The Academy of Finland project Oral Poetry, Mythic Knowledge and Vernacular Imagination: Interfaces of Individual Expression and Collective Traditions in Pre-Modern Northeast Europe (2012–2016) of Folklore Studies, University of Helsinki, investigates the symbolic and textual strategies that lended pre-modern, largely oral cultures the means to create poetic corpora that even today form an uncontested and valued, but unevenly recognized, part of Northern European cultural heritage. In these

cultures, the production, transmission and interpretation of cultural knowledge was deeply rooted in mythic thinking and the human faculty of imagination, matching creativity with slowly changing mental templates. An understanding of these forms of thought and communication will provide a solid basis for the negotiation of cultural and ethnic identities as well as the rights to intangible culture.

The Approach

At the level of theory, the project focuses on the intersection of oral poetry, mythic knowledge and vernacular imagination. Oral poetry is approached as a conventionalized conservative system of expression; mythic knowledge as mythology and belief traditions; imagination as the human capacity to organize mental representations. Oral poetry is a central mode of expression in cultural practices associated with ritual and beliefs, used in the application and communication of mythic knowledge. Imagination allows the organization of images and construction of mythic knowledge in relation to the language and semiotics as used in that poetry. Oral poetry thus emerges as a site of vernacular imagination rooted in cultural practices, enabling adaptive strategies for applying mythic knowledge in both familiar and unforeseen situations. These processes are addressed at the level of the individual understanding, collective tradition, and in comparative typological and long-term historical perspectives.

Regional Focus

Traditions are considered according to a regionally defined area of Northeast Europe. This is a culturally dynamic area peopled by diverse ethnic groups with distinct local cultural traditions with a long history of contact and exchange. In cultures of this region, oral poetries had central roles in individual and community life prior to processes of modernization, and these have evolved in relation to long histories of cross-cultural contacts. Studies of traditions in Northeast Europe have been generally inclined to divide these according to linguistic heritage (e.g. Finno-Ugric), influences from a single culture (e.g. Germanic), or limit geographical surveys to adjacent cultures – often reflecting political boundaries. The Circum-Baltic area has received increasing attention for its rich history of interfaces between Finno-Ugric and Indo-European cultures, but without normally considering cultures east of Karelia. Our project opens this Circum-Baltic discussion to a new scope of Northeast Europe, including the Nordic and Baltic countries and northwestern territories of the Russian Federation where many small cultural groups such as the Nenets are found. Emphasis is given to North Finnic (especially Finnish and Karelian) traditions because Finnic cultures have historically stood at the nexus of interactions between Indo-European and Finno-Ugric or more broadly Uralic cultures.

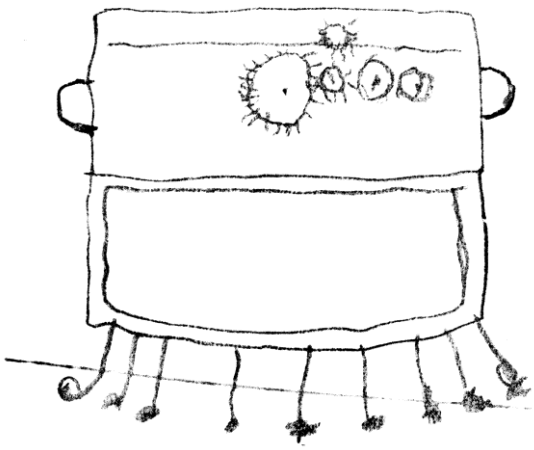

Illustration representing the mythic Sampo by the singer Riiko Kallio, 1921. (Original lost; reproduced from Väisänen 1932: 178.)

The project seeks to offer broader insights into this region's dynamic history, a new understanding of cultural heritage in this part of the globe, and new perspectives on European cultural identities. The project will generate new knowledge on the interface between slowly changing structures and creative innovation; elucidate processes by which mythic knowledge is mediated and socially negotiated; examine how modes of expression condition mythic knowledge; and consider how cultural practices both shape vernacular imagination and are conditioned by it.

Anchor Studies

The overall goal of and abstract overview will be developed around four 'anchor' studies. These treat: North Finnic Kalevala-meter poetry; North Finnic lament poetry; early Germanic poetries; Nenets epic and shamanic songs. Each anchor study is situated in the context of different genres and traditions of the culture, and more broadly within the context of neighbouring cultures, where appropriate.

These four anchor studies treat the two most central and archaic oral poetry traditions of North Finnic cultures, the oral poetry of one Indo-European culture and of one Uralic culture in the region. The four anchor studies provide complementary and mutually reinforcing insights on their respective target cultures. They will be united in the development of a flexible research frame and general methodology for use as a tool when approaching other traditions in more flexible modes of expression, both in pre-modern and modern societies.

Lotte Tarkka will continue her research on genre, intertextuality and multivocality in oral poetry through the anchor study "Genre, Mythic Realms and Vernacular Imagination". Analysis of the fictive and imaginary worlds created in the runo-singing practices in the Kalevala-meter provides a basis for relating the notion of tradition to innovation and creativity as necessary components of vernacular imagination.

In the anchor study "Genre and Mythic Knowledge through the Ages: Perspectives on Early Germanic and Finno-Karelian Oral Poetries", Frog examines the social negotiation of interfaces between mythic knowledge and oral poetry in long-term perspective. This will be examined through two oral-poetic traditions that should prove reciprocally informative: early Germanic poetries (with emphasis on Old Norse eddic and skaldic verse) and North Finnic kalevalaic poetry (with emphasis on epic and incantation).

In the anchor study "Mythic Knowledge and Shamanism in Nenets Oral Narration", Karina Lukin treats the Nenets epic and shamanistic poetry collected from the mid-19th century through the beginning of the 20th century. The analysis centers around key expressions and themes related to the shamanistic and mythological imagination. It considers the diachronic movement of these elements in epic poetry on one hand and their synchronic movement between different genres on the other.

In the anchor study "Mythic Knowledge and Vernacular Imagination in Finnic Lament Traditions", Eila Stepanova will investigate the intersection of belief traditions with poetic register and the conventional contents and structures of North Finnic lament traditions (e.g. Karelian, Ingrian, Vepsian). Finnic lament poetries represent a tradition of unfixed meters and highly specialized poetic language believed to be understood by the dead. This project will survey the similarities and differences in aspects of traditional lament among different North Finnic groups on local, regional and linguistic-cultural bases.

These four projects have been organized to be complementary and mutually informative. Different detailed case studies will develop in dialogue with one another and with the research of other scholars at conferences and workshops. The constellations of many-sided interfaces between these different anchor studies will produce new perspectives on interrelationships of oral poetry, mythic knowledge and vernacular imagination in this part of the world. New understandings will be developed on the role of the individual in collective practices both synchronically and diachronically; both within individual genres and across whole modes of expression; both within a single culture and across diverse cultures. The broader situation in Northeast Europe will be developed simultaneously through networking and collaborations centrally actualized through the organization of workshops international conferences.

Conferences and Workshops

The different anchor studies of the project will engage in ongoing discussion with research by other scholars in order to develop and synthesize the most dynamic possible perspective on the interface of the individual with collective traditions of oral poetry and mythic knowledge and on the interface of

vernacular imagination with inherited language, images, structures and information. Three major strategies for opening and maintaining international discussion are:

- International conference organized by the project
- Invitation-based workshops organized by the project
- Coordinated sessions at major international conferences

International conferences will be organized annually by the project and oriented to its interests and priorities. The conferences will have open calls for papers. They will be organized in collaboration with other projects, institutions and organizations including the Academy of Finland project Song and Singing as Cultural Communication of the University of Tampere, the Estonian Literary Museum (Tartu, Estonia) and the Karelian Scientific Centre, Academy of Russia (Petrozavodsk, Russian Federation). The project will also organize three invitation-based workshops with specialist of different fields each year. Workshops will be thematically oriented to questions, challenges and strategies related to the overall goals of the project and its anchor studies. The project will also organize panel sessions on themes relevant to the project at international conferences. These sessions will involve project members and other scholars.

At the 16th ISFNR (25th–30th June 2013, Vilnius, Lithuania), the project is organizing a panel "*Homo narrans*, Mythic Knowledge, and Vernacular Imagination". This panel seeks to reconceptualise the relation between mythic knowledge and vernacular imagination in the human need to construct narrative worlds, addressing questions of how poetic registers associated with myth, ritual, and belief function as sites of imagination and memory in the internalization, application and transmission of culturally central ideas and values.

Our first international conference is being organized in collaboration with the Academy of Finland project Song and Singing as Cultural Communication of the University of Tampere. The project will be held in Kuhmo, Finland, is tentatively scheduled for October 2013 on the theme of cultural meanings and oral poetics. The event will be held in English, Finnish and Russian (with simultaneous translation into the other languages).

For more information on the events coordinated by this project, please contact the project leader, Professor Lotte Tarkka, and the research team of Frog, Karina Lukin and Eila Stepanova at oral-poetry@helsinki.fi.

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Miscellanea

Gunnlöth's Tale by Svava Jakobsdóttir

Triin Laidoner, University of Aberdeen

Readers may be interested to hear that the novel *Gunnlaðar saga* (1987) by Icelandic author Svava Jakobsdóttir (1930–2004) has recently been published in an English translation by Oliver Watts. The novel is underpinned by the author's scholarly research into the Gunnlöð episodes in *Snorra Edda* and *Hávamál*; this research was published as an article in the journal *Skírnir* shortly after the novel first appeared (Svava Jakobsdóttir 1988), and has since been translated into English for the collection *The*

Poetic Edda: Essays on Old Norse Mythology (Svava Jakobsdóttir 2002). This is the first time, however, that the novel itself has appeared in English.

The publishers, Norvik Press, give the following summary of the novel:

> In the 1980s, a hardworking Icelandic businesswoman and her teenage daughter Dís, who has been arrested for apparently committing a strange and senseless robbery, are unwittingly drawn into a ritual-bound world of goddesses, sacrificial priests, golden thrones, clashing crags and kings-in-waiting. It is said that Gunnlöth was seduced by Odin so he could win the 'mead' of poetry from her, but is that really true, and why was Dís summoned to their world?[1]

Further details of this work – in which elements of the thriller and the psychological novel are combined with the interpretation and reinterpretation of texts central to the study of Old Norse mythology – can be found on the website of the publishers (www.norvikpress.com).

Notes

1. Quoted from: http://www.norvikpress.com/book-detail.php?i=94, accessed 13th November 2012.

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PEOPLE

Research Reports

The Saga Outlaw and Conceptions of the Past

Joonas Ahola, University of Helsinki

Paper presented at the 15th International Saga Conference: "Sagas and the Use of the Past", hosted at Aarhus University, 5th–11th August 2012, Aarhus, Denmark.

This paper focuses on the production and contemporary reception of the Sagas of the Icelanders through the case of the conventional presentations of outlaw characters in a large sample of saga texts. The Saga World, as a reflection of the past, was in many ways closely tied to the prevailing circumstances in 13th and 14th century Iceland.

Outlaws signified social space as characters who were banished to the margins of society. They defined the social systems and the relationship of those social systems to the law by illustrating controversies between the law and different categories of social conduct. The category 'outlaw' therefore encompasses a wide range of saga characters – from outright villains to heroes. This is attributable to the fact that Icelandic Saga Age society stressed values such as honour and family loyalty, while actions that were morally acceptable could violate the law and lead to outlawry.

Representations of outlaws gained depth and powerfulness through the complementary signification that was created through intertextual referentiality. Intertextual referentiality here refers to the signifying references to literature, tradition and collective perceptions of the reality. These references were actualized in the narrative conventions that connected saga narration to other forms of narrative.

This paper discusses outlawry in the Sagas of the Icelanders as a polysemic, culturally central and a compelling concept, which belonged to the past of the saga writers and their audiences. Through this concept, the medieval Icelanders could reflect on questions of morality, justice and law, among others.

Álfar and the Early-Icelandic Settlers

Courtney Burrell, University of Victoria

Paper presented at Supernatural Places: The 6th Nordic-Celtic-Baltic Folklore Symposium, organized by the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore and the Department of Scandinavian Studies, University of Tartu, 4th–7th June 2012, Tartu, Estonia.

Much has been written about Icelandic *huldufólk* ['the hidden people'] in folk belief and their relation to Old Norse *álfar* ['elves']. *Álfar* (specifically the Icelandic variety) are intriguing creatures themselves. They seem to have a complex history, since they change considerably from their earliest appearance in medieval Icelandic literature and differ from elves found in early-modern and modern Icelandic folktales. The period of Icelandic settlement and the years following it – as can be examined from references in medieval Icelandic texts– was when beliefs concerning *álfar* must have begun to change. *Álfar* seem to have god-like qualities, but also take on more and more of the characteristics of lowly nature spirits (Gunnell 2007: 118–120). These beings and their apparent change also provide one example of how new environments affect folk belief and culture. Although *álfar* have

been connected with other phenomenon as well, most notably the cult of dead ancestors, *álfar* in early Iceland clearly have a connection to fertility – that is through their association with nature – which is seen in their connection with sacred land and in their relation to other fertility beings including the Norse god Freyr and *landvættir* ['land-spirits']. Moreover, early Icelanders seemed to have considered *álfar* to be influential with regard to their connection to the landscape (Gunnell 2007: 120–121). It is possible that beliefs about *álfar* affected how the early Icelanders related to their new physical landscape – by helping to make it somewhat supernatural – but it is also possible that the landscape itself inspired the early-Icelandic settlers to attribute new characteristics to the *álfar* and contribute to their changing and varied representation in medieval literature and folk belief. Furthermore, through examination of how the early Icelanders may have regarded these beings in relation to the landscape, an understanding of how peoples develop supernatural beliefs and how existing beliefs affect new conceptions of physical landscapes becomes available.

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Contextualizing Creativity in an Archival Corpus: The Case of Kalevala-Meter Mythology

Frog, University of Helsinki

Paper presented at the 124th Annual Meeting of the American Folklore Society: "The Continuity and Creativity of Culture", 24th–27th October 2012, New Orleans, Louisiana, U.S.A.

Kalevala-meter poetry, or kalevalaic poetry, refers to the Finnic alliterative trochaic tetrameter as it was found among Finns, Karelians and Ingrians. Kalevalaic poetry was earlier the central and dominant mode of poetic expression among these groups used for many genres of ritual, magical and secular expression, including mythological epic. These traditions disappeared rapidly in the wake of modernization across the 19th and 20th century. Continuities of living practice are going extinct as kalevalaic poetry has begun a second life in the modern music industry and courses in the Department of Folk Music at the Sibelius Academy.

The mythological epics are now only preserved in archives. Nevertheless, the rich documentation of traditions of kalevalaic poetry – roughly 150,000 items in the archives of the Finnish Literature Society – provides a rich context for approaching individual creativity within that corpus. This paper offers a number of examples to illustrate aspects of the tradition which such a corpus can be used to illuminate.

Mythological epic songs were normally realized in 100–350 line performances. Individual epics were remarkably conservative. They were quite different from the flexible production of South Slavic epics on which Oral-Formulaic Theory was based. Individual poetic lines were often verbally quite fixed. Epics were reproduced in stanza-like compositional verbal systems often appearing as groupings of lines, and both individual lines and these stanza-like units or 'multiforms' were often exclusively associated with one image or event in one part of one song.[1]

This paper will address variation in mythological epic at the level of verbal production and representation on the one hand and on the level of narrative content on the other. Computer assisted statistical studies of units of verbal composition provide the foundation for considering variation in verbal production. These statistical studies provide a framework for approaching the indexicality of verbal units of composition in communities and intertextual referential strategies in the oral tradition.

'Dialects of singing' tradition and the 'inclination to non-variation' will be introduced with a discussion of improvisational 'patching' – i.e. when informants would occasionally improvise unconventional lines or use phrasings from another kin-group's dialect of singing once before finding/recalling the conventional form in repetitions or subsequent performances. This type of variation will provide an introduction to the conservatism of the tradition and individual choice in non-variation. Rhetorical strategies of variation so subtle that they only become apparent to a researcher through statistical survey will then be presented. This will be followed by the use of intertextual reference actualized through verbal variation. (See further Frog 2010b; 2011.)

Variation at the level of narrative content will be introduced with examples of what Linda Dégh (1995: 44–45) terms 'form-breakers', who contested or revised traditional mythological narratives in relation to changing ideologies (Christianity) or personal identification with gods and heroes (Frog 2010a: 226–229). Examples connected to belief traditions will be followed by impacts of regional genre shifts, where epic became handled in as a folktale (Siikala 2002: 28; cf. Frog 2010a: 81–82), and or epic content was adapted to or took on the quality of lyric form (Siikala 1990; cf. Frog 2010a: 88ff.), closing with an example of comical manipulations of epic material (from Frog 2010a: 200–201).

The majority of examples discussed in this presentation are exceptional within the corpus. However, exceptional examples present the least ambiguity, and simultaneously highlight the potentialities of the tradition for its users. The central focus throughout nevertheless remains to illustrate how a corpus can be used to construct a context for approaching specific cases where living informants are unavailable.

Notes

1. This approach to the 'multiform' has been extensively developed on the basis of the model proposed by Lauri and Anneli Honko (1998; Honko 1998; see esp. Frog 2010b; 2011; for another adaptation, see Drout 2012).

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When Thunder Is Not Thunder: Changing Intersections of Narrative and Conceptual Models

Frog, University of Helsinki

Paper presented at Supernatural Places: The 6th Nordic-Celtic-Baltic Folklore Symposium, organized by the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore and the Department of Scandinavian Studies, University of Tartu, 4th–7th June 2012, Tartu, Estonia.

Traditions associated with thunder are particularly rich in the Circum-Baltic region. This is reflected in folktales, legends and belief traditions. It is also related to the centrality of the thunder-god in earlier traditions of Finno-Ugric and Indo-European

cultures, which exchanged narratives and beliefs about thunder and the thunder-god across centuries of contact.

The dynamic cultural history of this part of the globe has resulted in extremely stratified traditions and beliefs about thunder. The present paper addresses the interface of *a*) narratives related to thunder or the thunder-god and *b*) aetiologies or conceptual models for understanding thunder and its causes. This will be approached through a case study of variation in different forms of a particular mythological narrative, the so-called tale-type ATU 1148b ("Thunder's Instruments" or the Theft of the Thunder-Instrument). The discussion highlights focus on stable plot-types and their circulation as social resources that can be adapted across genres, and what happens when conceptual models integrated in a socially circulating plot-type cease to correspond to current models in other contexts. Put another way, the paper considers what happens when 'thunder' in a myth or belief legend ceases to align with current conceptions of 'thunder' in belief traditions or in the ways that people talk about and narrate 'thunder' (whether as a god or abstract phenomenon).

The paper opens with a survey of relevant aetiologies of thunder that circulated in the Circum-Baltic region. This survey will be accompanied by observations concerning persistence and innovation as historical processes. The paper will then turn to narrative traditions related to 'thunder'. Conventional narratives will be distinguished from narrative patterns and flexible conceptual schemas that provide narrative cores. References to narratives that become 'suspended' in particular genres or applications (e.g. proverbs or riddles) will be distinguished. Adaptations of material circulating cross-culturally to vernacular gods and mythic landscapes in cultural exchange will be observed, concentrating on examples of narratives persisting in the wake of changing dominant conceptions of thunder. Such adaptations include: *a*) the persistence of archaic conceptions; *b*) 'renewal' or updating the aetiology of thunder and its consequences; *c*) the divorce of a narrative or conceptual schema from specific aetiologies of thunder; and *d*) the adaptation of the material to new contexts and applications from which 'thunder' may be absent. Examples extend to ritual and preventative cultural practices and connection to a specific place in a local landscape as a potential factor in maintaining traditions which otherwise drop out of circulation. This discussion highlights the interdependence of some plot-types and conceptual models which impact the development of the tradition over time.

Warriorhood and Supernatural Beings

Karolina Kouvola, University of Helsinki

Paper presented at Transcultural Contacts in the Circum-Baltic Area: 2nd Meeting of the Austmarr Network, organized by Folklore Studies, Department of Philosophy, History, Culture and Art Studies and the Department of Finnish, Finno-Ugrian and Scandinavian Studies, University of Helsinki, 8th-10th June 2012, Helsinki, Finland.

This presentation addresses warriorhood and supernatural beings associated with warriors in Scandinavian and Finno-Karelian cultures during the Viking Age. The Scandinavian textual sources are mainly Icelandic sagas and Old Norse poetry. The Finno-Karelian sources employed are the epic Kalevala-meter poems primarily documented during the 19th century.

During the Viking Age, warriors functioned as society's defenders and protectors. This paper will examine more closely what kind of poetic and literary associations warriors and supernatural beings had. It will focus especially on the characters of Óðinn, Väinämöinen, Joukahainen and Lemminkäinen, and how these appear in textual and epic sources. These characters from different cultures and their meanings will then be compared with one another.

This presentation will also discuss the range of possibilities for understanding the importance of the role of the warrior and its supernatural manifestations according to

textual sources. It will consider what the sources can tell and how can it be applied to wider concept of warriors in the Viking Age Baltic area. The overall goal of this presentation is to suggest answers to these questions and hopefully shed light on the spiritual side of the Viking Age warrior in the Northern Countries.

The Signs of Storytelling: Register Markers in Gaelic Traditional Narrative

William Lamb, University of Edinburgh

Paper presented at Register: Intersections of Language, Context and Communication, organized by Folklore Studies of the University of Helsinki and the Academy of Finland project Oral and Literary Culture in the Medieval and Early Modern Baltic Sea Region of the Finnish Literature Society, 23th–25th May 2012, Helsinki, Finland.

Linguistically-orientated register research has tended to concentrate either upon core morpho-syntactic features – such as verb types, syntactic complexity and reduced forms – or so-called 'register markers' (Biber & Finegan 1994). The latter are lexemes and phrasal formulae that, in and of themselves, are sufficient to bring to mind a particular language variety. For example, in English, the phrase, 'once upon a time' – conventionalised to the point of cliché – immediately activates the expectation for a narrative event.

In Scottish Gaelic traditional storytelling, verbal formulae are the most palpable register markers to be seen. They are found across a wide range of tales and tellers (O Nolan 1971), and some originate in early modern and medieval forms of the language (Bruford 1966). My working assumption in this research was that conventionalised language of any kind co-varies with important communicative and thematic functions. In other words, the very existence of a fossilised or semi-fossilised form suggests that there was an opportunity for it to become so; it fulfils some non-arbitrary purpose in the register and does so in a well-packaged, economical way. In this paper, I attempted to locate the various communicative functions underlying a range of verbal formulae, and organise them within a taxonomy. By doing so, I hoped to be able to say something about the structures of Gaelic folktale morphology – that is, what semiotic features have the most currency in the register – and to tie observations into a greater dialogue about the process of language conventionalisation.

The data for the study came from the first two volumes of Campbell's *Popular Tales of the West Highlands*. The tales within this collection were gathered verbatim from a range of narrators across the Scottish Highlands and islands in the mid-19th century. My sample contained 17 narrators over 33 tales, with a total of approximately 90,000 words.

An analysis of the data indicated that it is possible to link formulae in Gaelic traditional narrative to recurring discourse functions. These fell into three broad categories:

1. **Character relations**
2. **Epithets and names**
3. **Inertia** (i.e. things that negotiate the progression of the story)

Within **character relations**, for example, were the functions *dialogue conventions* (e.g. greetings and leave taking), *emotive-expressive language* (e.g. expressions of joy and sadness) and *power transactions* (e.g. entrapment). Within **inertia** were the functions *boundary negotiation* (e.g. beginning and end formulae), *plot staging* (e.g. initial complications) and *temporal-spatial functions* (e.g. expressions of time). Interestingly, much of the actual language used to express these functions was in the form of rich, culturally-engendered codes or motifs, such as:

- The so-called 'Knot of the Three Narrows', from which there is no escape
- The far-away house in the night, the magical qualities of its inhabitants and the liminal position that it represents for the hero
- The oath to neither sleep, eat nor drink until a hero finds his stolen wife
- Deploying a big-headed, skinny-legged man as a bludgeon against an attacking army

I hope to provide a fuller account of the findings and their theoretical implications in the coming year.

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Alliteration in Finnish Lutheran Hymns and Oral Kalevalaic Poetics: Religious, Cultural and Linguistic Shift during the Reformation

Tuomas M.S. Lehtonen, Finnish Literature Society

Paper to be presented at Alliterativa causa, organized by the Folklore Society and the Warburg Institute, 18th–19th January 2012, London, England.

The Lutheran Reformation in the 16th century deeply changed Finnish culture. Perhaps the most fundamental change was that the religious reformers created the Finnish written language. Up to the 16th century in Finland, a province of Sweden, Latin, Swedish and Low-German were used as written languages while the Finnish spoken by the majority of the peasant population was used only for oral communication. Nevertheless, traditional Finnish oral poetry, so-called kalevalaic poetry, has preserved many medieval Catholic topics up to the 19th century, e.g. poems related to Catholic saints (St. Mary, St. Anne, St. Catherine, St. Olaf), among them the local patron saint Henry, and other features like exorcisms. It seems that oral tradition adapted and preserved Catholic teachings as part of local vernacular religion, especially in the most populated southern and western parts of the country.

Later nationalist minded scholars of Finnish literature and folklore were puzzled by the fact that the earliest promoters of the Finnish written language seemed to have avoided kalevalaic poetics and preferred instead iambic German meters (the so-called German Knittel-meter with rhymed couplets in the early phase) which were difficult to use in Finnish since Finnish word-stress is different from word-stress in Germanic languages. Hence, early hymns were written in more or less mixed iambic and trochaic meters. Most writers favored rhymed couplets and verse structures not familiar to the kalevalaic idiom. On the other hand, the very change in poetics and metrics was related to the introduction of new religious practices – first and foremost with the Lutheran idea of a congregation participating in the celebration of Holy Mass by singing hymns. This practice was, of course, meant to introduce the basic religious doctrine among the populace and to create a communal sense of belonging.

This paper shall concentrate on the use of alliteration, which is an emblematic feature of Kalevalaic poetry but completely usable in other metric systems as well. It is certainly true that the religious reformers felt that German iambic and rhymed meters were more suitable for their purposes but we cannot say for sure whether the old oral poetic idiom was interpreted as a carrier of different beliefs (pagan, Catholic) or whether it was simply incompatible with new hymnal melodies. The use of alliteration in Finnish hymnals by Jacobus Finno (1583), Hemmingius de Masco (1605, 1616) will be analyzed and compared to the officially established Finnish hymnal from 1701. The central question is whether alliteration was a bridge between the earlier oral and vernacular poetics and the new literary religious poetics. Furthermore, this paper inquires whether the poetic forms themselves were seen as the carriers of ideologies or beliefs, and thirdly, whether it is possible to trace any change in the use of alliteration in hymns from the late 16th century up to the beginning of the 18th century.

Networking, Capital Accumulation and Investment in the Periphery: Trade and Cultural Contact in the Pre-Reformation Baltic Sea Region

Ilkka Leskelä, University of Helsinki

Paper presented at Transcultural Contacts in the Circum-Baltic Area: 2nd Meeting of the Austmarr Network, organized by Folklore Studies, Department of Philosophy, History, Culture and Art Studies and the Department of Finnish, Finno-Ugrian and Scandinavian Studies, University of Helsinki, 8th-10th June 2012, Helsinki, Finland.

I am writing my PhD thesis on late medieval (1460–1530) trade between the Hanseatic city ports and the Swedish (Finnish) towns. My addition to the rather well researched topic is a combination of the purely economic view with practical communication and contact patterns, networks and accumulation of immaterial (social and cultural) capital. On the grand scale, I aim to clarify the practical context of the adoption of Christian/German cultural models in the Swedish/Finnish periphery, and the function of the periphery in the Europe-wide system of exchange.

Central theoretical frameworks for my research are:

1. The concepts of economic, social and cultural capital (Pierre Bourdieu); how they interact in creating more material and immaterial capital, at the personal, family and societal levels.
2. Networks and their close relation to social capital (e.g. Mark Granovetter).
3. Registers of speech/writing (correspondence) as indicators of intensity and direction of personal and cultural influences (Michael Halliday & Ruqaiya Hasan).
4. Core–periphery model of world-system analysis (Immanuel Wallerstein).

My research is based on (merchants') correspondence, city council diploma, town records and toll registers, mostly written in Middle Low German and Old Swedish. In this symposium, I hope to present some of my thoughts and preliminary results regarding the *longue durée* of culture influxes in the Baltic Sea Region.

Wayland: Smith of the Gods

Jon Mackley, University of Northampton

Paper presented at Supernatural Places: The 6th Nordic-Celtic-Baltic Folklore Symposium, organized by the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore and the Department of Scandinavian Studies, University of Tartu, 4th–7th June 2012, Tartu, Estonia.

This paper considers how the legend of one of the Scandinavian sagas has been incorporated into English folklore and topography.

The legend of Wayland, the 'Smith of the Gods', has been attached to a Neolithic burial site near Uffington in Oxfordshire, England. The first phase of the barrow was constructed around 3590 BC, but legends were probably attached to it by Saxon settlers in the fifth century. There is documentary evidence that it has been called "Wayland's Smithy" since the 10th century and it was believed the 'cave' was the home of an invisible smith. If a traveller's horse lost a shoe, the traveller could leave the horse with a piece of money; when he returned he would find the horse new shod.

Wayland was an important deity in the Saxon pantheon, but there are only a handful of references to him in English literature including the Anglo-Saxon poems, *Deor*, *Beowulf* and *Widsith*. Through these texts, and early Scandinavian Yorkshire carvings, which incorporate Christian and Scandinavian imagery and depict scenes from Icelandic and Teutonic sagas, we can trace Wayland back to the Scandinavian poems of the *Elder Edda*, most particularly *Vǫlundarkviða*. In these earlier legends, Wayland was blacksmith to the gods who forged legendary armour and swords and parallels with these tales can be traced back to Greek mythology.

In addition to the site of Wayland's Smithy, this paper considers areas in the local and natural topographical features that have been named after characters in the Wayland stories. Wayland was also associated with the Saxon Winter Solstice and his legend was re-

worked and sanitised and appropriated into the Christian calendar.

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"I Would Sue the Gods, but I Cannot": The Creativity of Karelian Lamenters

Eila Stepanova, University of Helsinki

Paper presented at the 124th Annual Meeting of the American Folklore Society: "The Continuity and Creativity of Culture", 24th–27th October 2012, New Orleans, Louisiana, U.S.A.

This paper addresses the creativity of Karelian lamenters and their ability to adopt new concepts into traditional sacral lament poetry. Laments may be generally defined as sung poetry of varying degrees of improvisation, which nonetheless follows conventionalized rules of traditional verbal expression, most often performed by women in ritual contexts and potentially also on non-ritual grievous occasions.

The Karelian lament tradition requires the use of a special 'register' for communication with the otherworld, ancestors and gods. The register of these laments is a whole traditional system of outstanding specific features including the lexicon, circumlocutions, parallelism, grammar, and melody, which all could be used both conservatively and creatively depending on the competence of a particular lamenter. On the one hand, the traditional lament register can be seen as "organizational restriction" – rules which are necessary to follow – but on the other hand, the Karelian lament register presents a broad range of possibilities for a lamenter to generate expressions that go beyond traditional boundaries while remaining within the traditional rules. In the corpus of approximately 3000 Karelian lament texts, no two laments are exactly alike (even from the same performer). This shows the possibilities of creativity open to Karelian women.

The mythic background of the Karelian lament tradition was influenced by the long process of Christianization. It also experienced a new wave of influence following the Russian revolution and, during the Soviet period, adopted new concepts and meanings. My analyses of approximately 500 lament texts (most collected in the 1970's) reveal diverse layers of influence that can be traced in the tradition and how individual lamenters develop their own understanding of the mythic world of Karelian laments.

The title of my paper is a quotation of a funeral lament performed by Valentina Martynova in 1971, in which Valentina was telling her deceased mother how hard she was trying to get her back. For example, Valentina was ready to pay "a huge amount of capital, thousands and millions," to the otherworld's gods, and she would sue the gods for her mother's death, but failed. This is how Valentina explained to her dead mother why the family must bury her and send her to the otherworld. In this example, it is possible to observe the intersection of three different layers of influence:

1. the traditional mythic otherworld and its inhabitants referred to in the Karelian lament register as *syndyzet* (origin.DIMINUTIVE.PLURAL)
2. The Orthodox Christian counterpart of *syndyzet*, referred to as *spuassuzet* (savior.DIM.PL)
3. Modern economic and legal strategies (e.g. suing)

The example is exceptional, but it characterizes the individual's role in the perpetual innovations to the traditional register. The social establishment of such innovations can be seen within the larger corpus.

The continuity of the old lament tradition and its preservation have been enabled through the creativity of individual lamenters and through other members of the community, all of whom internalize the traditional register and cultural concepts as a flexible system.

The Register of Karelian Laments

Eila Stepanova, University of Helsinki

Paper presented at Register: Intersections of Language, Context and Communication, organized by Folklore Studies of the University of Helsinki and the Academy of Finland project Oral and Literary Culture in the Medieval and Early Modern Baltic Sea Region of the Finnish Literature Society, 23th–25th May 2012, Helsinki, Finland.

Laments are a universal genre of oral poetry, but they nevertheless lack sufficient study. Laments may be generally defined as melodic poetry of varying degrees of improvisation, which nonetheless follows conventionalized rules of traditional verbal expression, most often performed by women in ritual contexts and potentially also on non-ritual grievous occasions. Karelian laments have primarily been studied in terms of their function within transition rituals or in terms of certain poetic and stylistic features applied in the Karelian lament tradition and its lexicon. However, previous approaches left some important issues concerning lamentations outside of discussion, for example the role of the melody or the significance of grammatical forms.

This paper proposes investigating the Karelian lament tradition as a special register used by lamenter-women to express culturally significant concepts and meanings as well as their own feelings in different ritual and non-ritual situations. This register was also used for communication with the realm of the dead and its inhabitants.

In this study, I analyzed approximately 500 texts of Karelian laments from the Seesjärvi region, situated in the Republic of Karelia (Russian Federation). These texts were collected within the period of 1937–2002. I investigated all meaningful features of lament poetry comprehensively – both verbal and non-verbal – which seemed to be significant for lament performance and reception. The register of Karelian laments from the Seesjärvi region contains of the following parts: (special) grammar, lexicon (both essential and context-dependent), stylistic features, melody, and non-verbal communicative features (proxemic, kinesic, prosodic). The Seesjärvi lament register is however a local form (dialect) of the *general register* of the Karelian lament tradition. 'General register' is a term which I use to describe the common 'principal' features shared by all local traditions of Karelian laments, although the lament register is not identical in all dialects. Moreover, each lamenter applies the local lament register in her own way in what is called the *idiolectal lament register*. This paper will introduce the distinction of general, dialectal and idiolectal registers of Karelian laments and discuss both traditional and personal meanings conveyed by the lament register.

The discussion of registers of Karelian laments will conclude with perspectives on internalization of the local lament register and traditional knowledge – cultural concepts and meanings – as a whole. The competence of lamenters will be addressed in relation to the internalization and use of the lament tradition, and this will be connected to the ability of lamenters to improvise in diverse situations.

Essay Collections

Mythic Discourses: Studies in Uralic Traditions

Frog, Anna-Leena Siikala and Eila Stepanova, University of Helsinki

A collection of 18 papers by international authors edited by Frog, Anna-Leena Siikala and Eila Stepanova, appearing in the series Studia Fennica Folkloristica, number 20, published by the Finnish Literature Society (Helsinki) in 2012.

Myths are both representations of present-day discourses in local communities and manifestations of the *longue durée* of culture. In handling the reasons for human and social existence, diverse mythologies answer the same key questions, even though the conclusions and their poetic expressions vary from culture to culture. Mythologies may appear confused or confusing because they present the basic ideas of vernacular worldview and its accompanying system of values in mythic images and metaphoric language, full of conflicting ideas. When addressing both cultural and existential questions, myths create a connection to the principal events of the past, and in so doing, they gather together a social whole united by ideas of a common origin. As shown, for example, by *Kalevala*, the mythic epic of Finns and Karelians, myths are important tools for creating a sense of self-defined identity. Therefore, research into mythic traditions has been vital in interpretations of "European" cultural capital and in distinguishing the characteristic cultural features of small ethnic groups.

In Finland, research into Uralic languages and cultures has a strong tradition, beginning with M. A. Castrén, Elias Lönnrot, Kai and Otto Donner, Julius and Kaarle Krohn, A. Kannisto, K. F. Karjalainen, T. Lehtisalo, Uno Harva and Martti Haavio. Mythology provides valuable material for research on language and culture. This was already apparent in the 19th century, when researchers interested in Finno-Ugrian languages and cultures conducted field work among scattered North European native cultures and Siberian peoples. Consequently, the research and resources of these interrelated areas of study have been intimately interconnected from the very outset. A remarkable number of collections of folklore and folk poetry as well as monographic studies on Uralic religions were published. Owing especially to the work of the Finno-Ugric Society and the Finnish Literature Society, a great deal of the mythology of the Finno-Ugric linguistic area is available for study. Both in Russia and Finland as well as in Hungary and Estonia, many generations of researchers have applied themselves to the collection, publication and investigation of these materials. As a result, research into Uralic mythologies has a particularly good infrastructure with archives, libraries and new fieldwork collections – resources which it pays to exploit. On the other hand, a great part of this knowledge has been gathered by Russian researchers and it has remained unknown to many researchers in the West. One goal of the present collection is to raise awareness and open discussion between these different research traditions.

The study of mythic traditions has recently grown in importance in Western Europe. This is partly because new archaeological methods and linguistic findings have opened new directions in the study of pre-history, and on the other hand, this is the outcome of considering the identification of a common European heritage important for uniting Europe socially to support its unification within a common political entity. In Finland, the 150 year jubilees for the first published edition of the (*Old*) *Kalevala* in 1985, and for the greatly revised and expanded second edition of the (*New*) *Kalevala* in 1999, have rekindled interest in Kalevala-meter oral poetry, bringing new approaches and new questions concerning the singers, their local communities, as well as the performance and variation of this poetry. These approaches have opened a broad field for research and many of the new paths still await

investigation. A new wave of interest in mythology and ethnic religions has also been observed in the different Republics of post-Soviet Russia. Young artists of Finno-Ugrian Republics, for example, follow the modern trend in the globalising world in their quest for mythology.

Uralic languages (Finno-Ugric and Samoyedic languages) are spoken by indigenous peoples of Northern Eurasia in the territory extending from Fennoscandia to West Siberia. Even if Uralic groups are linguistically related, their histories and social, economic and cultural life differ greatly. In addition, all these ethnic groups or nations have had different linguistic, cultural, social and religious contacts with other groups and nations during their long and various histories. Many Uralic groups have maintained and recreated their religious and mythological traditions in spite of the fact that the traces of archaic religious systems have merged with the ethnic religions of neighbouring peoples and also with world religions propagated by the churches. The religious and mythic traditions of Uralic peoples are therefore especially rich and versatile, reflecting the cultural history of Northwest Eurasia. Both comparative research and fieldwork-based studies focusing on the contemporary cultures benefit from a knowledge of vernacular Uralic mythic traditions, and it is therefore important to raise awareness of modern perspectives on these traditions and make those perspectives more accessible.

A Dynamic Collection

Mythic Discourses, organized into four parts, brings together a broad range of scholars to address the many facets of myth in Uralic cultures. Because the mythologies of the Uralic peoples differ considerably, mythology is understood here in a broad sense, including not only myths proper but also information about religious beliefs and associated rituals. Many articles of this volume address mythic discourses in the present day or in the wake of process of modernization, examining how aspects of vernacular heritage continue to function as social resources through emergent interpretations and revaluations. Studies emphasizing the synchronic dynamism of living traditions are paralleled by articles examining diachronic processes, investigating continuities in mythic images, motifs, myths and genres. The synchronic and diachronic emphases are complementary, matching perspectives on the dynamism of mythic discourses in living and changing cultural contexts with perspectives on the *longue durée* of these traditions and their transformations. The remarkable range and breadth of Uralic cultures discussed, extending from diverse living cultures to evidence of a common cultural heritage or early cultural contacts, comes together to offer a dynamic perspective on Uralic traditions in life and through history.

Gods and Their Stories

As the most characteristic feature of a mythology tends to be its mythic figures and the narratives attached to them, the first part of the collection consists of five articles on "Gods and Their Stories". These articles address traditions of anthropomorphic gods and heroes as well as narratives associated with them – or, more accurately, the constellations of images and events that make up the narrative cores of myths. They focus on the place of these figures and their narratives in the history of cultural discourse. Across this group of articles, emphasis is distributed between the transformations and negotiations of mythic traditions and conceptions in the wake of modernity on the one hand, and historical and comparative discussions of the *longue durée* of these traditions on the other. Together, they provide an essential background for subsequent parts of the collection and their diverse perspectives on the emergence, cultural activity and metamorphoses of traditions through mythic discourses.

"Gods and Their Stories" opens with a foundational discussion by Anna-Leena Siikala (University of Helsinki) that introduces theories of and methodological approaches to myths and mythology. Siikala's contribution provides a general background and context for discussions of mythology, its sources and mythic discourse in later articles, opening questions and issues ranging from

comparative studies and long-term perspectives to present-day revaluations and revitalizations of traditions in modern cultures.

Ülo Valk (University of Tartu) advances discussion in a sensitive treatment of mythic discourses surrounding thunder in Estonian folklore. Valk offers a valuable exposition of the transition and transformation of vernacular traditions of the thunder-god and his adversary the devil through the social processes of change incited by modernity and alternative ideologies carried through scientific explanations and textbook education.

Lauri Harvilahti (Finnish Literature Society) and Elina Rahimova (Institute of World Literature, Moscow, Russian Academy of Science) pick up the theme of adaptations of mythic traditions to a modern milieu in the case of Lemminkäinen of Finno-Karelian kalevalaic poetry, and employ this discussion as a springboard for exploring the problematics of comparative study in attempting to open the *longue durée* of a tradition's history. Harvilahti and Rahimova open by contrasting Elias Lönnrot adaptation of Lemminkäinen into *Kalevala* for Romantic and nationalist ends with the life of this figure in the oral epic tradition, and then turn to outline diverse typological parallels in other cultures that have held the often deceptive promise of illuminating the background or origins of Lemminkäinen's epic and tragic death.

Clive Tolley (University of Turku) advances further into the problems of comparative research, examining the unexpected course taken by a mythic motif associated with Uralic traditions, and transferred from god to god prior to its emergence in Norse Germanic mythology. Tolley raises important questions about how we think about cultural history and myths as cultural heritage.

Vladimir Napolskikh (Udmurt State University) closes the section with his vast survey of a world-creation myth, contextualizing the Uralic tradition in a much broader frame. Napolskikh correlates the cultural distribution of the myth with genetic markers to propose a correspondence between cultural practices of mythological narrative transmission and genetic ethnic heritage.

Sampo

The second part of the collection, comprised of four articles, addresses diverse mythic discourses that intersect around a single, dynamic mythic image. Mythic images are perhaps the most central, fundamental and most richly contested elements in mythic discourses, and the object called *sampo* in Finno-Karelian mythology is perhaps the most mysterious and extensively discussed mythic image in all of Uralic mythologies. These articles variously address the dynamism and metamorphoses of this image in living cultural contexts, its *longue durée*, and also that of figures and narratives attached to it.

Lotte Tarkka (University of Helsinki) opens the discussion with an exploration of how the mysterious *sampo* functioned in the mythology and poetry of Viena Karelia. Tarkka's synchronic focus emphasizes the dynamism of this mythic image as a social resource in both broad social processes as well as in personal and potentially unique imaginal interpretations.

Veikko Anttonen (University of Turku) turns from this synchronic dynamism to a conceptual and semantic approach to the contents of mythological and religious terms. Anttonen offers a valuable overview of the debate surrounding the *sampo*, addressing it as a symbol at the intersection of recorded evidence and its historical roots, and he lays out an approach to the *sampo* as a cultural and semiotic phenomenon.

Pekka Hakamies (University of Turku) shifts attention from the *sampo* as an object to the figure of Ilmarinen, the mythic smith who is its creator, with a look at the associated technology identified with this figure. Hakamies assesses impacts of the introduction of iron-working technologies on Finno-Karelian mythology and examines the mythic discourse engendered by new technologies related to utopian fantasies.

Frog (University of Helsinki) draws the section to a close by advancing from the mythic image of the *sampo* and figure that creates it to the system of narrative material

within which these appear, looking at the role of narrative as a tool for the construction, negotiation and manipulation of images and figures in mythic discourses. Frog develops long-term perspectives to highlight the stratified transformations that provided the mythology with renewed currency in changing cultural contexts before turning to a rich stratum of Germanic models and the social-historical processes through which they were engaged to produce a unique mythological cycle.

Gender, Genre and Mythic Patterns

The third part of the collection turns from intersections of mythic discourses surrounding a central mythic image to distinctions and divisions of such discourses connected with fundamental distinctions within a culture. "Gender, Genre and Mythic Patterns" consists of four articles addressing variation at the intersection of gender and genre, with considerations of patterns emergent within corpora across genres and cultural practices.

Eila Stepanova (University of Helsinki) opens the section with a discussion of laments, a women's genre found across Finno-Ugric cultures, reconnecting with the opening theme of gods through a case study of the mythic being or beings referred to as *syndyzet* in Karelian laments. Stepanova examines this term's use by lament sub-genre correlated with kalevalaic poetry and other evidence to reveal alternative mythologies associated with the women's tradition in which archaic vernacular conceptions of a Great *Synty* evolved differently.

Galina Mišarina (University of Helsinki) builds on the introduction to laments with a treatment of a special Komi genre in which the lament tradition is employed as an incantation to expel pests. Mišarina opens by addressing the problematics of approaching the genre of this tradition before turning to a discussion of alternative uses of full ritual patterns as a form of mythic discourse.

Irina Il'ina (Komi Scientific Centre) and Oleg Uljašev (Komi Scientific Centre) expand the examination of Komi traditions to offer an overview of mythic patterns associated with gender in Komi-Zyrjan culture. Il'ina and Uljašev offer perspectives on myths, magic and beliefs revealing two, co-existing cultural strata each bound to a gender, neither of which predominates over the other.

Vera Survo (University of Helsinki) concludes the section with an overview of mythic images represented in Karelian embroideries – an area of women's cultural competence comparable to lamenting – and their role in the ritual life of the community. Vera Survo provides comparisons and contrasts to the embroidery traditions of other cultures in the region and outlines aspects of the development of traditions related to embroideries in the modern era.

Place, Space and Time

The concluding part of *Mythic Discourses* narrows still further to consider socially constructed realities in space and time through cultural practices in "Place, Space and Time". These five articles build on preceding discussions in examinations of the role of mythic discourses to inform and construct basic understandings of the world where beliefs, location, narration and/or ritual meet. The closing contributions bring discussion full circle by returning to the theme of gods, this time in relation to sacred sites and ritual practice, and to cultural contacts and the *longue durée* of mythic images in the construction of the landscape.

Karina Lukin (University of Helsinki) opens the discussion with narrative traditions concerning the landscape among the Nenets in the present day, focusing on the traditions surrounding the death of the last shaman in a local community. Lukin situates narrations of this event between belief traditions and social realities on the one hand, as well as between the Soviet construction of the 'last shaman' as a modern mythic image and vernacular conceptions of the transition to the modern era on the other.

Arno Survo (University of Helsinki) turns attention to the multiple valuations and conflicting tendencies in the study of vernacular religion and traditions in Ingria. Arno Survo illustrates this discussion of the ideological attitudes of researchers and their construction of Ingria as a cultural area through the example of discourse surrounding

an enigmatic multilingual manuscript found in St. Petersburg.

Aado Lintrop (Estonian Literary Museum) returns to broad comparative perspectives, surveying typological parallels in the relationship of particular beliefs and uses of certain genres to conceptions of cyclic time in Finno-Ugric cultures. Concentrating on Estonian and Udmurt traditions, Lintrop offers insights into relationships of cultural practices to conceptions of time and space in the negotiation of boundaries of and encounters with the otherworld.

Nadežda Šutova (Udmurt Institute for History, Language and Literature) draws this section back to the themes introduced in the opening of the collection, addressing of several lesser-known gods of the Udmurts. Šutova begins her discussion with a variety of beliefs and cultural practices associated with these figures before turning to a case study on sacred sites surrounding a particular Udmurt village.

In the concluding article of the collection, Arja Ahlqvist (University of Helsinki) presents a survey of her extensive fieldwork and research on the so-called 'Blue Stone' as a site in living landscapes. Ahlqvist draws together many themes addressed in earlier articles as she unearths the background of this phenomenon, showing that in some regions these sacred stones were assimilated by Slavic groups from now-extinct Finno-Ugric cultures and arguing that the distribution of the 'Blue Stone' tradition combines with other evidence to suggest a potentially Finno-Ugric heritage.

Mythic Discourses

Although the individual articles often focus primarily on traditions in a single Uralic culture, these articles open a discourse with one another – a discourse which can only become fully realized through the reader. Together, the articles of *Mythic Discourses* allow the discussions of each part of the collection and also of the collection as a whole to offer a much richer and more dynamic perspective on Uralic cultures, both historically and in the present day, than any one article could possibly accomplish alone.

PhD Projects

The Saga Outlaw: Polysemy of a Category of Marginality in the Sagas of the Icelanders (working title)

Joonas Ahola, University of Helsinki

Research project undertaken for the completion of a degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Folklore Studies, Department of Philosophy, History, Culture and Art Studies, University of Helsinki; thesis scheduled for submission in early of 2013. Supervisors: Academician Anna-Leena Siikala; Docent Lauri Harvilahti.

This doctoral dissertation discusses the meanings of the social phenomenon of outlawry, in 13th (and 14th) century Iceland as a traditional category utilized in depictions of the past in the literary genre of the *Íslendingasǫgur* ['Sagas of the Icelanders']. Outlawry, as an extreme and marginalizing sanction that affected an individual, possessed a vast semantic potential in medieval Icelandic culture.

Outlawry in the Sagas of the Icelanders has been discussed in scholarly literature mainly in connection with the most famous outlaws, the heroes of the Outlaw Sagas. The phenomenon has been more generally described in several key articles (Amory 1992; Turville-Petre 1977) and considered in the course of wider studies of the social history of medieval Iceland (e.g. Heusler 1911; Andersson & Miller 1989; Miller

1991). In this dissertation, outlawry of the Commonwealth Iceland and its narrative accounts in the Sagas of the Icelanders are studies with focus on the different potential meanings that these accounts had for the saga authors and for their contemporary audience.

Outlawry, banishing a person from the protection of the law, was in itself a central element of the society of the Icelandic Commonwealth, which was largely built upon the principle of law. This sanction had strong symbolic charge already at the initial settlement of Iceland; beginning from the earliest historical accounts (e.g. *Íslendingabók* from the 12th century), numerous texts emphasize that a large share of the most respected settlers had been banished from Norway as outlaws. (See e.g. Hastrup 1990.)

Outlawry is concretized in sagas through the narrative characters of outlaws. These figures appear in numerous roles from heroes to villains. In this study, the outlawed characters examined are categorized according to the outcome of outlawry into fortunate and unfortunate outlawry, a division not only encouraged by the material itself but one that also provides, together with another variable – the attitude shown towards the characters in narration – an analytical pair that appears to be relevant and applicable to the Sagas of the Icelanders and also to other contemporary material. The accounts of outlawry in the Sagas of the Icelanders present narrative conventions that stand beyond the roles of the individual outlaws. The most recognizable of these can be described as traditional motifs. These conventions reflect crystallized contemporary collective conceptions about outlawry. These conceptions do not represent the period depicted in the sagas (the 'Saga Age'), nor the time when the sagas were written, which many studies of Icelandic social history have conceived to be as quite similar (e.g. Miller 1991; Jochens 1995). These conceptions rather reflect an imaginary reality that leaned upon both historical tradition and the prevailing circumstances in the period in which the sagas were written; these factors directed the observation and structuring of the narrative reality, as well as reception of the historical tradition in the sagas.

The meaning of outlawry in a saga narrative is primarily informed by legal texts and the consequences of outlawry that these texts imply. On the one hand, outlawry was conceived as a juridical state. (Lárusson 1958.) On the other hand, the appearance of outlawry in the sagas was determined by the substance and conventions of the textual genre in question. In this study, special attention is given to the function of outlaws and outlawry in the typical narrative structures of the sagas. These narrative structures are perceived as structures of expectation, in the sense of reception study (e.g. Jauss 1982), against which the outlaw characters and their actions were expressed and interpreted.

Given the multitude of uses of outlawry in the Sagas of the Icelanders, it is tempting to seek explanations for its narrative use outside of the sagas themselves. This study looks for semantic connections with other contemporary literary expressions in evidence of narrative conventions connected to outlawry in the Sagas of the Icelanders, and in evidence of the fundamental essence of outlawry, rejection and banishment. Such appearances in mythological and clerical texts and in the conceptions behind them, in heroic texts both in prose and poetic form, in the Kings' Sagas and in the Contemporary Sagas explain numerous accounts of outlawry in the Sagas of the Icelanders, although not necessarily as intertextual references but rather as expressions of the same semantic complex realized in differing forms. Interpretations made on such an allusive or referential basis do not challenge or question interpretations made solely on the basis of the Sagas of the Icelanders, but rather these additional appearances give the interpretations made on the basis of the texts of the Sagas of the Icelanders depth as expressions of traditional conceptions surrounding the semantics of outlawry. In order to try to reach for the meaning behind an expression such as outlawry in an unobtainable period in the past, one cannot but attempt to take advantage of all available resources.

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PLACES

Folklore Studies at the University of Helsinki: A Current View

Pertti Anttonen, University of Helsinki

The interdisciplinary journal *RMN Newsletter* is hosted by the university discipline of Folklore Studies in the Department of Philosophy, History, Culture and Art Studies, in the Faculty of Arts, at the University of Helsinki. The history of this discipline goes back to 1888, when Julius Krohn, Professor of Finnish Language and Literature, the 'father' of the internationally renowned Historical-Geographic or Finnish Method, met his untimely death, and his son, Kaarle Krohn, awarded earlier that year the title of Docent in Finnish and Comparative Folk Poetry Research, was appointed the caretaker of his father's position as acting Professor Finnish Language and Literature. Ten years later, in 1898, Kaarle Krohn was nominated Extraordinary Personal Professor of Finnish and Comparative Folk Poetry Research, and another ten years later, in 1908, the chair was made permanent with Krohn as full professor. In 2013, the discipline can celebrate its 125th anniversary.

The discipline of folklore studies constituted a department of its own until 1998, in which year it was incorporated into the then-established Institute for Cultural Research. A much larger administrative entity called the Department of Philosophy, History, Culture and Art Studies came into existence in the beginning of 2010. In the beginning of the new millennium the folklore personnel comprised of a half a dozen people, including both teachers (two professors plus junior teachers/researchers) and office assistants, but today there are only two permanently employed teachers (one professor and one senior lecturer) together with an office assistant (called an amanuensis) whom the discipline of folklore studies shares with the discipline of ethnology. From the beginning of 2013, folklore and ethnology will occupy the same office premises at the Topelia complex of the City Centre Campus.

Despite the severe cuts in funding and the number of personnel in the past few years, folklore study continues its existence as a unit of teaching and research. Over the last two decades, the discipline has brought together a great number of externally-funded researchers, both post-doctoral researchers and doctoral students, to constitute an energetic research community. In 2012, in conjunction with the international evaluation of research at the University of Helsinki, the Rector decided to give a four-year funding allocation to some of the most competitive research communities in the evaluation; the one comprising of scholars in folklore studies, called Cultural Meanings and Vernacular Genres (CMVG) was among these.

The constellation of this research community of 21 scholars, led by senior lecturer Pertti Anttonen, characterizes well the current trends in folklore studies at the University of Helsinki. Combining a wide range of research topics, the group's research basically concerns vernacular genres, locally emergent forms of verbal expression that are oral and traditional, or literary with close correlations to oral performance. The genres under scrutiny are epic and lyrical runo-songs, myths and mythic-historical discourse, laments, incantations, rhymed couplets, proverbs, folk tales, folk beliefs, oral and written narratives, jokes, popular autobiographies, and handwritten newspapers. Research extends from present-day Finnish society to the history of traditional poetic and narrative practices in the Finno-Karelian, Balto-Finnic, and Northern Russian cultural areas in the 19th and 20th centuries, Finno-

Ugric minority populations in Northern Russia and Western Siberia, as well as medieval Icelandic, Norse-Scandinavian and Germanic cultures.

The main focus in the analysis of vernacular genres by the members of this group lies in their social use and cultural meaning, in the oral circulation and transmission of textualized and formalized discourse, and their communicative, ideological and cultural political role in society. Despite the given focus on orality, no sharp distinction is drawn against literacy. In fact, the culture of books and writing is unavoidably present in the study of oral communication, since the documentation of oral performances cannot escape the conventions of writing and print in the textual representation of orality.

In addition to the CMVG, scholars in folklore studies also constitute more targeted research groups, and as such, seek for full-time research funding. Recently the most successful of these has been the project called Oral Poetry, Mythic Knowledge, and Vernacular Imagination: Interfaces of Individual Expression and Collective Traditions in Pre-modern Northeast Europe, which is funded by the Academy of Finland between 2012 and 2016. The leader of this project is Professor Lotte Tarkka, with Academician of Science and Professor Emerita Anna-Leena Siikala as academic consultant, and the other members being Frog, Karina Lukin and Eila Stepanova. In terms of genre, the project focuses on Kalevala-metric poetry and lament poetry in North Finnic areas (mainly Russian Karelia), early Germanic poetries, and Nenets epic and shamanic songs. Thematically the project focuses on the question of how oral poetry functions as a site of vernacular imagination in the application and communication of mythic knowledge. The members of the project support the discipline – and the department at large – with their respective contributions to teaching activities.

The Academy of Finland is also funding (between 2011 and 2016) the research by docent Kirsti Salmi-Niklander, who is studying authorial and narrative strategies in oral and literary expressions in small communities. Her research is comprised of three case studies, two concerning Finland between the 1850s and early 20th century, and the third one concerning two Finnish-Canadian and Finnish-American immigrant communities in the early 20th century. The analysis rests on hand-written newspapers, written reminiscences, oral history interviews and printed publications. The Academy funding entitles Salmi-Niklander to the title of Academy Research Fellow, as well as allows her to bring her contribution to the otherwise limited teaching resources in folklore studies.

In addition to seeking for funding from the Academy of Finland and independent foundations, researchers in folklore studies have in recent years looked for increased cooperation with the Finnish Literature Society. The Society runs a policy of strengthening their research output and, among other things, offers its research infrastructure to externally funded doctoral students and post-doctoral researchers who are not affiliated with a university by employment. There are also targeted research groups, both in operation and in planning, that are administered by the Society but function in close cooperation with university departments.

One of the currently most notable forms of cooperation between the Finnish Literature Society and folklore studies at the University of Helsinki is the highly interdisciplinary series of Register colloquia. The first colloquium, entitled Register: Intersections of Language, Context and Communication, took place in the premises of the Society in 23rd–25th May, 2012. The next conference, entitled Register II: Emergence, Change and Obsolescence: An international colloquium on meaning and human expression, will take place in the same venue on 22nd–24th May 2013.

With its many research groups and projects, as well as the Register colloquia and other similar activities, the discipline of folklore studies at the University of Helsinki continues to stand up to its reputation as one of the key places of folklore research in the world. However, despite a number of widely-known and influential scholars and their works, folklore studies in Helsinki – and

Finnish folklore scholarship in general, except perhaps for that of the late Lauri Honko – has for the last decades been, on the main, on the receiving rather than the giving end when it comes to international folklore theory. This is understandable as Finnish folklorists have a national commitment to provide for Finnish and Finno-Ugric cultural history and heritage as represented in and by oral traditions. A growing understanding of the importance of theory formation and theory discussions will eventually change course here, and *RMN Newsletter* may in fact serve this goal perfectly. The discipline will also take a more active role in building student and teacher exchange relations in the future and allocate at least some of its teaching activities to English. These steps will consolidate Helsinki's position as a great meeting place in global folklore studies.

JOURNALS

Slověne: International Journal of Slavic Studies

Fjodor Uspenskij, Institute of Slavic Studies (Moscow), Russian Academy of Science, and Higher School of Economics

I am pleased to announce that the first issue of the *Slověne: International Journal of Slavic Studies* is now available on-line at http://www.slovene.ru.

Slověne (ISSN 2304-0785) is the new peer-reviewed journal dedicated to aspects of Slavic philology and neighbouring fields launched by The Institute for Slavic Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow). Traditionally, the Institute has been doing research not only on Slavic, but also on Baltic and Balkan philology, as well as looking on Slavic in a broader areal and typological context, and this is reflected in the thematic attention of the journal. The journal will publish papers in Slavic languages and in the major European languages: English, German, French and Italian. The journal will come out in two issues per year both in hard copies and on-line with open-access availability at http://www.slovene.ru/.

The Editor-in-Chief of *Slověne* is Fjodor B. Uspenskij. Members of the editorial board include: Iskra Hristova-Shomova, Angel Nikolov, Maria Yovcheva (Bulgaria); Milan Mihaljević, Mate Kapović (Croatia); Vaclav Čermak (Czech Republic); Roland Marti, Björn Wiemer (Germany); András Zoltán (Hungary); Marcello Garzaniti (Italy); Jos Schaeken (Netherlands); Peter M. Arkadiev, Alexander I. Grishchenko, Roman N. Krivko, Sergey L. Nikolaev, Maxim M. Makartsev, Philip R. Minlos, Alexander M. Moldovan, Tatjana V. Rozhdestvenskaja, Anatolij A. Turilov, Boris A. Uspenskij, Fr. Michael Zheltov, Victor M. Zhivov (Russia); Jasmina Grković-Major, Tatjana Subotin-Golubović (Serbia); Robert Romanchuk, Alan Timberlake, William Veder and Alexander Zholkovsky (USA).

The editors urge authors to submit papers in major European languages to editorial@slovene.ru and slavs.journal@gmail.com. Further information on submission guidelines is available at http://www.slovene.ru/style_guide.pdf.

We hope that the journal will become a forum of interaction and mutual enrichment for the Russian, East European and Western philological traditions.

CALLS FOR PAPERS

Limited Sources, Boundless Possibilities: Textual Scholarship and the Challenges of Oral and Written Texts

A Special Issue of RMN Newsletter (December 2013)

Textual scholarship is an umbrella term for disciplines that deal with describing, transcribing, editing or annotating texts and physical documents. It has traditionally consisted of fields such as textual criticism, genetic criticism, analytical bibliography, stemmatology, paleography and codicology. As an interdisciplinary field of research, textual scholarship brings together historians, folklorists, literary critics, linguists and musicologists that are interested in the genesis, transmission and variation of oral or written texts.

The objectives and methods of textual scholars vary a great deal, but they share common challenges of interpreting and representing limited sources – fragmentary documents, discontinuous recordings, fading voices, incoherent manuscripts and insufficient or contradictory data on the contexts of producing and transmitting texts.

We would like to enhance interdisciplinary discussion and to provide researchers with a better methodological understanding of the challenges of limited sources in editing oral and written texts and of studying their transmission and variance in a special issue of *RMN Newsletter*, the international open-access bi-annual publication of Folklore Studies / Department of Philosophy, History, Culture and Art Studies, University of Helsinki (ISSN 1799-4497). Our publication promotes cross-disciplinary discussion on diachronic, comparative and source-critical treatments of cultural expression across diverse and intersecting disciplines.

The special issue on textual scholarship calls for both research articles (up to 10 pages + works cited) and reviews (up to 5 pages + works cited). The research articles will be peer reviewed. The articles may treat various materials (e.g. manuscripts, folklore, letters, diaries, recordings) and cover themes such as:

- Tracing processes of textualization in oral poetry
- Lost sources
- The scholarly editing of incoherent sources
- Annotating gaps: interpreting illegible, invisible or inaudible sections
- Limited sources in stemmatalogy
- Challenges of historical and comparative methods in folklore studies
- Describing obscure ethnomusical data
- Digitalizing and encoding fragmentary texts
- Overlaps and limitations in digital editions and databases

The themes may be discussed through concrete case studies or as broader comparative investigations. Theoretical discussions are also welcome.

If you are interested in participating in this international and cross-disciplinary discussion, please submit a 500 word abstract of your proposed contribution, with your name, affiliation and contact information to the issue editors Karina Lukin (University of Helsinki) at karina.lukin@helsinki.fi or Sakari Katajamäki (Finnish Literature Society) at sakari.katajamaki@finlit.fi.

Deadline for proposal submission is Monday, January 15th, 2013. The completed 3–10 page submission (+ works cited) will have a deadline of May 1st, 2013.

Register II, An International Colloquium on Meaning and Human Expression: Emergence, Change and Obsolescence

22nd–24th May 2013, Helsinki, Finland

'Register' originated as a term in linguistics for contextual variation in language, or language as it is used in a particular communicative situation. This term and concept has become important for addressing communication through practice in several intersecting disciplines, such as folkloristics, linguistics and linguistic anthropology, being used with varying fields of inclusion and exclusion, ranging from the purely verbal level of communication to all features which have the capacity to signify (props, gestures, etc.). The Helsinki Register colloquia have been organized to bring together representatives of diverse perspectives in order to open cross-disciplinary discussion of the term and concept 'register', including among scholars who address the topic without using the specific term.

Register II sets out to explore interfaces of social, societal and semiotic processes that *a*) give rise to registers as meaningful constellations of communicative features; *b*) affect existing registers and their constituent features; and *c*) lead registers to become obsolete for certain functions or to drop out of use. We invite presentations on both synchronically oriented research and on long-term historical perspectives; on rapidly developing or short-lived registers (e.g. school-yard slang, 'facebookese') as well as on registers characterized by social stability and slow-changing structures (e.g. 'Biblical' language, oral epic singing). We hope that diverse presentations from different disciplinary perspectives on the life of registers as social practice will prove reciprocally informative and produce new insights and understandings.

Keynote speakers at the colloquium are:

- Douglas Biber, Regents Professor of Applied Linguistics, Northern Arizona University, USA
- Charles Briggs, Alan Dundes Distinguished Professor of Folklore and Professor of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley, USA
- Ruqaiya Hasan, Emeritus Professor of Linguistics, Macquarie University, Australia
- Timo Kaartinen, Adjunct Professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Helsinki, Finland
- Lars Boje Mortensen, Professor of Cultural History of Antiquity and the Middle Ages, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark

If you would like to take part in this event by presenting a paper, please send an abstract of no more than 500 words to Ulla Savolainen (ulla.savolainen@helsinki.fi) by 6th January 2013.

Papers presentations should be twenty minutes in length allowing ten minutes for discussion and accessible to participants from other fields for cross-disciplinary discussion. If you would like to participate without presenting a paper, please let us know by March 15th, and also whether you would be interested in moderating a session. A participation fee of 50€ covers lunches and receptions.

"Register II" is organized by Folklore Studies of the University of Helsinki and by the Academy of Finland project Oral and Literary Culture in the Medieval and Early Modern Baltic Sea Region of the Finnish Literature Society.

For more information on this event, please visit our website at:
http://www.helsinki.fi/folkloristiikka/register/

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