ARCHAEOLOGIA
BALTICA 15

ARCHAEOLOGY, RELIGION, AND FOLKLORE IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

Edited by Daiva Vaitkevičienė and
Vykintas Vaitkevičius

Klaipėda University Press

MOKSLAS • EKONOMIKA • SANGLAUDA
EUROPOS SĄJUNGA
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Leidžiama pagal projektą „Periodinių mokslo leidinių leidyba“,
projekto kodas VP1-3.2-ŠMM-02-V-02-002

KLAIPĖDA UNIVERSITY

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Klaipėda, 2011

UDK 902/904
Ar 46

Archaeologia Baltica has been on EBSCO's Current Abstracts and TOC Premier Database Coverage List since 2007.

Articles appearing in this journal are peer-reviewed by either internal or external reviewers.

Archaeologia Baltica volume 15 was prepared by Klaipėda University Institute of Baltic Sea Region History and Archaeology.

Volume editors: Daiva Vaitkevičienė and Vykintas Vaitkevičius
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Cover illustration: A brooch from Laiviai (Kretinga district)

ISSN 1392-5520

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PREFACE

From 2 to 4 May 2008, the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore and the public institution Vita Antiqua held an international conference in Kernavė under the title 'Natural Holy Places of the Baltic Region According to Archaeological and Folklore Data'.

The conference was part of the series of events devoted to the issue of natural holy places which had started in 2007 at the initiative of Estonian archaeologists and researchers into folklore. More participants attended the Lithuanian conference than had attended any of the events up till then. The conference covered a wide range of academic disciplines and issues. Among the 18 researchers from eight countries attending, there were highly experienced and well-known professionals, as well as young researchers still pursuing their doctoral studies. There were archaeologists and folklore experts, and researchers in the fields of religion and the history of culture.

The 15 reports presented at the conference and two further reports made available on stands covered the northern, eastern and southern parts of the Baltic Sea region: Finland, Estonia, Russia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Poland and Germany. Participants accepted the term 'natural holy places' as a working term for the conference, covering all and any holy or cult places in the natural world (such as rocks, stones, trees, water bodies), which are normally of natural origin. Rock carvings and cup-marked stones found in Finland represented perhaps the oldest period, the Stone Age and the Bronze Age, whereas stones with sharp-bottomed

A moment during the conference in Kernavė (photograph by Ramunė Steponavičiūtė).

bowls that are common in the nucleus of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 14th to the 16th centuries represented the youngest holy places.

The reports presented to the conference, some of which are published in this issue of *Archaeologia Baltica* (the rest have not yet been prepared for publication), included an initial survey of types of natural holy places, discussed statistical data, assessed the current situation of studies of natural holy places, and introduced both current and completed research projects. As Dr Tõnno Jonuks from the Museum of Estonian Literature noted, it was amazing that both the traditions of ancient natural holy places covering several countries and questions and knowledge related to the modern study of them were essentially the same. These evident points in common united participants in discussions on terms and notions, methods, and the interpretation of results.

The range of issues in archaeological studies related to natural holy places was touched upon in most of the reports, by Tiina Äikäs (Oulu), Tõnno Jonuks (Tartu), Irena Kaminskaitė (Vilnius), Juha Ruohonen (Turku), Rudi Simek (Bonn), Leszek Słupecki (Rzeszow), Vykintas Vaitkevičius (Klaipėda), and Heiki Valk (Tartu). As could be expected, one characteristic of natural holy places across the entire region is the individual finds dating from different periods which are usually found accidentally. A key issue that poses numerous questions is their interpretation and the possibility to build up a picture of rituals of the past, at least in part. On the other hand, it was very important to see natural holy places as an indivisible element of the cultural landscape of the Baltic region, an element closely related to places where people lived, buried their dead, and engaged in economic activity. It is clear that interaction between the ancient religion and Christianity in every cultural region is characterised by certain local features. However, the main element in the process of the study of the origin and use of natural holy places from this point of view is the viability and continuity of the traditions.

The use of folklore data in archaeological studies was another key aspect of the reports presented to the conference. Marge Konsa (Tartu) announced the results of a search for new archaeological monuments carried out in the Estonian area of lakes known for the numerous legends about them. Professor Juris Urtāns (Riga) reviewed the results of aerial surveys of lakes in southeast Latvia known for legends about them. It became evident that cooperation between archaeology and folklore was very important and promising.

In some cases, an analysis of natural holy places was based on historical sources and folklore material. Alaksiej Dziermant (Minsk), Sandis Laime (Riga), Nijolė Laurinkienė (Vilnius), Elena Tianina (Moscow) and Anna Wickholm (Helsinki) have shown that specific place legends about natural holy places are known in all countries, although in different amounts and different ways. The most common questions related to this phenomenon are the origins of motifs, their dating, and sources.

Professor Juris Urtans' report was especially expressive (photograph by Irena Kaminskaitė).

During the conference, much attention was paid to giving participants opportunities to learn about Lithuanian natural holy places. They had a chance to see the archaeological monuments of Kernavė and the neighbouring village of Grabijolai, the Old Town of Vilnius and the Park of Hills (Kalnų parkas) and the crypt of the cathedral, and the Vilnius and Širvintos districts (including a visit to the oak tree and burial mounds of Ardiškis, the stones of Liukonys, the stone with a footprint at Gelvonai, the Kupolis hill at Pypliai, the Alkupis at Stavarygala and Šventeţeris, and the site of the Kukaveitis sacred grove near the village of Gudulinė).

Part of the conference was an educational project presented by Sedula, a creative folklore group directed by Dr Daiva Steponavičienė. Participants could also see an installation on the subject of sacred water entitled 'Springs in Baltic Culture' by Beatričė Laurinkutė.

The excursion to the site of the Kukaveitis sacred grove (photograph by Irena Kaminskaitė).

The excursion to the sacred oak tree of Ardiškis (in the Širvintos district) (photograph by Irena Kaminskaitė).

From 8 to 10 July 2009, an international conference with the title 'The Baltic World-View: From Mythology to Folklore' was held in Vilnius. It was organised by the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore, in cooperation with the Centre de recherches sur l'imaginaire, Université Stendhal, Grenoble.

The cultural ties connecting Lithuania with France have historically been associated with the poet Oscar Milosz or Algirdas Julien Greimas, a professor of semiotics who promoted Lithuanian culture in France. This time, however, these ties took a different turn, and brought from Grenoble Philippe Walter and Christian Abry, whose studies focus on Lithuanian mythology and folklore. It should also be pointed out that the conference was held at the time that the country was commemorating the 1,000th anniversary of the first mention of its name in written sources, and it emphasised the aspiration to show the ancient culture of Lithuania in the context of other cultures.

The main object of the conference was to look at the Baltic world-view as part of the intangible heritage in the Baltic Sea region, which extends across the borders of individual linguistic areas. The conference aimed to overcome the problems caused by the tendency to analyse the Baltic world-view from a philological point of view (by focusing on linguistically related cultures), a tendency that formed in the 19th century and still exists today. The problem is not relevant in archaeology, which studies archaeological monuments, landscape and artefacts, but is of high relevance in philological and ethnological disciplines. In the course of dividing cultures into groups from a linguistic point of view, some differentiation occurred in scientific works between Balts belonging to the Indo-European group of languages (Lithuanians, Latvians and Prussians), and the culture of the Estonians, Karelians, Finns and other nations belonging to the Finno-Ugric linguistic group. Methodological obstacles resulting from linguistic differentiation interfere with study of the folklore, mythology and world-view of cultures of the Baltic region as the intangible heritage of an integral cultural region. Therefore, one of the most important objects of the conference was to transcend linguistic boundaries and bring together researchers of Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, Finnish and other cultures.

Another important task is to study the Baltic world-view as a cultural phenomenon manifested in different forms (such as folklore, language, religion and mythology), and to bring together researchers from different fields. This is also very relevant, especially in view of

At the Centre of Europe Open Air Museum conference hall (photograph by Vytautas Tumėnas).

the fact that interdisciplinary and complex studies of Baltic cultures are far from being numerous.

Another important aspect of the conference was the fact that it brought together researchers in Lithuanian culture, mythology and folklore from various foreign countries (France, Great Britain, the United States, Finland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia). Lithuanian material was selected as the main subject, or as an object for comparison, in a number of reports presented. A total of 26 reports were made, and five poster sessions were presented at plenary sessions. Two more reports made at the event were held within the framework of the conference at the French Cultural Centre.

The work of the conference included the formulation of several important study concepts (as seen from the methodological positions of France, Great Britain, the United States and the Baltic region), and an analysis of different aspects of spiritual culture (the sources, methods and results of the reconstruction of a world-view, how myths functioned in the Baltic region, Baltic mythology as seen from an Indo-European point of view, indigenous cultural values, the sacral landscape).

The reports delivered covered different contexts of the Baltic world-view and represented different methodological points of view. Considerable attention was paid to research into mythology and religion. Emily Lyle (Edinburgh) analysed the Prussian triad of gods described in Simon Grunau's *Chronicle* in the 16th century, and interpreted it on the basis of categories of Indo-European mythical thinking. Philippe Walter (Grenoble) analysed a Lithuanian myth that was written down in 1261 about Sovijus, who established the custom in the Lithuanian state of burning the dead. He compared this myth with the Celtic myth about Finn and the Germanic myth about the giant Fafnir, and the wild boar killed by Sovijus with the salmon and the dragon, primordial creatures of Indo-European myths. Rolandas Kregždys (Vilnius) presented reconstructions of several Prussian gods, and explained the importance of linguistic data reconstructing the world-view of the ancient Balts. Valdis Rūsiņš (Riga) analysed the impact of cultural contacts between Balts and Finns on Baltic religion, especially the cult of the Baltic god of Thunder (in Latvian *Perkons*, in Lithuanian *Perkūnas*) and its female line, the cult of the god's daughters and daughters-in-law. Ergo-Hart Västrik (Tartu) analysed the cult of Peko, the god of fertility, in traditional Seto religion. In the late 19th and early 20th century, wooden dolls were made and special rites were performed in the worship of this deity. Teuvo Laitila (Joensuu) analysed the healing practices of the Orthodox community of Border Karelia, and attempted to determine whether G. Foster's theory, according to which a mythological

The French mythologists Philippe Walter (right) and Christian Abry at the Centre of Europe Open Air Museum (photograph by Vykintas Vaitkevičius).

notion of 'limited good' prevails in a closed community, was valid there.

Daiva Vaitkevičienė (Vilnius) analysed the Baltic libation, which has a large number of typological parallels in both the Indo-European religion and the religions of other cultures. A study of ritual objects was presented by Vykintas Vaitkevičius (Klaipėda) in his report on the terminology of the Baltic religion. He delivered a report on a Baltic term used for the image of a deity: Lithuanian *stabas*, Latvian *stabs*, Prussian *stabis*, and Swedish *stav*.

The notion of a natural Lithuanian religion was discussed in two reports. Eglutė Trinkauskaitė (Syracuse, USA) characterised the methodological concept of a natural religion, and revealed, through mushroom-gathering, berry-picking and beekeeping practices, features of the indigenous religion in modern Lithuanian culture. Jonas Trinkūnas (Vilnius) discussed the ethical principles of the ancient Lithuanian religion and their cultural continuity.

A large number of speakers analysed folklore narratives from the Baltic region. Frog (London/Helsinki) analysed the general mythology of the Baltic region on the basis of the myth about the theft of the thunder-instrument (AT 1148B). Jūratė Šlekonytė (Vilnius) reviewed the narrative of the wild hunt in Lithuanian folklore. Leszek Słupecki (Rzeszow) compared Baltic and Slavic images of werewolves. Christian Abry (Grenoble) searched for parallels between Lithuanian mermaids (*nėrovės*) and *naroves*, the aquatic creatures known in the Savoy, Vallée d'Aoste and Piedmont regions. Lina Būgienė (Vilnius) analysed *aitvaras*, the mythical being of Lithuanian legends, and compared it with the supernatural milk thief found in other folklore traditions of the Baltic region. Ülo Valk (Tartu)

analysed Estonian ghost stories, and drew attention to the fact that these stories reflect social changes.

Reports by three folklore researchers were studies of music and poetics. Eila Stepanova (Helsinki) analysed the world-view of lamentation songs, and common poetic principles of Karelian and Lithuanian lamentation songs. Aušra Žičkienė (Vilnius) presented the main principles of Lithuanian ritual music in her analysis of the layers of ethnic music arranged like geological layers of different historical periods. Jurga Sadauskienė (Vilnius) analysed changes in the portrayal of the flower garden in Lithuanian folk songs: the transformation of poetics from symbolism to aesthetics. Using differences in the portrayal of a flower garden in songs from the 19th and 20th centuries, she revealed changes in the Lithuanian world-view. Another report related to plants was given by Daiva Šeškauskaitė (Kaunas), who emphasised the importance of trees in Lithuanian mythology.

Reports on the cultural landscape were especially interesting and colourful. Andra Simniškytė (Vilnius) analysed the burial mounds from the Roman Period (the first to the fourth century) called 'giants' burial mounds' in northern Lithuania, and discussed their relation to the cult of the ancestors. Andrej Pleterski (Ljubljana) suggested a hypothesis concerning Baltic and Slavic cultural ties, which are reflected in the coincidence of certain Slovenian sacral sites and Lithuanian theonyms. Janis Cepītis (Riga) and Lilija Jakubenoka (Aizkraukle) presented a group of Latvia's sacred stones, capable of spinning yarn or making a dress.

A separate section of the conference was dedicated to methods and sources. Aldis Pūtelis (Riga) discussed problems of criticism of written sources pertaining to the Baltic religion and mythology, and suggested that no clear dividing line between folklore and mythology should be drawn, because today folklore, with all its strengths and weaknesses, is the only source that allows for the objective study of Baltic religion. Toms Ķencis (Riga/Tartu) analysed 20th-century methodological problems encountered in research into Latvian mythology. David Šimeček (Prague) presented a previously unknown manuscript on Baltic mythology by the Czech philologist J.H. Máchal (1855–1939).

Five poster sessions were also presented at the conference. The report by Mare Kõiva and Andres Kuperjanov (Tartu) entitled 'The Moon in Baltic-Finnic Mythology' attracted special attention. It suggested the hypothesis that Baltic and Finnic cosmonyms were much more closely related than those of the Balts and the Slavs. The report by Dovilė Kulakauskienė (Kaunas) discussed modern children's mythology and 'table tapping'. Stormy discussions were provoked by the re-

Visiting the Witch's Armchair in Noreikiškės (in the Prienai district). Sitting: Frog. Standing: Eila Stepanova (third from left), Ülo Valk (fourth from left), Eglutė Trinkauskaitė (fifth from left) and Emily Lyle (sixth from left) (photograph by Daiva Vaitkevičienė).

On the Beižionys hill-fort (Elektrėnai municipality) (photograph by Rasa Kašėtienė).

port by Roman Shirouhov (Kaliningrad/Klaipėda) and Konstantin Skvortsov (Kaliningrad) which presented polychromatic drawings from the 11th and 12th centuries of Prussian saddles found during archaeological research in Alejka (in the Kaliningrad region). Other poster sessions were also related to the applied arts, to a greater or lesser degree: Vytautas Tumėnas (Vilnius) presented interpretations of fabric patterns in contemporary art, and the report by Nijolė Kazlauskienė (Kaunas) focused on bead wreaths, strings of beads, and the image of pearls in Lithuanian folklore.

It should also be mentioned that the conference was held in the Centre of Europe Open Air Museum conference centre, in a pleasant harmony of nature and culture. A separate event within the framework of the conference entitled 'Studies of Myths Today' was held on 8 July at the French Cultural Centre, at which Philippe Walter and Christian Abry spoke about the meanings of myths and their role in the modern world. On 9 July, a concert of ancient Lithuanian polyphonic songs (*sutartinės*) took place at the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore. It was given by Trys Keturiose, a group of polyphonic singers under the leadership of Daiva Vyčinienė. Skirmantas Sasnauskas played improvisations on Lithuanian folk music instruments. On 10 July, there was an excursion to sacred Baltic sites near Prienai, Kaišiadorys and Elektrėnai. During the excursion, Vykintas Vaitkevičius presented the Baltic historical and sacral heritage. The following sites were visited: the hill-fort at Beižionys and the Beižionys group of burial mounds (giants' graves), the King's Mount at Ringailiai and the ritual stone called The Gipsy Lady's Stone, Lake Švenčius (a sacred lake, *Swente Azere*, the first one to be mentioned in Lithuania, in 1384), the ancient settlement area of Nemaitonys (populated since the Late Neolithic), the sacred stone of Nemaitonys, the sacred oak at Užukalnis, and the third to sixth-century archaeological site at Noreikiškės and the Witch's Armchair there.

Volume 15 of *Archaeologia Baltica* contains eight articles based on reports given at the conference 'The Baltic World-view: From Mythology to Folklore'. These articles reflect the main tendencies highlighted at the conference, and represent the present-day situation in studies of the Baltic world-view.

Vykintas Vaitkevičius,
Daiva Vaitkevičienė

Translated by Vidmantas Štilius

I. NATURAL HOLY PLACES IN ARCHAEOLOGY AND FOLKLORE IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

FROM FELL TOPS TO STANDING STONES: SACRED LANDSCAPES IN NORTHERN FINLAND

TIINA ÄIKÄS

Abstract

In this article, I present sacred places in northern Finland. The sacred places differ greatly from those in southern Finland. This is due to the different cultural tradition. Sacred sites in the north can broadly be divided into three groups: terrain formation, natural objects and structures. I concentrate on offering places, called *sieidi* (SaaN), which were used by the ancestors of the modern Sámi. Meat, antlers and metal, and in later times alcohol, were offered in order to gain success at hunting. A prominent feature in *sieidi* places is their heterogeneity and the long tradition of use attached to them.

Key words: sacred landscape, *sieidi*, Sámi, northern Finland.

Introduction

When it comes to types of sacred places, the northernmost part of Finland differs from the rest of the country. The area north of Kuusamo and Rovaniemi is defined by offering sites that were used by the ancestors of the modern Sámi people. There is a clear dominance in their northern distribution, but written records also refer to one offering site as far south as Hyrynsalmi (Itkonen 1946, p.36) (Fig. 1). These Sámi offering sites are called *sieidi*, and they consist of natural objects that are usually unshaped by humans. Offerings of meat, antlers and metal (Itkonen 1948, p.318), and in later times alcohol (Sköld 1999), were given to *sieidi* in order to obtain, for example, success at hunting. They worked as a medium to contact supernatural forces. The dating of *sieidi* sites is difficult, but there are finds from the Iron Age and Medieval times, and there is an oral tradition indicating their use even in the 20th century. I will return to the problem of dating at the end of this article.

Sámi sacred sites can broadly be divided into three classes. According to Christian Carpelan (2003, pp.77-78), these are terrain formations, natural objects and structures. The first group consists of fell tops, rock formations, islands, lakes and headlands. Natural objects are stones, springs, and small caves or clefts. The third group includes carved stubs, erected stones, wooden poles, and stone circles. The last mentioned are objects which have been modified by people. The *sieidi* offering sites usually consist of a rock or a rock formation.

The Sámi people have attracted interest for a long time. Texts from antiquity mention nations that were connected to the Sámi, such as '*fenni*' (Tacitus 46.3), '*phinnoi*' (Ptolemaios II.11.19), '*skrithiphinoi*' (Procopius vi.xv.16-25) and '*screrefennae*' (Jordanes III.21-22). But the ethnic content of these ethnonyms has also attracteded criticism (Wallerström 2006; Hansen, Olsen 2007, pp.45-51; Ojala 2009, p.83). It is misleading to describe past ethnic groups in modern terms. And in the case of the forefathers of the Sámi people and texts from antiquity, the geographical distance between the writers and those described is also great. A more organised collection of information did not begin until the 17th century, when the Swedish Crown ordered priests and missionaries to write down their experiences from Lapland, in order to dispute the rumours of Swedes using Sámi witchcraft in their warfare (Rydving 1995, p.19). The work of priests was later continued by lappologists, who also described the culture from an outsider's point of view (Lehtola 2000, p.157). In Finland, most of the ethnographic data derives from the writings of Paulaharju. Samuli Paulaharju (1875–1944) was a teacher who dedicated his spare time to collecting folklore. He has described *sieidi* offering places in many of his writings, but concentrated on them in his book *Seitoja ja seidan palvontaa* ('*Sieidis* and *sieidi* Worship').

In the early 20th century, Sámi religion and the use of *sieidi* offering sites was often approached from an evolutionistic and animistic perspective (Bäckman, Hultkrantz 1985, p.8). Later, most studies concentrated on identifying and grouping *sieidi* sites, and fitting together ethnographic observations and archaeological finds. Recent studies have aimed at a more holistic view, where offering sites have been studied as part of a wider world-view (Schanche 2000; Mulk 2005; Fossum 2006; Mulk 2009). Also, the connection of the Sámi religion to the environment and subsistence strategies has been stressed (Mulk 1998; Mebius 2003, pp.11-12).

Offerings at *sieidi*

Sieidi offerings were strongly connected to the subsistence strategies of the Sámi. The main purpose of the offerings was to maintain or achieve success at hunting. Other reasons for the offerings were, for example, to help or cure illness, or help during pregnancy (Mebius 2003, p.141). Offerings could take place according to seasonal or yearly cycles, for example, in connection with the autumn slaughter. Other offerings were made during crises, like an epidemic among humans or animals. In some cases, offerings might have taken place as part of daily life in connection with meals, or while passing a *sieidi* place (Mebius 2003, p.141; Rydving 1993, pp.104-107). Offerings could also take place among different groups. There were *sieidi* sites that were used by one person, a family or a *sijdda*, and some *sieidi* sites were visited from far distances (Rydving 1993, pp.104-107; Mulk, Bayliss-Smith 2006, pp.90-91).

Ethnographic evidence describes how different gods were given different animals. For example, Sáráhkka, the goddess related to childbirth, was given female reindeer (Mebius 2003, p.142). The colour of the animal played a role, too (Læstadius 2000 [1845], p.175).

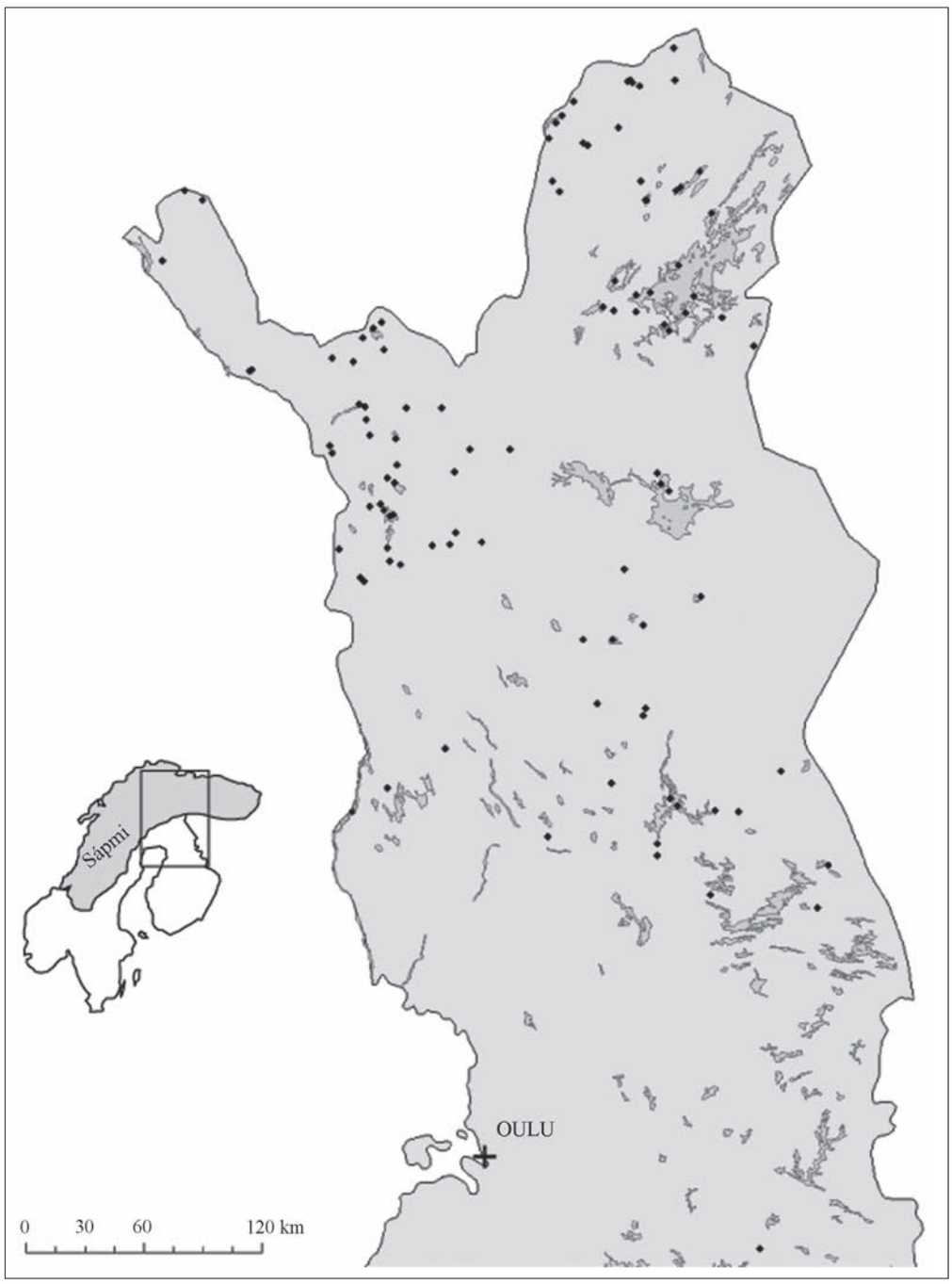

Fig. 1. The distribution of Sámi sacred sites in Finland (drawn by the author).

There were also beliefs concerning the treatment of bones. Written sources from the 17th century onwards emphasise that the bones of the sacrificial animal were not to be broken. But already at the beginning of the 18th century, there are sources telling how among the southern Sámis the meat of the sacrificial animal was eaten together with the marrow from the bones. Split bones have also been found in excavated material from Sweden dating from the 17th and 18th centuries (Högström 1980 [1746/1747], p.191; Zachrisson 1985, pp.87-88; Iregren 1985, p.105). Split bones are also found at *sieidi* sites in Finnish Lapland (Äikäs *et al.* 2009, p.118). Zachrisson (1985, p.94) has suggested that sources might describe what people should have done, not what they did. The careful handling of the bones was related to the thought of the new animal that was to be created from the bones by adding new meat to the skeleton (Mebius 2003, p.143).

The reciprocal relationship between a human and a *sieidi* has been emphasised. According to Audhild Schance (2004, p.5), offerings to *sieidi* should not be seen as sacrifices, but as the return of a gift or a request to take something from nature. If someone was not satisfied with the way the *sieidi* worked, it could be broken. However, the *sieidi* was believed to be able to avenge this kind of behaviour. Paulaharju (1932, pp.23-24) tells how a fisherman who was too proud to give the *sieidi* a share of his catch became blind and deaf for a long time.

How to count *sieidi* sites

The number of *sieidi* sites is uncertain. Most of the information about Sámi offering sites was collected by outsiders, in many cases priests (Rydving 1993, p.29). At the same time, priests were seen as persecutors of the old faith. We can assume that not all sites were revealed to them, and even some of those shown might have been false. Even nowadays, there are stories about local people who know sacred places but are not willing to talk about them.

As archaeologists, we can only work with sites of which some information has survived. For a site to be treated as a *sieidi*, I believe it has to possess at least two of the following characteristics: a place name indicating sacredness, an oral tradition, finds indicating offerings, or, in some cases, a connection to a Sámi dwelling site. There are just over a hundred *sieidi* sites of which the location is known with some certainty. In addition, there are dozens of sites which could not be located with sufficient accuracy. Most of the sites, both identified and unidentified, are situated in the Utsjoki (Ohcejohka), Inari (Anár) and Enontekiö (Eanodat) areas.

The number of different Sámi sacred sites is shown in Figure 2: *sieidi* stones are the main group. The number of sacred fells (this group includes both Finnish *vaara* and *tunturi*) is less than half that of *sieidi* stones, and the other groups are represented by five sites or fewer. There some types of sacred site that are represented by just one site. These include, for example, a brook (at Pasmarova Enontekiö) and a pool (Seitalampi Inari).

Nevertheless, the classification of sacred sites is far from simple. Just as it is hard to tell where a mountain starts, it is hard to define the borders of sacredness. In place names, the word sacred (*bassi/basse-*) often refers to a larger area, such as a fell, but also a *sieidi* could have given a name to a bigger landscape feature. According to Paulaharju (1932, p.8), the whole fell could become sacred if there was a place where offerings were made. Itkonen (Itkonen 1948, p.310) also states that the place where a *sieidi* was located was con-

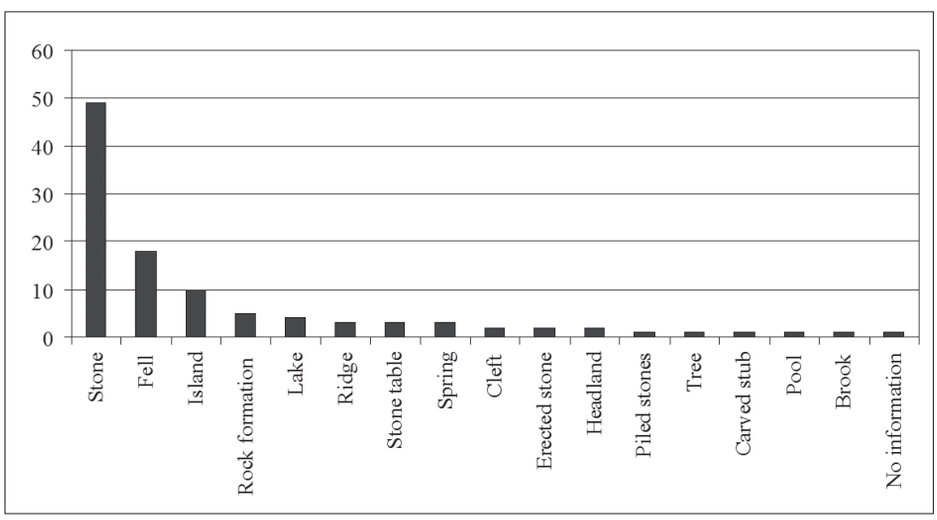

Fig. 2. The numbers of different sacred sites in northern Finland (table compiled by the author).

sidered sacred. Hence, the name of a natural feature, such as Seitasaari (*sieidi* 'island') or Seitajärvi (*sieidi* 'lake'), could have referred to a *sieidi* in that place, instead of meaning that the whole island or lake was seen as a *sieidi*. M.A. Castrén (Castrén 1853, p.123; Manker 1957, p.83) says that the locus of a *sieidi* could have been held sacred even if the *sieidi* itself had been destroyed. On the other hand, not all sacred fells were places of offerings. The fell itself could be respected and considered sacred (Vorren 1987, pp.95-96). In some cases, we cannot separate whether a specific stone or the whole place where the stone is standing is sacred. The name of the island of Ukko (referring to a god) indicates the sacredness of the island (Plate I, Fig. 3). During excavations in the summer of 2007, the offering activities on the island could be located to a single place where a big stone was situated on a ridge (Harlin, Ojanlatva 2008) (Plate I, Fig. 4). This raises the question whether the whole island or just the stone was sacred. On the island of Ukonsaari (with a similar etymology), several offering clefts have been found on the southwest side of the island (Okkonen 2007, p.32). Here, it seems likely that the whole island was sacred (Plate I, Fig. 5). There are also offering stones on the tops of fells. There, a similar case could be made for the whole area being sacred, and not just a specific locus.

The shaped and un-shaped sacred landscape

From stones, I will now turn to other natural sacred sites. *Sáiva* is a concept that is known across the whole Sámi area, but its meaning varies. In the west, *sáiva* is connected with certain fells or mountains; but, particularly in the traditions of Finnish and Swedish areas, *sáiva* referred to special lakes that had two bottoms. *Sáiva* lakes were inhabited by human and animal spirits that could act as protectors and could help in activities like fishing and hunting. *Sáiva* was also connected with the idea of the world of the dead. Folklore tells us that fishing from a *sáiva* lake required taking special measures. One should move carefully in the vicinity of the lake, take no women, and keep totally silent. The fish in a *sáiva* were considered to be exceptionally fleshy, big and healthy, but hard to catch because they could hide in the lower part of a double-bottomed lake. *Sáiva* lakes were regarded as sacred, and offerings were made on their shores (Læstadius 2002; Pentikäinen 1995, pp.146-147; Pulkkinen 2005, pp.374-375). There are also stones and rock formations that are located in the close vicinity of a *sáiva*.

There are only a few examples of sacred springs in northern Finland. One lies in Pello, on the west side of Kotavaara hill. In the 1950s, a local informant could still say that the water of the spring 'softened the eyes' and was used for healing purposes (Korteniemi 1984, p.29).

Trees were also regarded as sacred. The only still-known sacred tree in northern Finland is a pine growing in an old market place at Enontekiö. Coin offerings were given to the tree (Paulaharju 1932, p.45). The pine, known as Uhriaihki, is still in its natural form, but there are also examples of modified trees and stubs. Carved trees were used for different functions, such asto mark borders, hunting or fishing places, ownership, or a place of death (Kotivuori 2003; Konkka 1999). There are also marked trees on top of some sacred ridges. Ämmänvaara in Kemijärvi was a sacred place called Bessousing. On the top of the hill there are pines with marks and dates carved on them (Appelgren 1881, p.53). A similar phenomenon has been noted on top of Saitavaara in Muonio, where an erected *sieidi* stone was surrounded by trees with cut marks indicating visits to the place from as far as two hundred kilometres away. These marks are not necessarily related to the ritual practices at these sites.

There are also carved stubs relating to a partially different tradition to Sámi offering practices. Hence, carved stubs are not counted among the Sámi sacred sites. These so-called fish pillars are mainly found in the Kemijärvi region, in the southern part of my study area. They are approximately one to 1.5 metres high, and carved from the top to resemble a knob. They are usually situated on the shores of lakes (Plate I, Fig. 6), and are part of an old tradition to remember a successful fishing expedition, or in some cases fowling or hunting. The tradition has been joined to the southern farming culture instead of Sámi traditions, but it might have its roots in old beliefs concerning success at hunting (Kotivuori 2003, p.26).

Epilogue: The long tradition

Carved stubs might offer one example of the changing meanings attached to *sieidi*. There is reason to believe that *sieidi* sites are part of a long tradition of ritual activities. In Sweden, metal finds from offering sites date their use mainly to between 900 and 1300 AD; but there are also some finds that are substantially older. On the other hand, when the offering of metal ceases, offerings of bone and antler are still to be found from 1450 to 1650 AD (Mulk 2005; Fossum 2006, p.108). In Finland, the best-known example of an offering find comes from the previously mentioned Ukonsaari island. Sir Arthur Evand found a silver ornament from the 13th century while visiting the site. Excavations

have revealed bones dating from the 14th century and the beginning of the 17th century, and a Russian coin from the 17th century (Okkonen 2007). The oldest bone finds from *sieidi* sites in Finland date from the 13th century, and the most recent ones from the 17th century (Salmi *et al*., 2011).

Even though bone finds from later centuries are not to be found, this does not mean that the offering practices ceased in the 17th century. Written sources mention people who still made offerings at the turn of the 20th century (Paulaharju 1932, p.45). Modern folklore suggests that a fisherman must bring alcohol to a *sieidi* in order to get a good catch (Erälehti). Tourists bring personal objects, coins, and in some cases candles. *Sieidi* sites can be visited by different groups, such as locals, nature tourists, neo-pagans, or cultural heritage enthusiasts (Äikäs, forthcoming). The tradition of making offerings to *sieidi* is still living, even though the meanings attached to the places have changed over the years.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank EnviroNet, the Multidisciplinary Environmental Graduate Net School, for financing my travel to Vilnius, and all the organisers of the conference 'Natural Holy Places in Archaeology and Folklore in the Baltic Sea Region'.

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Received: 8 December 2008; Revised: 9 May 2011;
Accepted: 16 May 2011.

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NUO VIRŠUKALVIŲ PRIE STOVINČIŲ AKMENŲ – SAKRALINIAI ŠIAURĖS SUOMIJOS KRAŠTOVAIZDŽIAI

Tiina Äikäs

Santrauka

Šiame straipsnyje pristatomos Šiaurės Suomijos šventvietės. Dėl kultūrinių skirtumų jų tipai labai skiriasi nuo šventviečių, paplitusių Pietų Suomijoje.

Samių šventvietės yra skirstomos į tris dideles grupes, tai: įvairios reljefo formos (viršukalvės, uolos, salos, ežerai ir pusiasaliai-kyšuliai), gamtiniai objektai (akmenys, šaltiniai, nedideli urvai, uolų plyšiai) ir tam tikros struktūros (raižyti medžių kelmai, vertikalūs akmenys, mediniai stulpai ir akmenų ratai). Pastarosios šventvietės buvo sukurtos žmonių pastangomis.

Sieidi yra labiausiai paplitusios samių šventvietės; tai paprastai uola ar tam tikras uolų darinys. Siekiant pasisekimo medžioklėje, sieidi nuo senų laikų buvo aukojama mėsa, ragai, metaliniai dirbiniai, vėlesniais laikais – alkoholis. Remiantis gyvūnų kaulais, rastais tyrinėjant šias šventvietes, aukojimo tradicija apima XI–XX a. laikotarpį.

Sieidi šventvietėse turistų paliekamos aukos rodo, kad tradicija iki šiol gyva, nors su ja susijusios reikšmės bėgant laikui jau pasikeitė.

Vertė Vykintas Vaitkevičius

HIIS-SITES IN NORTHERN ESTONIA: DISTINCTIVE HILLS AND PLAIN FIELDS

TÕNNO JONUKS

Abstract

In this article, I analyse places with toponyms connected with *hiis* (meaning 'holy place', usually associated with 'holy grove' in Estonian) in northern Estonia. Geographically, it is possible to distinguish between three main types of landscape for places of which the names include the word *hiis*: distinctive hills, plain fields, and isolated, hidden places. Research into holy places tends to focus on naturally prominent or spectacular places, which have shaped the view that holy places are usually situated on hills; but plain fields and other visually less attractive sites have been neglected. Here, I will give examples of different types of Estonian *hiis*-sites, and discuss the links between these places and other monuments, graves and cemeteries dating from different periods, and settlements and churches. Finally, the article points to the favouring of different landscapes selected for *hiis*-sites, and argues that the claim that only attractive sites are regarded as 'holy places' is not valid.

Key words: holy grove, *hiis*, dynamism of religion, Estonia, stone-grave, ancestors.

It is a rather common practice in religious research for a study to be based on selected source material. Works in the form of short studies do not usually allow the entire diverse body of sources to be presented, and a selection is therefore made depending on which of them is more relevant in the context of a specific study. Such sources are often impressive finds or relics, which, though they support traditional approaches, may result in a slightly distorted overview of the topic. A fine example of such a process is found in Nordic Bronze Age religion: the cosmological concept of a horse pulling the sun, which is manifested as the Trundholm Sun Chariot, a symbol of this religion, is known worldwide. At the same time, this is a single example (except for some examples of rock carvings) of this kind, and, regardless of the existence of rich archaeological material, no analogous artefact has been found in Scandinavia or elsewhere in Europe. Thus, a broader cosmological concept has emerged on the basis of a highly singular object.

Similar problems surround natural holy places. Among these, there are visually impressive sites which overshadow others. Historiographically, this approach can be observed from descriptions as early as the 17th century, which emphasise that holy places were situated on mountain tops or hill tops (Olearius 1996, p.122). It is characteristic of Early Medieval descriptions for a hill with a forest to be described as a holy place. The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia and the 13th-century Danish Census Book mention holy places in connection with forests (*lucus sanctus*), and leave out general descriptions of the landscape. Only in the most famous description of an Estonian holy place, by Henry of Livonia, is a hill named on which a picturesque forest grew (HCL XXIV, 5). The first selection of different landscapes connected with holy places in Estonia was provided by August Wilhelm Hupel at the end of the 18th century. In this text, trees are again mentioned as an obligatory element: 'In some holy places there is one tree, in others there are many, mostly spruce trees; these can be found on hillocks, plains, near springs and elsewhere' (Hupel 1777, p.153). Still, the emphasis on holy places being located on hillocks remained prevalent (Merkel 1798; Jung 1879; Koski 1967), especially in school textbooks, and, in a more popular form, in calendar texts. The view of holy places being situated on an impressive landscape spread from calendar texts to oral lore, and the influences of literature are clearly traceable in many lore texts. Although the influences of literature are a somewhat overlooked aspect in the study of oral lore about holy places, the treatment of this specific lore is not possible without a national-romantic element in them. Matthias Johann Eisen (1920) was the first to add other types of holy landscapes to hillocks, thus revealing that the toponyms and lore connected with *hiis* (meaning 'holy place'; for more, see Jonuks 2009b) have been assigned to bog islands, wetlands and completely flat areas. The view of *hiis*-sites as places of a highly diverse landscape had formed in academic treatments by the end of the 20th century; however, an even more emphasised concept of a *hiis* was a sacred grove/forest on top of a picturesque hill.

At the end of the 20th century, the approach to *hiis*-sites as naturally prominent places changed slightly. Instead of the former location on a hill or a hillock, the focus has shifted to the site's boundaries, and the fact that natural boundaries are important for a natural holy

place, as these distinguish the site from the surrounding landscape (Anttonen 1992). Still, its prominence is used as one of the most important characteristics of a holy place (Moor 1998, p.49). An important aspect here is definitely the 20th and 21st-century scholars' cognitive perception of the sacred, which is often connected with a conspicuous or a prominent site. Proceeding from this notion, research has overlooked several sites known by the name of *hiis* which are not situated on conspicuous or prominent sites, and do not easily fit into the traditional concept of a *hiis*. In the following, I would like to emphasise the phenomenon of the boundaries of a natural holy place, though I agree that boundaries are not something that have to be particularly prominent. Instead, a boundary may be hardly noticeable, and many natural holy places may be located in a site which is distinct from its surroundings, although not particularly prominent. After all, although the boundaries of holy places have been important in folk religion, oral tradition does not usually fix borders precisely. Only the most important border is usually described, the one that marks the border between everyday life and the sacral space, while leaving the other sides of the holy place more vague.

In this article, I will take a look at the three types of landscapes that are assigned the toponym *hiis*, and point out their most characteristic features. I do not intend to suggest that it is possible to compile a typology that would accommodate all the sacred places. The different landscapes that the holy places are situated in and their association with different archaeological objects may be suggestive of the different purposes and dating of *hiis*-sites (Jonuks 2007). The defiance of typologisation proceeds from the nature of these objects: these are natural objects which were not made by humans but have been adapted for use by them. Thus, any typologisation can be done only on a cognitive level, and this depends on the perception of the natural monument and the landscape by a given researcher. For this reason, I will not attempt to suggest specific 'typological markers' which would apply to all objects, because even those markers would depend on the local context. I have chosen Viru County in northeast Estonia as the site for the study, an area that some authors view as the core of Estonian *hiis* culture (Plate II, Fig. 1). In studies like this, the result is greatly affected by the landscape, and the results achieved in one region, in this case Viru County, cannot be automatically applied to other areas.

An important question that has to be addressed at this point is the definition of the concept of '*hiis*', or the holy grove. Traditionally, holy groves have been studied in connection with other natural holy places (sacrificial stones, holy springs, and so on), and regarded as a sub-category of a sacrificial site. This approach is definitely valid, as these places are of the same essence and occupy the same sphere. I will focus here solely on holy groves, whereas the selection of sites is determined by the presence of the root '*hiis*' in the toponym and/or the availability of the oral tradition. With this, I presuppose that the concept '*hiis*' covers something broader than single sacrificial trees and stones. It has to be noted that holy groves should not be regarded as something independent and isolated: it is highly likely that in many places different traditions of holy groves, sacrificial sites and other places mentioned in oral lore have merged. I have considered it important here to analyse holy groves separately from others, because their function in the broader religious context was quite likely different compared to sacrificial stones or springs.

The places analysed are known from oral tradition. How to relate folkloristic places to archaeology is a well-known and disputed issue (e.g. Gazin-Schwartz, Holtorf 1999), and it will not be addressed in detail here. The main assumption is made that motifs from the oral tradition, recorded in the late 19th or the 20th century, should not be dated much earlier. But places which oral tradition indicates may be much older and can be dated according to associated archaeological sites (Jonuks 2009a, p.59ff). I suggest that sites in the landscape may have been important through different periods, and led people to ascribe a folkloristic meaning to them. This is especially true for important religious sites that retain their meaning throughout different historical periods and past religions.

Hiis-places related to hills

Well-known and used hills are the first kind of landscape for holy places with *hiis*-toponyms. These are prominent and stand out in the surrounding landscape, and often in the entire area. Next to their visual prominence, an important characteristic of a *hiis*-site is its anomality, which distinguishes the site from the landscape around it. Such are places that have been used in research of holy groves since the 18th century. Two specific sites will be discussed in greater detail below, as their broader environment allows for reference to other associated phenomena.

The 1.5-kilometre-long ridge of Purtse Hiiemägi hill ends with a cliff, and there is a group of eight graves at the western foot of the hill. The unexplored group of stone cist graves and *tarand*-graves probably dates from the period from the middle of the first millennium BC to the middle of the first millennium AD (Tamla

1996). Next to the graves there is a sacrificial spring called Uku allikas (Uku's[1] Spring), which has been mentioned in oral lore. Purtse hill is definitely the most prominent element in the local landscape: it is visible from a distance and meets nearly all criteria in the study of a stereotypical holy grove (Plate II, Fig. 2).

Purtse Hiiemägi hill also offers a fine example of another characteristic feature of the landscape. Regardless of the widespread view that both oral lore about holy groves and many stone cist graves can be associated with conspicuous elements in the landscape, the association of these with dramatic relief forms, in this case an open cliff or escarpment, is much weaker. The latter type of landscape would provide a spectacular view, and an alleged landmark. Instead, on Purtse hill the graves are associated with the gentle slopes of the holy grove hill, rather than the visually striking cliff nearby. Elsewhere in Estonia, steep coastal escarpments are rarely associated with oral lore about *hiis* or archaeological finds. One of the few exceptions here is the Panga coastal cliff on Saaremaa Island, which is known in oral tradition as a place where offerings were made for good luck or for a good catch of fish (ERA II 225, 238/9 (7)).

While observing the location of graves or other archaeological monuments and holy places, it becomes evident that these are rarely associated with landscapes that could be described as 'dramatic', although it is likely that this type of landscape was used. Most locations of archaeological monuments tend to be associated with gentle slopes rather than steep cliffs, and are oriented towards former settlement sites (Lang 2000, p.218; Jonuks 2009a). This visual connection with settlements may explain why no graves have been constructed on coastal cliffs: these were open to the sea, and rule out the possibility of visual contact with the settlement. The magnificent views that open out from the edge of the cliffs were probably less important in this respect.

Kunda Hiiemägi is the second example of a *hiis*-site which is situated on a spectacular and prominent hill (Plate II, Fig. 3). Kunda hill is a long and narrow ridge overlooking a prehistoric village, and folklore abounds about a holy grove on the hill. Four stone graves are situated in a row in the northern part of the hill top, and the burial site is oriented towards the former Kunda settlement. Kunda Hiiemägi offers a fine opportunity to observe the entire complex. Kunda village is a settlement site dating from the Early Iron Age, which coincides with the dating of the graves. A decorative pin dated to the 12th century AD has been found in a spring in the village's centre. Other examples of springs situated in village centres in which decorative objects have been discovered are also known in Estonia (such as Tõrma, Pajumaa and Sõrandu) (Tamla 1985; Jonuks forthcoming: b). Thus, it could be speculated that the ritual behaviour of the past was not limited to a single location in the neighbourhood, and the examples of Kunda and other similar complexes seem to suggest that the sacred space was considerably vaguer, consisting of the village and the spring at its centre, but which were further connected to the *hiis*-site, and possibly the burial ground in the vicinity.

Owing to the thorough geological research conducted in the area (Moora 1998), the Kunda example allows further speculation about the connection between the village and the holy grove hill. The settlement and the hill are separated by a narrow basin, which was once excessively humid, but has now dried up. On the one hand, this basin forms a natural boundary separating the 'sacred area' (the hill) and the 'profane area' (the settlement); but on the other hand, the one-time lake shore might have functioned as a pathway leading from the village to the *hiis*-site, ascending to the flat space and passing the row of stone graves. Perhaps it was the northeast part of the hill that was used as the main ritual space. People who went there and spent time there passed the graves of their ancestors, and rituals connected with ancestral worship had an important part in the religion of the first millennium BC (Jonuks 2009a). Quite another question is whether this speculation can be confirmed, and how to test it. The material available to us today remains insufficient, and any attempt to reconstruct events of such a distant past remains merely conjecture.

When using the above criteria, that is, a naturally spectacular landscape where stone graves have been constructed, we can speculate about several places which may have functioned as similar holy *hiis*-sites; but the root *hiis* in their names and the folklore about them has been lost. Such sites can be found in complexes with burial fields which were founded on the slopes or on the top of a cliff promontory, and in some cases (such as the burial field in Tõugu, see Lang 2000) a connection with a settlement, similar to the Kunda site, can be observed. Thus, it may be assumed that during the Late Bronze Age and the early stage of the Iron Age, such naturally spectacular holy places were more widespread, they were marked by stone graves on the ground, and rituals performed at these sites were closely connected with the dead and with ancestors. In the course of the later development of religion, the rituals and their meaning were transformed: the crite-

[1] Uku is a mythological deity, mostly associated with thunder. In Estonia, oral folklore about Uku has been concentrated in the coastal regions, and this has led to speculation that it spread to Estonia from Finland (Loorits 1951; Salo 1990).

ria for holy places and the settlement pattern changed. The latter two aspects may explain why there is no oral lore about some *hiis*-looking sites. Instead, holy places occupying a completely new type of landscape came into use: this applies, for example, to the plain Hiieväli (*hiis*-field) a few kilometres from the Tõugu burial group on a coastal cliff. A similar complex can be seen in Karula. This *hiis*-site is situated on flat and stony terrain below a cliff, and a few kilometres from this site there is a group of probably stone cist graves from the Early Iron Age on a cliff promontory. The Karula site, where according to oral lore there was a *hiis*-site, stands out from the surrounding landscape, although the ridge can hardly be described as a visually impressive one.

In terms of landscape, the latter two examples express quite a different attitude. It may be speculated that the Tõugu and Karula sites were holy places, which were probably used in the Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age, they were located on elevated protruding cliffs, and they were marked with burials, which were oriented towards settlements below. Very likely, the function of these holy places was connected with ancestors (Jonuks 2007; 2009a). A dramatic change in the use of the holy landscape took place in the Late Iron Age, and prominent landscapes were replaced by rather modest ones (Lang 2000, p.287).

There are many reasons why the use of landscape changed and the holy places were relocated, but perhaps the most important one was the change in the settlement pattern, according to which earlier settlement units were abandoned and new ones were put to use (Vedru 2011). Quite as important in this respect are the more general changes in religion, which led to emphasising new elements in the landscape. It becomes evident that the holy places that were probably put to use in the Late Iron Age are not necessarily situated on naturally prominent or anomalous landscapes; but, more importantly, there are no graves or burials from the period associated with them. At the same time, these places are closely connected with original settlements, and we may assume that this tradition of holy places is no longer so closely associated with the dead and ancestors, and focuses more on rituals connected with gods and deities. This construction should not be interpreted as a sign of 'conversion', during which former holy places were deliberately abandoned, especially since many *hiis*-sites about which there is more recent lore (Kunda, Tõrma) meet the criteria of former holy places. In these cases, the main reason for choosing a new landscape was the disruption of the settlement, which is why new sites were chosen depending on the new criteria and sacred requirements.

Hiis-places in plain fields

A fine example of a new kind of holy place is the *hiis*-site of Aburi, which is situated one to 1.5 kilometres from the former village centre, on completely flat ground, and no graves have been found in its immediate vicinity (Fig. 4). The settlement site is dated to the Late Iron Age and the Middle Ages, and the only remnant of the past is the connection between the settlement and the *hiis*-site. There are other examples of *hiis*-places that are situated in such ordinary landscapes, and the surrounding villages have considered the *hiis*-site their own (for example, the holy place shared by the villages of Vaeküla, Raudlepa and Raudvere). A clearly characteristic feature of such places is the lack of a connection with Late Iron Age graves on the one hand, and the location of these places in landscapes that cannot necessarily be described as highly prominent or spectacular on the other. These are gently sloping areas, and characteristic as sites which are somewhat distinct from the rest of the surroundings. Such places are in no way comparable with the previously described holy places located on prominent hills and marked with graves. These differences in relief forms indicate that there has been 'something' that has made these sites distinct from the surrounding ordinary scenery. Similarly to what Veikko Anttonen (1992) has argued, the most important characteristic of such places is the boundary, which gives a sense of separation. This boundary is not clearly observable from outside, and the *hiis*-site is only perceived as an extraordinary

Fig. 4. The *hiis* (holy grove) and village in Aburi.

place. Certainly, many of the phenomena that created the boundary may be lost to us now.

It is possible that *hiis*-sites were surrounded by a stone wall or a pole fence, which was supposed to be a sign for outsiders that this was a sacred place (Kütt 2007, p.207). The few archaeological studies that have been carried out in holy groves in Estonia have not confirmed the presence of fences in these places (Jonuks forthcoming: a). This does not mean that there were none, but that it is not currently known how to study them. A possible border, marked with bigger stones, is known from Zebrene in Latvia (Urtāns 2008, p.72ff). However, we should not take as dogmatic the view that fences were used to create boundaries. Although many lore texts refer to fences that surrounded *hiis*-sites, they were not necessarily allusions to the practice of enclosing holy groves, but the expression of *aspiration*, which is very common in folklore, to show what a *hiis*-site should have looked like, rather than what it looked like in reality. Also, since reinterpretation is very characteristic of folk religion, it is impossible that a uniform idea about the appearance of a *hiis*-site could have been established.

Regardless of the fact that holy places which are located in prominent landscapes allow for more speculation in the interpretation of grove sites, we should not neglect those situated in 'ordinary' landscapes, or mention them only in passing. *Hiis*-sites have an important place in terms of their rich diversity and general context, even more so because holy places in different types of landscape also point to changed religious concepts. Considering also the possible chronological aspect, the (over)emphasis of visually impressive *hiis*-sites seems to focus on a single aspect of the holy place rather than on the entire concept in general.

Hidden hiis-sites

In addition to these two kinds of holy places of which the names contain the toponym '*hiis*', there is a group which is not connected with settlements or graves, or spectacular natural landscapes. These places are holy sites which are situated on bog islands, deep in woods and elsewhere off the beaten track, and which are separated from the everyday world because they are more difficult to access. In Estonia, such holy sites can be found in primeval river valleys (Kongla), on bog islands (such as the Great Holy Grove and the Small Holy Grove in Varudi) and elsewhere outside populated areas. An important motive for selecting such places was evidently their isolated location. Another significant aspect was probably also the passage to the holy place through the unique bog landscape, or by descending to a deep river valley. An isolated and hardly accessible place was possibly also connected with a religious experience which was quite different from the one gained from other types of landscape. We may speculate that going to a bog island through a thickety bog or descending into a deep valley along a river bank studded with springs was connected with the rituals carried out in the holy place, and the pathway prepared the participants spiritually for the ritual. A good example here is the description of Iissaar (Holy Grove Island) in the village of Roostoja in East Viru County (RKM II 61, 27/8 (12). According to this text, there was a holy island in the bog, and as a sign of veneration, people left their hats on the previous bog island, Kübarsaar (Hat Island). Taking off one's hat and entering the holy place with the head uncovered can definitely be viewed as part of the holy ritual, and the purpose of it was the spiritual preparation of the participants to enter the holy place. It is true that such accounts are rather rare in Estonian lore about holy places, but it must be remembered that this type of lore rarely contains specific, detailed descriptions, and most mentions of holy groves refer to the concept of *hiis*-sites in general terms. An aspect similar to the above example has been discussed further in connection with pilgrimages (Turner, Turner 1978). This discussion emphasises that the pilgrimage, which is highly ritualised and follows several established rules, is as important as the destination of the pilgrimage. Pilgrimages prepared the people spiritually on their way to the holy place, and it is possible that cognitive preparatory processes also took place in natural holy places.

While holy places of this kind are not associated with graves or settlement sites that can be dated, their chronology, as well as presenting further speculation about their function, is problematic. In overall Estonian folklore about *hiis*-sites, the oral heritage about these hidden and hard-to-access holy places focuses on personal rituals such as offering and curing. Such hidden holy places might have had a different function: in addition to the obvious isolation, they provide a more personal relationship with the place, and this, in turn, clearly makes people regard these places as different to holy places near villages, where the focus is on the gatherings and festivities that are held there.

Hiis and the Church

A special topic in the discussion of *hiis*-sites is their relation with sacred Christian places. This relation is based on the premise that Christian sanctuaries were built upon former non-Christian religious sites. Building churches on these sites has often been justified by the view of Pope Gregory I, according to whom

Christianisation was believed to be more effective if people were allowed to continue to visit their former holy sites, but that these sites had to be converted to Christianity and the former idols destroyed (Sanmark 2004). Perhaps the most famous examples of this kind are the Old Uppsala church and the Frösö church in Sweden (Fabech 1989). It is rather difficult to point out specific examples in Estonia, because little research has been done on churches from this angle, and, if at all, the studies tend to focus on the cemeteries surrounding the churches. It has been suggested that Valjala and Pöide churches on Saaremaa Island were built on former non-Christian holy grove sites (Mägi 2002, p.156). Also, Heiki Valk (2007) has emphasised the link between former holy places and churches, and has pointed out the same energetic criteria for selecting both pagan and Christian sacred places. A link between churches and the earliest religious places, especially cemeteries, has also been suggested by Armin Rudi (2003, p.93). According to Rudi, control was taken over the former cultural landscape by constructing Christian sacred places close to former cemeteries or in close proximity to them, and in this way former generations were integrated into the new religion and cultural context.

A number of parish churches in Estonia were built in the middle or the second half of the 13th century, that is, soon after Christianisation. It is highly unlikely that the churches of what were then future parish centres were erected on desolate sites. The former function of these sites is not known, but it was probably not supposed to be only religious. Research history has shown that in the 13th century, churches in Estonia were built in the centres of villages, in cemeteries dating back to Late Prehistory, a former place of veneration and elsewhere (Moora 1956; Tamla 1993; Mägi 2002, p.155). Of course, there are other reasons determining the choice of location of parish churches, and not many of them can be investigated archaeologically. It seems more likely that the choice of church locations depended on the local situation, and building churches only on former sacred or burial sites was not important. An analysis of churches and early burial grounds in Öland has given quite similar results: while churches may be associated with burial sites of the Late Iron Age or the period prior to that, there are plenty of churches that have no visible relation with earlier archaeological sites (Andrén 2002, p.223). Even in the crosscut of a parish, the church may not have been located in the central place. Medieval churches, regardless of their important social role and social rituals, still represented different beliefs and ideologies, and thus different ritual practices, so that not all former sites of religious importance were suitable for building a church, and the choice of a new site depended on local factors. The most important consideration in all the examples where a Christian church was built in the village centre, a former holy grove or cemetery, or the place of which the function is difficult to determine, was that the choice of location further reflected the importance of the church in addition to its religious and social significance. Therefore, it is quite possible that a Christian church was built in a former holy place, but this relation does not have to be as categorical as the general assumption in popular treatments has often been.

The landscape provides a possibility to speculate about the relationship between Prehistoric holy places and the Medieval parish church. Parish churches were often built in the most prominent place in the surrounding landscape, and there is often a spring or a river nearby. This choice of landscape leaves open the possibility that the place was also considered holy before Christianisation. This was not necessarily always so, of course, because the presence of a nearby body of water was also vital for churches in Medieval times, especially in the early period of Christianisation. An example of this can be found in the Chronicles of Henry of Livonia, which describe a baptism ritual following the fall of the Valjala stronghold, during which priests were summoned to the church to praise the Lord: 'By consecrating the spring in the centre of the stronghold and filling the cask, they first baptised the older and better people who were taught in the Christian faith, and then other men and women and children' (HCL XXX, 5).

Spring water therefore had an important role in Medieval Christian liturgy, and it may have been a factor determining the choice of the location before building a church. For a baptism ceremony, churches may have fetched baptismal water simply from a consecrated spring nearby, so these places did not necessarily have to be former holy places.

Conclusions

To sum up, three major groups of holy sites, with probably partly different dates and functions, can be distinguished in the north Estonian landscape. This article has left out the discussion of smaller places connected with the offering tradition, like springs and offering stones and trees, or offering yards located near farmsteads (Loorits 1935). The incorporation of these into a more complete and systematic context would provide us with a highly diverse and multifaceted overview of holy sites, at least in the context of the 19th century. While analysing *hiis*-sites, however, there are differences in places where the supposedly earliest

hiis-tradition is associated with a prominent natural monument, and where the rituals performed were probably connected with the veneration of the dead and ancestors. Later, a new layer was added to this stratification. Here, the connection with the dead was no longer important, and the choice of the location was not determined solely by the prominence of a natural monument. The introduction of a temporal perspective does not mean that former holy places were abandoned at a specific point in time and new ones were put to use. It rather suggests a change in religious needs: on the one hand, the aspect of nature was no longer emphasised as much, and on the other hand it points to the relocation of former settlement centres, during which some sacred places may have been abandoned, and new ones on a completely different landscape may have been put to use. Several former *hiis*-sites were still used in the newer religious phase. Besides Tõugu and Karula, there are holy sites that are isolated from the ordinary landscape and are difficult to access, which seems to emphasise their distinctiveness and 'difference' from the ordinary landscape.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Kristiina Johanson for translating the article. This study was supported by target funded project SF 0030181s08.

Abbreviations

ERA – Estonian Folklore Archive (Eesti rahvaluule arhiiv) at the Estonian State Literary Museum.

HCL – *Heinrichi Chronicon Livoniae*.

RKM – Folklore Collection of the Estonian State Literary Museum (1945–1996).

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Received: 12 December 2008; Revised: 6 May 2011;
Accepted: 16 May 2011.

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ŠIAURĖS ESTIJOS *HIIS* ŠVENTVIETĖS: IŠKILŪS KALNAI IR LYGŪS LAUKAI

Tõnno Jonuks

Santrauka

Jau nuo XVII a. tyrinėtojai akcentuoja senąsias šventvietes, kurios kraštovaizdyje išsiskiria kaip vaizdingos ir įsimintinos vietos. Viduramžiais šventvietės paprastai būdavo tapatinamos su miškais (*lucus sanctus*), tačiau minimi ir kalnai.

Matas Joanas Eisenas (1920) buvo pirmasis, papildęs senųjų šventviečių tipų sąrašą, parodydamas, kad pavadinimas *hiis* („šventa vieta“) ir jį lydinti tautosaka taip pat yra susiję su kalvelėmis pelkėse, raistais ir laukais – visiškai lygiomis vietovėmis.

Šiame straipsnyje analizuojami su pavadinimo *hiis* vartojimu susiję trys kraštovaizdžio tipai ir išryškinti svarbiausi jų požymiai. Autorius nemano, kad galima sukurti visapusišką šventviečių tipologiją. Tačiau svarbu tai, kad skirtingų tipų kraštovaizdžiai, kuriuose aptinkama šventviečių, ir pastarųjų ryšiai su archeologijos paminklais gali suteikti duomenų apie skirtingas *hiis* šventviečių funkcijas bei jų chronologiją.

Netipologinis požiūris į šventvietes yra glaudžiai susijęs su tuo, kad šventvietės yra gamtiniai objektai, kuriuos žmogus įtraukė į savo kultūros lauką. Taigi tipologija galima tik tam tikrame lygmenyje, ir ji visuomet atspindės tai, kaip konkretus tyrėjas suvokia gamtinės kilmės paminklą bei jo aplinką. Atsižvelgdamas į tai, šio straipsnio autorius nemėgins ieškoti tam tikrų „tipologinių žymenų“, būdingų visiems objektams, nes ir šie žymenys didele dalimi priklauso nuo lokalinio konteksto.

Garsūs ir plačiai naudoti kalnai yra pirmasis kraštovaizdžio tipas, būdingas šventvietėms, vadinamoms *hiis* vardu. Tai iškilios, plačiose apylinkėse dominuojančios kalvos. Būdinga, kad ant šių kalvų randama naujojo bronzos amžiaus – ankstyvojo geležies amžiaus kapų iš akmenų, įrengtų virš žemės paviršiaus, ir tai suteikia galimybę minėtas šventvietes datuoti. Vėlesni, vėlyvojo geležies amžiaus arba viduramžių, pavieniai kapai ir kapinynai ne taip dažnai susiję su išskirtinėmis kraštovaizdžio vietomis, kurios, matyt, buvo laikomos šventomis tuo metu, kai minėtuose kapinynuose buvo laidojama. Kadangi tokius atvejus nesunku interpretuoti, tai šventi kalnai paprastai užima dominuojančią padėtį ir tyrinėtojų darbuose.

Kaip kitos rūšies šventviečių pavyzdys straipsnyje nagrinėjama Aburi vietovėje, šalia vėlyvojo geležies amžiaus – viduramžių kaimavietės centro, visiškoje lygumoje esanti *hiis* šventvietė. Artimiausioje jos aplinkoje kapų neaptikta.

Tai ne vienintelis toks atvejis; *hiis* šventviečių, kurios lokalizuotos niekuo neišsiskiriančiame kraštovaizdyje ir neturi jokio ryšio su vėlyvojo geležies amžiaus laidojimo vietomis, yra ir daugiau. Šių vietų jokiu būdu negalima lyginti su aukščiau minėtomis šventvietėmis ant dominuojančių kalvų ir paženklintų kapais.

Visos *hiis* šventvietės yra reikšmingos, įdomų kontekstą turinčios ir didele įvairove pasižyminčios vietos. Skirtingi jų kraštovaizdžio tipai gali būti susiję su skirtingomis religinėmis koncepcijomis. Minėtų išskirtinių *hiis* šventviečių akcentavimas (ir netgi jų pervertinimas), atrodo, nepagrįstai sutelkia dėmesį į vieną šių šventviečių aspektą, bet ignoruoja visumą.

Be aptartų dviejų šventviečių tipų, yra dar viena objektų grupė, kuri nesusijusi su gyvenvietėmis, laidojimo paminklais ir įsimintinais kraštovaizdžiais. Tai šventvietės kalvelėse tarp pelkių, miškų tankmėje, toli nuo pramintų takų, kitaip tariant, sunkiai pasiekiamos ir nutolusios nuo žmonių pasaulio. Izoliacija, atrodo, buvo svarbiausias motyvas renkantis šventvietes tokiose nuošaliose vietose. Kadangi šios rūšies šventvietės nesusijusios nei su laidojimo, nei su gyvenamosiomis vietomis, jų chronologija ir naudojimo pobūdis tebėra nenustatyta. Apskritai žodinė tradicija apie tokias paslėptas ir sunkiai pasiekiamas *hiis* šventvietes pabrėžia individualią ritualinę praktiką – aukojimus ir gydymo apeigas. Čia žmogui atsiranda galimybė sukurti glau-

desnį nei bet kur kitur ryšį su vieta. Tuo šios nuošalios šventvietės skiriasi nuo tų, kurios lokalizuojamos prie gyvenviečių ir kuriose vykdavo bendruomenės sueigos bei šventės.

Speciali diskusijos apie *hiis* šventvietes tema yra jų ryšys su krikščioniškomis šventomis vietomis, mat įprasta manyti, kad bažnyčios buvo statomos senose šventvietėse. Popiežiaus Grigorijaus I bulėje kalbama apie tai, kad krikščionybė lengviau plis, jeigu žmonėms bus sukurta galimybė melstis senose vietose. Tačiau joms turi būti suteiktas krikščioniškas charakteris, o stabai sunaikinti.

Sunku pateikti tokios rūšies pavyzdžių iš Estijos, nes minėtu požiūriu bažnyčios, išskyrus Valjala ir Pöide Saremos saloje, iki šiol faktiškai nėra tyrinėtos. Pagrįstai manoma, kad XIII a. bažnyčios Estijoje buvo statomos gyvenviečių centrinėse dalyse, priešistorinių kapinynų teritorijoje, vietose, kurioms rodoma pagarba, ir kitur. Atrodo, kad viduramžių bažnyčios padėtis pirmiausia priklausė nuo vietos ypatumų, ir nesiekta ją būtinai pastatyti šventos ar laidojimo vietos teritorijoje.

Vertė Vykintas Vaitkevičius

THE MYTHICAL FLIGHT PATHS OF LAKE SAUKA

JURIS URTĀNS

Abstract

Lake Sauka is the largest lake in the district of Augšzeme in Latvia. It features very often in tales and legends, which mostly relate the story of its flight and its settling down in its present location. The nearest place from where it might have flown is approximately 30 kilometres away, but the most distant place is about 70 kilometres away. The places of origin, flight routes and conditions of settling down mentioned in numerous tales, when confronted with modern knowledge about the layout of archaeological sites, allow us to see yet unknown connections between the mythical world reflected in tales, and the real world represented by the relief and by archaeological sites.

Key words: Lake Sauka, folklore, mythical flights, archaeological sites.

Lake Sauka is located in the south of Latvia, in a region called Augšzeme, or Sēlija. It is the largest lake in Augšzeme (Plate III, Fig. 1). It covers an area of 7.5 square kilometres, and is 6.2 kilometres long, 1.5 kilometres wide, and 9.5 metres at its deepest point. Although the lake is not overgrown, its shores are reedy. The area is hilly and picturesque. Today, the shores of the lake are quite densely populated. There is a fairly large number of known archaeological sites on the shores of the lake, although since there has not been a complete archaeological survey of the shores, some unknown archaeological sites could still exist there, probably occupation layers of ancient settlements. The best-known archaeological sites on the very edge of the lake are the Sauka hill-fort and its probable cult hill (for further information about Sauka hill-fort, see Urtāns 2006, p.48ff), the ancient burial ground at Bridāgi, the Medieval cemetery in Sauka by the Plūmes homestead, and the Medieval cemetery by Bincāni. Slightly further away from the lake there are some more archaeologically important places: an ancient burial site by the Sauka rectory, a Medieval cemetery by Ormaņkalns, Lones Medieval cemetery, and others.

Lake Sauka is often mentioned in legends, it is the most frequently mentioned location in the Augšzeme area (Vīksna 2006, p.184). At present, we have more than 70 folk tales concerning the lake, and many legends about it have been published (Šmits 1937, p.421ff; Ancelāne 1988, pp.77-78; 1991, pp.142-143, 271ff; 1995, p.98; Vītola 2008, p.210ff). It is well known that not all versions of the legends have been collected; the number of tales available, however, is large enough for them to be considered adequately representative. While it should be noted that Lake Varieši or Silabebri at Ungurmuiža on the opposite side of the River Daugava is also sometimes called Sauka Swamp and Lake, and it is not always possible to discern precisely to which of these lakes the local legends refer, generally Lake Sauka or Silabebri at Ungurmuiža is associated with a comparatively smaller number of folkloric texts.

Local legends about Lake Sauka mostly tell of the lake flying and landing in its current location. From a mythical point of view, the flight of a lake and the subsequent choice of landing place is an understandable phenomenon. An analysis of tales about Lake Sauka flying seems interesting, with the emphasis on the flight path of the lake. This analysis becomes even more unique when aerial reconnaisance of the lakes of Augšzeme associated with cultural history is undertaken, which to a large degree follows the same paths along which the mythical flight of Lake Sauka occurred.

Local legends referring to the flight of Lake Sauka can be divided into a number of thematic groups, which partly repeat themselves and overlap. The mythical flight of the lake is described by the following themes within the associated folkloric texts:

- the reasons why Lake Sauka flew
- the places from where Lake Sauka arose and flew
- how Lake Sauka flew
- how Lake Sauka found its current location
- what Lake Sauka covered when landing in its new location
- the relationship between Lake Sauka and neighbouring lakes.

From the point of view of this analysis, in which local legends refer to the topography and/or real places in the cultural landscape, the original location of the lake should be determined, which is usually indicated fairly precisely in the local legends: the flight path of the lake, the current location of the lake, where it landed and where it submerged real places, and other lakes and places which have been named in relation to the

flight of the lake. With this approach, it is possible, through aerial reconnaissance, to check and view in reality what is included in the local legends.

Although there are many different local legends about the locations from which Lake Sauka has flown, the main flight path of the lake can be identified. This direction is related to north-northeast.

The closest place to Lake Sauka from which it could have flown (Fig. 2), and which is the most heavily represented in folkloric texts (13 texts), is the Strubenči swamp in the Sēlpils area, which is located approximately 30 kilometres from Lake Sauka (Plate III, Fig. 3). On contemporary maps, this swamp is called Alināni swamp or moor (for a wider overview of Sēlpils area place names and their origins, see Avotiņa 2003). There are many archaeological sites around the Strubenči swamp, of which the most significant are the Ilenāni ancient burial ground and the Jumprava hill at Ilenāni on the northwest side of the Strubenči swamp, a number of archaeological sites at Alināni on the northern side of the swamp, the many archaeological sites to the northeast of the Strubenči swamp by Lake Baltiņi (the Baltiņi ancient burial ground, Baltiņi health spring, a number of Devil's stones, Baltiņi settlements I and II, an unlocated footmark stone, and others), and archaeological sites to the south of the Strubenči swamp by Arbidāni, Zaķēni and Aizporāni. In one tale, it is claimed that the Strubenči swamp is similar to Lake Sauka: 'In the Pikstere area there is a place where Lake Sauka used to be located. There is a valley which is seven miles long and three miles wide, with the same island and the same stream flowing out of it: there are the same horns and bays as Lake Sauka has today' (*Piksteres pagastā ir tāda vieta, kur agrāk bijis Saukas ezers. Ir izmērīta 7 verstis gaŗa un 3 verstis plata ieleja, tāda pat sala un tāda pati upīte iztek*) (LFK 119, 404). It must be said that this observation does not conform to reality, and also that some uncertainty appears in the local legend in the form of the word *esot* (in the original Latvian), which could be an indication that the storyteller himself is not convinced of the tale. In another tale, it is said that while Lake Sauka was flying to its new location, a number of pieces fell off, which today form Lake Paslavītis, Lake Ceplītis and, the biggest piece, Lake Pikstere (LFK 914, 937). It should be noted that all of these lakes are located on an approximate line which connects Strubenči swamp with Lake Sauka. While Lake Sauka was taking off from the Strubenči swamp, one piece broke off, which continued to be called Ninītis, a former name for Lake Sauka. In other tales, Ninītis is described as a pool in a marsh. A lake with this name does not appear on contemporary maps in the Strubenča swamp, or anywhere in the vicinity.

The second most popular theory for the place from which Lake Sauka began its flight to its current location is the Gnēvja swamp (five tales), which is listed on contemporary maps as Gņevis, and is located northwest of Stukmaņi. This place is over 40 kilometres from Lake Sauka (Fig. 2).

The furthest place indicated by tales from which Lake Sauka flew is Piķapurvs, which is located in the Sausnēja area of the Madona region. Two different local legends have been recorded relating to this area, but the context suggests that there were more tales, meaning that they were fairly widespread. Today, Piķapurvs is a largish swampy forest (Plate IV, Fig. 4). Significantly, it is related to other tales about a bloody battle which, due to a mistake, occurred between friendly forces, and the blood which flowed into the lake, this being the reason why the lake flew away. This tale can also be related to real archaeological objects, because Krievu Island at Piķapurvs is the site of a barrow burial field from the Early and Middle Iron Age (Moora 1929, p.129 (No. 152); LA, p.339). Krievu Island is a raised sandy area, just under a kilometre long, surrounded by swampy ground (Avotiņa 1999, p.192). Over time, the barrows have been largely destroyed; however, today three mounds around 20 metres wide and one metre high have been preserved, and these are significant features of the local cultural historical landscape. Perhaps the people who knew tales about the origins of Lake Sauka from Sausnēja Piķapurvs had some connection with or knowledge of this place? It should be noted that in the tale about the origins of Lake Sauka, it is mentioned

Fig. 2. The flight paths of Lake Sauka: 1 the Strubenči swamp; 2 the Gnēvja swamp; 3 the Piķapurvs swamp; 4 Lake Lelītis; 5 Lake Dumblis; 6 the Mēmele area; 7 the Krievu kakts swamp; 8 the Lielzalve area.

that at Piķapurvs there was a lake 'which became flooded with blood during a large battle' (*kas kādā lielā kaujā aizmilzis ar asinīm*) (LFK 1674, 372). A number of versions suggest that Lake Sauka originates from a 'Krievu corner', although this indication is not certain (Lerhis-Puškaitis 1903, p.1305; Ancelāne 1988, pp.313-314). We might consider, though we cannot prove it, that the 'Krievu corner' in one version could be understood to be Krievu Island at Piķapurvs, which is tempting in order to increase the amount of tales that are related to the origins of Lake Sauka from Piķapurvs, although in the tales Krievu corner is said to be located west of Lake Sauka.

It should be remembered that Sausnēja Piķapurvs is quite a distance, some 70 kilometres, from Lake Sauka. The wide River Daugava flows between these places as well (and also between Gnēvja and Lake Sauka), which at the possible time of the appearance of the tales in the 18th to the 20th centuries was the border of Imperial Russia, and earlier the Daugava was the border between the Duchy of Courland and Swedish-ruled Vidzeme. Both linguistic and archaeological research indicate that the area in which Sausnēja Piķapurvs is now located, the southern slopes of the Vidzeme highlands, could have been ethnically connected with the Selonians since the Early Iron Age (Vilcāne 2001, p.63ff; Breidaks 2006, pp.542-543). If we are trying to find some correlation here, then these could relate to much earlier eras.

All three of the most popular places of origin of Lake Sauka are loosely located on a north-northeast axis (Fig. 2). Also, the number of recorded folkloric tales declines proportionally with the distance from Lake Sauka (the Strubenči swamp 13 tales, Gnēvja five tales, Piķapurvs two). The fact that more than one local legend has been recorded in distant places indicates that these tales are not anomalies. It is also significant that all three places mentioned are located on one axis, although we cannot know if in the mythological world the lake flew in a straight path, or whether during the flight it could have deviated. At the moment, no tales have been found which simultaneously mention two or three places of origin for Lake Sauka: each one indicates only one place of origin for the lake.

The other places of origin of Lake Sauka are mentioned only once in individual tales (the heart of the Mēmeles area, Lake Elkšņu Dumbļa, the Lielzalve area, the Krievu kakts swamp to the west of Lake Sauka, and an unspecified place, probably Lake Lelītis, to the east of Lake Sauka).

The landing place of the lake or the current location of Lake Sauka has a very detailed description in local legends. Lake Sauka lands in a place which is usually identified as a cultural landscape: there were grassy meadows and fertile fields (LFK 1400, 9430), a valley with fields (LFK 1654, 5597), 'a grassy meadow' (*bijusi jauka ieleja*) (LFK 1400, 15801), a field (LFK 120, 237), cornfields (LFK 828, 17221), countryside (1654, 7081), meadows (LFK 929, 23553; 1400, 1581), and animals were put out to graze there (LFK 984, 41; 1393, 416). People lived there, and there was also 'an old house' (*viena veca māja*) in the valley (LFK 1654, 3772), several houses (LFK 828, 17221; 1654, 7081; 1654, 5597; 1665, 332), seven farms (LK 1640, 4306), Sauka hut (LFK 1400, 9430), a homestead called Saucieši (LFK1637, 1012) or Sauka (LFK 1557, 2102), a large homestead belonging to a rich farmer (LFK 1614, 332), or a large homestead (LFK 17, 944, 21). By contrast, the valley in which Lake Sauka landed was also described as wild, untouched by humans, or scarcely touched, a place surrounded by hills (LFK 929, 19745), a wide, green plain (LFK 1400, 9430), a marshy meadow (LFK 1400, 15801), a hollow (LFK 1268, 985), a swamp (LFK 603, 133), or a large clearing (LFK 1654, 6594). A forest also grew there (LFK 119, 404). A stream or brook flowed along the valley (LFK 1006, 1; 1400, 9430; 861, 1243; 1910, 6571; 1213, 27; 1665, 332; 1703, 474). In a number of instances, this stream is called Dūņupe (LFK 603, 133; 1657, 4380). A stream with this name flows from Lake Sauka today.

Aerial surveys of the west side of Lake Sauka showed various areas of different colouring on the bed of the lake, as well as some features which stand out above the water level of the lake. Investigating this part of the lake *in situ* revealed that the water level in Lake Sauka in the summer of 2006 was particularly low, and in some places features on the bed of the lake rose up 20 to 40 centimetres above the water level. The peat bed of the lake contained many eroded remains of trees and stumps, which created strange shapes (Plate III, Fig. 5). It is obvious that the local inhabitants, to whom the lake and its bed were well known, knew about these trees in the shallows of the lake. They could be used as an explanation for the tales of submerged houses, because the sunken trees could definitely be used as proof of this. Let us remember that the lake settlements in Vidzeme were also discovered largely due to local legends about flying lakes and sunken houses (Apals, Zelmenis 1998, pp.2-3).

Research on the bed of the lake also revealed some remnants of wooden constructions, in the form of stakes hewn with an iron axe. These stakes were driven in in rows, which have not so far been further investigated; and, furthermore, some of these were driven in alternately at an angle, and in front of poles which were driven in straight. It could be surmised that

the remains of fishing equipment have been discovered, which cannot currently be more precisely dated or described. It is known that in more recent times, Lake Sauka had special constructions installed in it for the storage of fish (Ribulis 2006, p.45).

Many local legends describe the places of origin of Lake Sauka, the flight paths of the lake, and its landing. By examining these tales with contemporary knowledge about the location of archaeological sites, and with the use of aerial and underwater archaeological research methods, we are able to identify some previously unknown correlations between the mythological world, which is reflected in local legends, and the real world, which is represented by topographical forms and archaeological sites. Aerial reconnaissance allows us to view these realities from the point of view of the flying lake.

Abbreviations

LA – BĪRONS, A., MUGURĒVIČS, E., STUBAVS, A., ŠNORE, E., eds. *Latvijas PSR arheoloģija*, 1974. Rīga: Zinātne.

LFK – Latvian Folklore Record (Latviešu folkloras krātuve).

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Received: 18 December 2008; Revised 4 April 2011; Accepted 16 May 2011

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MITINIAI SAUKOS EŽERO ORO KELIAI

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Santrauka

Saukos ežeras yra didžiausias Augšžemėje (pietrytinėje Latvijos dalyje), apie jį ypač daug pasakojama. Padavimas apie Saukos ežero kelionę dangumi yra populiariausias tautosakinis motyvas visame regione. Grupuojant padavimų variantus, ryškėja keletas iš dalies sutampančių, iš dalies skirtingų siužetinių linijų.

Artimiausia vietovė, iš kurios, kaip pasakoja 13 padavimų tekstų, į savo kelionę pakilo Saukos ežeras, yra Strubenči pelkė Sėlpilyje, apie 30 km nuo vietos, kurioje ežeras telkšo šiuo metu. Viename padavime kalbama apie tai, kad Saukos ežerui skrendant į naująją vietą kelios jo dalys nukrito ir atsirado nedideli ežerai – iš tiesų, maždaug vienoje linijoje tarp Strubenča pelkės ir Saukos ežero telkšo keletas vandens telkinių.

Labiausiai nutolusi vietovė, iš kurios, pasakojama, skrydžiui pakilo Saukos ežeras, yra Piķapurvs pelkė Sausenejoje. Ant smėlėtos kalvelės minėtoje pelkėje yra supilti trys senojo–vidurinio geležies amžiaus pilkapiai. Piķapurvs nuo Saukos ežero, matuojant tiesia linija, nutolęs apie 70 km. Atskirai pažymėtinas faktas, kad – pagal kalbininkų ir archeologų tyrinėjimus – senajame geležies amžiuje tiek vietovė, kurioje telkšojo Saukos ežeras, tiek jo dabartinė vieta buvo apgyventa sėlių.

Visos vietos, iš kurių, pasakojama, Saukos ežeras pakilo į kelionę, yra išsidėsčiusios apytiksliai vienoje linijoje. Didėjant atstumui nuo dabartinės Saukos ežero vietos, nagrinėjamų padavimų skaičius mažėja.

Vietovė, kurioje šiuo metu telkšo Saukos ežeras, yra žmogaus seniai įsisavintame kraštovaizdyje. Tačiau gausūs padavimai apie ežero kilmę ir jo kelionę dangumi atskleidžia iki šiol menkai arba visai nežinomus mitinio pasaulio bruožus, šio pasaulio sąsajas su konkrečiomis kraštovaizdžio formomis ir archeologinėmis vietomis.

Vertė Vykintas Vaitkevičius

MYTHICAL CREATURES, THE MAKING OF WEARING APPAREL, AND THE LANDSCAPE

JANIS CEPĪTIS, LILIJA JAKUBENOKA

Abstract

Stones where mythical creatures carry out work connected with wearing apparel appear in publications on the mythological stones of Lithuania and Belarus. This theme is not so widely considered in Latvian research literature. The aim of this work is to show that in Latvian folklore, by natural (stone, tree, stump, water, cave, etc) and man-made objects of the cultural space (threshing barn, cemetery, hill-fort, etc), mythical creatures tailor, spin, knit and mend for people or for themselves.

Key words: mythical landscape, tailor-stones, cobbler-stones, folklore.

There are stones appearing in publications about the mythological stones of Lithuania and Belarus where mythical creatures carry out work connected with wearing apparel. The aim of this paper is to show that in Latvia also there are objects of the mythical landscape where the devil or female mythical creatures tailor, mend or knit clothes or make footwear.

The stone appears in legends to be a tailor

Many stones that tailor clothes are well known in Belarus, and are sufficiently well described in research literature (Duchyts *et al.* 2008). Such stones were located in Latvia too, but unfortunately nowadays they are not in their original locations. The majority of tailor-stones were located in the cultural and historical region of Latgale.

One of the tailor-stones was located in the present district of Rēzekne, in the parish of Nautrēni not far from Rogovka.[1] This big stone was situated on the bank of a small river that flows close to a hill-fort. We believe that it concerns Zušupe, the Ičas tributary, and Opinku hill-fort. In the legend, it is called a tailor-stone, in the Latgalian dialect *kraucis* (LFK 679, 239).[2] If somebody wanted to have something tailored, he had to put a piece of cloth and some money on the stone, and pray in the following way: 'Oh, sir, tailor me some clothes!' The next morning, the order would be accomplished. Nobody saw or knew where the tailor was. A redoubtable landlord who lived in the nearby manor of Zaļmuiža demanded that the stone tailor for him as for nobody else. Indeed, the next morning he found some wonderful clothes on the stone, but when he tried them on, it appeared that the sleeves were sewn to the back. Indeed, the landlord had clothes such as nobody else did. The furious landlord called his servants, and they dragged the stone to the river. Some dressmaker's scissors were found under the stone. The second legend (LFK 263, 1344) does not reveal the location of the stone; only the person who recorded the tale explains at the end of it that it was heard in Pintāni, the same parish of Nautrēnu. The legend says that there was a big stone in the field, under which a tailor-devil lived.

Two legends recorded in Latgale (Dagda (LFK 232, 1219) and Ludza (LFK 197, 997) tell about big stones located on the land of landlords that made different clothes, but there was also a misunderstanding with the landlords. One furious landlord threw the first stone into the maelstrom of a nearby river, but the stone did not disappear. It went about a hundred versts along the river, and continued to make clothes. In the second legend, the furious landlord started to push the stone into the river. He pushed it in in one go, but the stone climbed out on the opposite bank of the river. When he pushed it in a second time, the stone returned; but after it was pushed the third time, the stone did not come back, it sank.

There are two versions of a legend (LFK 1238, 1; 1472, 1582) recorded regarding a stone that was located near the River Iča, which separates the districts of Rēzekne and Balvi. They say that if somebody put cloth on the stone, then during the night a coat would be made. The landlord wanted to have clothes such as nobody else had. The stone complied by sewing one sleeve to the front and the other to the back. The landlord ordered

[1] In this paper, we use the administrative territorial division of the Republic of Latvia which came into force on 1 July 2010.

[2] In this paper, the notation LFK N, M means the number (N, M) of a tale introduced in the Archives of Latvian Folklore or the University of Latvia Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art. The authors are grateful to the Archives of Latvian Folklore for the possibility to use the fund.

the stone to be pushed into the river, and it flowed and growled for three days to Lake Lubāna. Later on, a frog and thread were found beneath the stone. A ditch formed in the place where the stone had been pushed. The second version of the legend says that scissors and a thimble were found beneath the stone.

Apart from the rest of the tailor-stones, another stone of this type was located in the cultural and historical region of Vidzeme (LFK 179, 1224). It was situated on the eastern side of Lake Alūksne, and was called a tailor-stone. If somebody needed to have something tailored, he or she brought cloth, and the next day the order would be finished. Once there was a case when somebody made an order according to the latest fashion in Riga. The legend says that the devil looked at the cloth, and said that he was unable to tailor something according to such requirements, and since then he stopped tailoring.

The two stones of Vidzeme that are linked with the middle basin of the River Aiviekste, which goes between Vidzeme and Latgale, were called tailor-stones, but there are no legends about cloth being left and clothes associated with them. One of these stones appears to be a huge boulder that can be seen in Kuja, a right tributary of the Aiviekste in the Madona district, in the parish of Prauliena, near the Jaunauziņas homestead, and is linked to stories by the devil himself sitting on it and sewing his trousers (Plate IV, Fig. 1). The other stone was one of the biggest Latvian boulders, and, before splitting during treatment of the river bed, it was located in Aiviekste. One version of the legend (LFK 1400, 32943) says that the tailor-stone was situated near the river of Saikava manor. There were needles-wattles presented to the stone by raftsmen in the spring in order to have a successful journey. In the second version of the legend (LFK 929, 24170), it is said that there is a white stone in Aiviekste, called a tailor-stone, and if the raftsmen passing nearby did not throw needles on it, then the rafts ran aground on the stone and were smashed to pieces.

Stones on which the devil mends

In Belarusian folklore, tailor-stones mainly tailor for people. One more set of legends that is linked with the above story, and yet is a little different, is 'The devil sits on a stone and mends his clothes'. Besides the already-mentioned stone in Kuja, in the same region, in the Cesvaine district, there is a popular stone that is associated with several legends, the Vaļģu devil-stone (Plate IV, Fig. 2). These legends say that the devil sat on it and mended his trousers, shirt or even his collar with a thill, and in one version of the legend, for some reason, also a harrow. In another legend (LFK 557, 8), it is told how the devil used to work in moonlight, occasionally shouting out the meaningless word 'eekshpydeeksh'. The devil was disturbed by a man who invoked God. Fleeing the place, the devil struck a stone with a needle, and left a scar on it.

A legend originating from the Salacgrīva district, in the parish of Liepupe in Vidzeme (LFK 1729, 1205), describes a stone that cannot be found in nature any more. It tells about a man who was on his way back home from Jelgavkrogs, and who saw the devil sitting on a big stone with rags and a thill.

Two legends about such stones also come from the cultural and historical region of Zemgale. One (LFK 929, 26) says that in the River Iecava opposite the church of Iecava there was a stone. The devil sat on it, mending his trousers with a thill and combing his hair with a harrow. Another devil poked his head out of the water, and shouted: 'Suk, suk, give it to me, too!' Another legend (LFK 1557, 2749) tells about a devil that lived beneath the stone. When the stone was blown up, the devil's trousers appeared to be torn. He stole a thill and some sacks from the manor of Trape, and began to mend his trousers. However, when the moon was covered by clouds, it was not possible for the devil to run the rope. The devil disappeared after the cock had crowed. It seems that the same stone is also described in another legend (LFK 1557, 13), where it is said that underneath a big stone in the Iecava district, in a meadow of the Ķizu homestead, lived the devil. The stone was embedded in the Misa rectory. The devil frequently sat on Ķizu hill mending his trousers.

In some legends, the devil does not do his mending sitting on a stone, and his link with it is mediated. The devil had to mend his clothes because he carried stones in them. When the clothes were torn, the stones were scattered. Sometimes the disturbed devil left traces in the stone when he fled. These legends reveal a wider mythical scenery, and the link between several objects of the mythical scenery becomes apparent.

A legend (LFK 81, 136) from the cultural and historical region of Kurzeme says that there was a small river in the Talsu district, in the parish of Vandzene, near the Ezerlejas homestead. The devil carried stones in a blanket in order to fill it up, but the blanket fell apart and the stones were scattered. The devil kept on mending until the thill fell out of his hands, and he was unable to find it because a cloud covered the moon. He shouted furiously at the moon: 'Shine, moonlight, shine, I lost the thill!' As the moon disobeyed, the devil threw a big stone at it, but the stone fell into the river. Immediately, the cock crowed and the devil had to go

to hell. The devil stepped on the big stone, and left big footprints on it.

Several legends about a devil-tailor come from Vidzeme. In the Vecpiebalga district, on the bank of the River Gauja downstream from Jaunviļumi, there was a pile of stones (and human bones) (LFK 1690, 11026). The devil brought these stones because he wanted to build a bridge over the Gauja. He carried the stones in the corner of a sheepskin coat, but the stones fell out because the coat was torn. The devil got on to a haystack, threaded a thill with a rope, and started to mend the torn coat.

Other objects of mythical scenery linked with the devil-mender

Not only stones, but also other objects of Latvian mythical scenery are linked with the devil-mender, both from nature (a tree, a stem, a place in a river or on the bank) and created by humans (a house, a barn, a pub).

In Vidzeme in the Gulbene district, in the parish of Lizuma, on Knistu hill, two men coming back from a pub saw the devil sitting in a tall fir tree making parts for headgear from hooves (LFK 1098, 20422). Each man had carved a symbol of a cross in the fir tree while transporting a dead body over the hill. The devil shouted diabolically at the moon: 'Don't glimmer so weakly, because I need to see what I'm doing.' A legend recorded in Ērgļi tells us about a devil named Step, who was sitting on the top of a haystack and mending his sheepskin coat. When the clouds covered the moon, Step shouted at it to keep on shining. Being immersed too deeply in his work, Step did not notice his enemy the thunder approaching which later struck him (Šmits XIV, p.187).

There are colourful legends from Kurzeme about a devil who did his mending near or in barns. The link between the devil and the stones is weaker here than in other cultural and historical regions of Latvia. There is a legend recorded in the Saldus district, in the parish of Lutriņu, about a devil that was sewing a goatskin on a stem (LFK 739, 3487). When it grew dark outside, he cursed the moon. That made the thunder angry, and it struck the devil.

In Zemgale, in the Iecava district, in the forest of Dietlavu, the devil threaded a sledge thill and mended his trousers there (LFK 231, 2849). There are many other versions of the legend from Zemgale, where the devil does his sewing by a river bank or a place called the Devil's Depth, or near a bridge. In these legends, the devil does not communicate with the moon, but whistles and talks about his tools (a thill as a needle) and what he does (mending, making trousers) (LFK 2128, 26; 1645, 3460; 1645, 3238).

Stones rolled by tailors

The particularity of the Latvian mythical landscape is revealed in the stones rolled by tailors. As far as we know, there are no similar legends found in neighbouring countries. One Tailors' Stone is situated on the left bank of the River Sesava, washed by water from one side, in the Dobele district, in the parish of Naudīte (Plate IV, Fig. 3). There are several legends (LFK 1573, 1714; 1404, 4749; 759, 9123) recorded about this stone that have the same theme. Either all the tailors or a hundred of them gathered and rolled a stone uphill. The stone then rolled back downhill, and crushed the tailors' legs, and that is why the majority of tailors are lame.

In the Pārgauja district, in the parish of Raiskuma on Vitku Kurpniekkalns (Cobbler's Hill), there is a stone called a three tailors-stone (Fig. 4). This name appears to be more recent, originating from the shape of the stone. The stone has three cracks on the top, forming three small rises. The stone was rolled uphill for seven years by 70 tailors (LFK 1262, 14). Other leg-

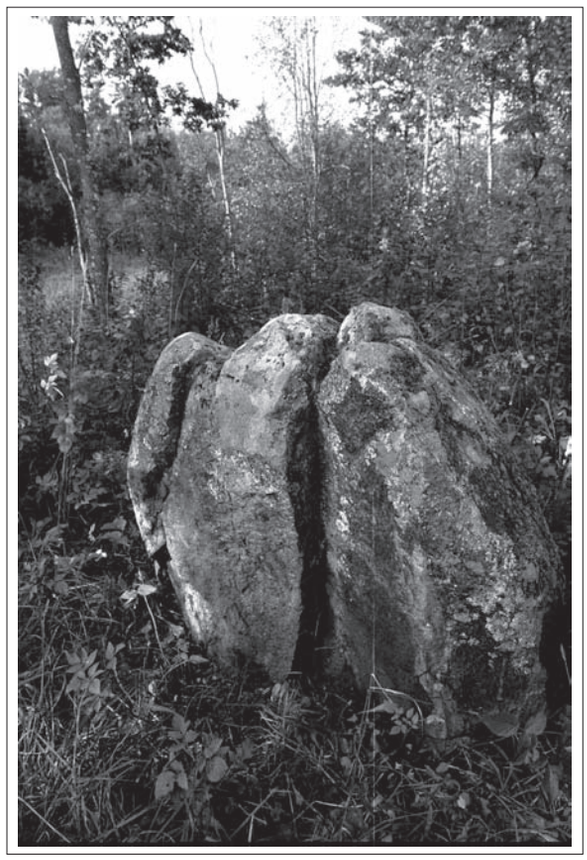

Fig. 4. The three tailors-stone on Vitku Kurpniekkalns (photograph by M. Zeltiņš).

ends speak of a larger number of tailors involved (LFK 1400, 5561). The stone was rolled uphill by weaker tailors, in order to prove that they were not so weak. Ninety-nine tailors could not manage to roll the stone uphill, but nine times 99 tailors did. A legend about Maizpeļu hill in Vidzeme is linked to the theme of tailors rolling a stone, yet without the stone itself (LFK 116, 9673). Seven tailors rolled it up a hill of mouse droppings. All the tailors involved were lame, blind or foolish.

Cobbler-stones and the devil-cobbler linked with other objects of the mythical landscape

Not only tailor-stones, but also cobbler-stones are known both in Latvia and in Belarus. Cobbler-stones are also known in Lithuania. In Latvia, besides one fairly new report with regard to the aforementioned tailor on the banks of the Kuja where it not only made clothes but also shoes, there are only two stones known where the devil cobbled. Both of them are in Latgale. One is located in the Rēzekne district, in the parish of Puša (Jakubenoka 2001), in the former Virbuli homestead. A little devil, *chortik* in the Latgalian dialect, used to sit on it and make shoes out of birch bark. When a man hit him with a rowan stick, the little devil thought that the moon was to blame, and said: 'Shine, shine, but don't tussle!' There are two featureless hollows in the comparatively small stone, and it is said that the little devil made them. The other stone is not localised in nature. In the legend (LFK 709, 119), it is said that late one evening when the moon was shining, a man, on his way back home from Līvāni, saw the devil working on the stone. The devil spoke in Russian, and made a suggestion that was not typical of him: 'Say to me "God help" and I will give you boots.' Two wolves ran out of the nearby bushes. Being afraid of them, the devil fled and ripped up the meadow unevenly. The place where the devil fled is called the Devil's Ditch, but the meadow is called the Devil's Bog, because no plants grow there. Most Lithuanian and Belarusian cobbler-stones made footwear for people. The devil in Virbuli made footwear for himself. In Līvāni devil's direct speech, there was a certain offer to make shoes for people. In Latgale also, a legend which describes the origins of a cobbler (LFK 253, 3) is written. The devil made boots. Someone hit him on the head, took away his tools, and made footwear himself.

In Vidzeme, there are also many legends about a cobbler, though they are not linked with a stone. One of them (LFK 1980, 2221) tells about a cooper on his way back home during the night, who heard a sound as if a cobbler was beating boots. When he approached him, he saw a cobbler smoking and beating a boot. They exchanged tobacco pouches. The exchanged tobacco pouch turned out to be a horse's hoof. That was the reason why the cooper hit him with a rowan stick. The other legend (LFK 72, 4657) tells about a man who was going home from a mill in the moonlight. He had to pass the cemetery of Ķinderi in the Cesvaine district. When he was in front of the cemetery, he saw a cobbler who was looking at the moon, making boots and cursing at the moon in a very crude way in Russian. In earlier times, the devil lived in the Priekuļi district, in the parish of Liepa, in the Lielā Ellīte sandstone cave (LFK 1081, 40.3). Every day, he sat by the roadside, and mended footwear with a sledge thill.

Female mythical creatures that work near stones and other objects of the mythical landscape

Stones near which female mythical creatures spin, knit and sew should be considered unique, due to the small number of them. In Latvia, only in relation to Mērsrags holy maid-stone (Fig. 5, 6) is there a set of legends that describe a sacred woman spinning, or a drone of yarn cart is heard in this stone. At midnight, a sacred woman used to come out and spin flax (LFK 924, 3)

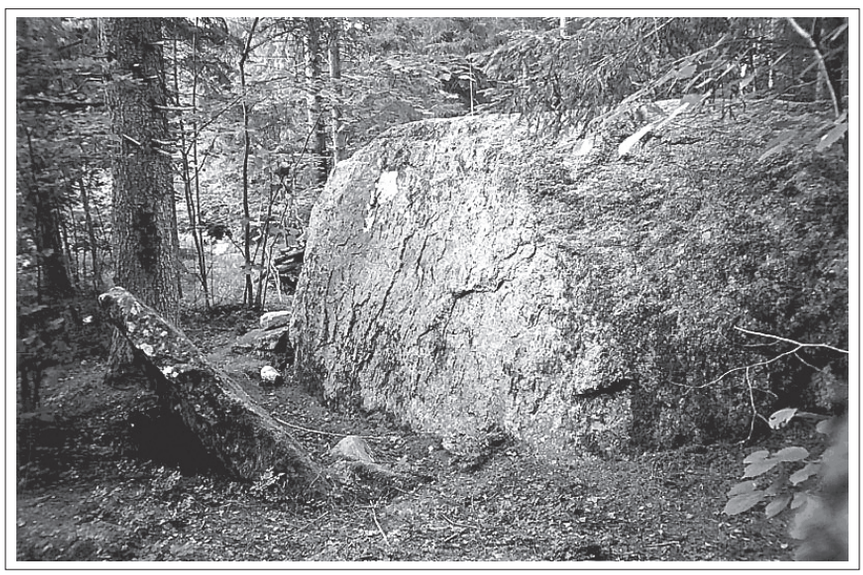

Fig. 5. Mērsrags Holy Maid stone (photograph by A. Opmanis).

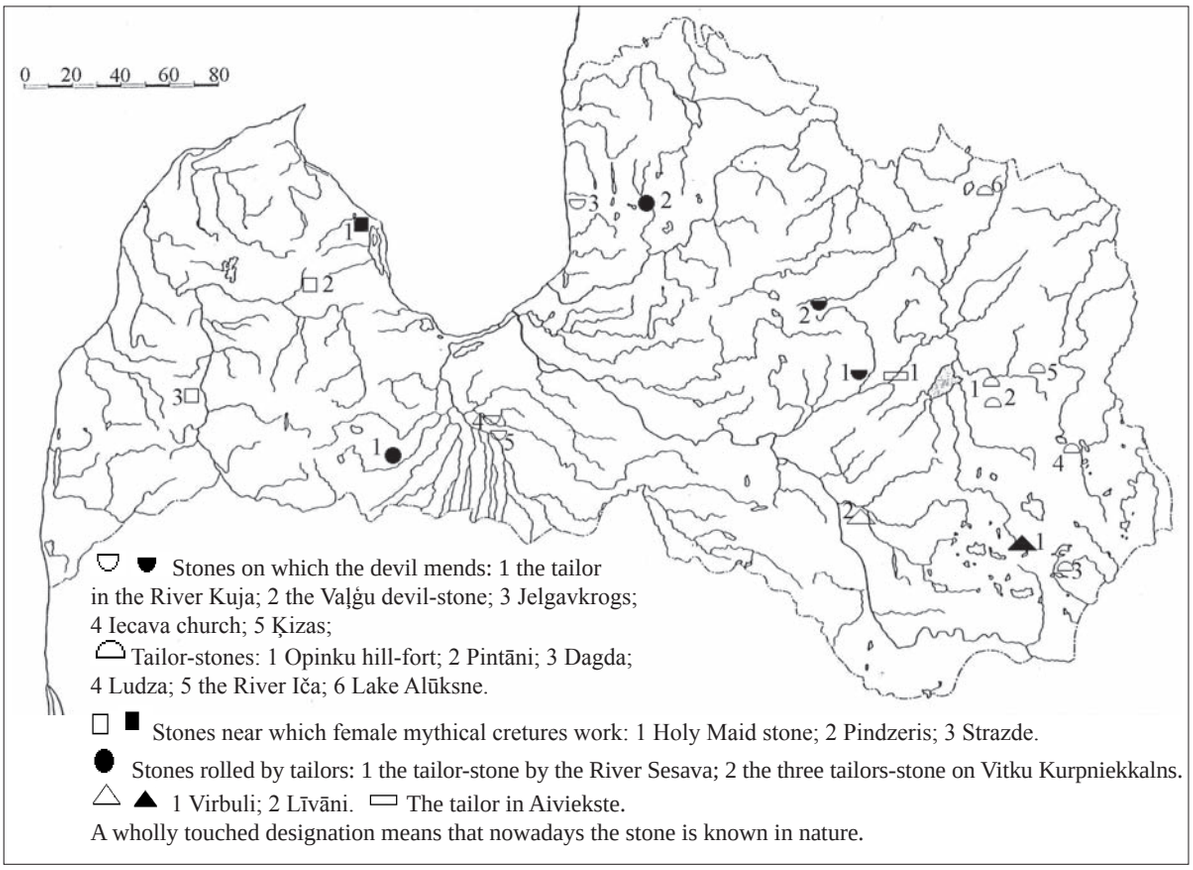

Fig. 6. A map of Latvia, with the stones mentioned.

here. One end of the stone appears to be cut off, and a rather thin quadrangular stone is placed there. That is the door used for the maid or her soul to enter the stone (LFK 622, 208).

There are at least two stones in Lithuania where female mythical creatures used to spin. The Raganas stone is mentioned in the Biržai region where Ragana (witch) used to spin (Matulis 1990, p.50), but in the Akmenė region there is a stone brought by the devil on which female elves used to spin (Vaitkevičius 1998, p.346).

Female mythical creatures not only spin in the legends coming from Kurzeme. In the Skrunda district, in the parish of Raņķi, Mucenieki Pindzeris was a big stone called the Devil's Bath, and witches used to splice manacles there (LFK 1148, 1). In the Talsi district, in the parish of Strazde, a legend has been recorded about a boulder on which an old woman dressed in red sat and knitted socks for the devil's children (LFK 1686, 1114). When the old lady finished knitting, the stone opened and she entered it together with a little dog.

The legends coming from Latgale are linked with hill-fort and a woman knitting and living in the underworld with a dog. Sometimes, a stone marks the border between a real and a mythical space. The legend about the Zamkys hill-fort, in the parish of Višķu in the Daugavpils district, deals with a big stone on which about ten people could stand (LFK 1945, 3592). Through a cavity under the stone, a man went down to the underworld and saw many rooms, and in one of these rooms a beautiful woman was knitting with a big dog beside her.

Female mythical creatures doing woman's work may appear not only near stones but also near other objects of the mythical landscape. In accordance with the story (LFK 1692, 535), Dižante in the Dundaga district is the Holy Maids cave, where holy maids used to spin so productively that the drone of the yarn cart was heard even outside the cave. In the Stepju Māras cave, which is located on the bank of the River Abava in the Talsi district, in the parish of Ģibuļi, holy maids spin, weave and make beautiful clothes (LFK 1909, 103), (LFK 1909, 119). The legend about the Liede hills, in the Gulbene district, in the parish of Jaungulbene (Šmits IV, p.211), tells how there was a metal door with a cave behind. There was an old woman who sat in the cave, she was a witch, and she used to spin. In the legend about Greitas hill, in the Daugavpils district, in the parish of Ambeļu, it is said that once this mountain opened (LFK 940, 4). A man saw Greita sitting and knitting socks with knitting needles, and two dogs were beside her. In the Staburags cave in the Jaunjelgava district, in the parish of Staburaga, a virgin used to spin for the peasants, because they themselves were unable to

do so due to the pressure from their landlords (Laime 2009, p.183). The latter legend is interesting for the fact that the mythical creature, almost like tailor-stones, helps to tailor clothes for people. Objects of the mythical landscape are found both in Latvia and Lithuania, and are linked with female mythical creatures and tailoring. In Žemaitija, in the Šilale region, at Lauma hill, Laumas used to seed flax, weave cloth, give presents to poor children and punish the rich (Vaitkevičius 1998, p.409). In the Mažeikiai region, on Darata hill, some girls used to spin and weave clothes (Vaitkevičius 1998, p.164). In Aukštaitija, in the Ignalina region, female elves (Laumas) would spin (Vaitkevičius 2006, p.358).

Thread, yarn, filament: connectors of various objects of mythical and real spaces

In the Monument Documentation Centre of the State Inspection for Heritage Protection, we found a story that can be found about a hill, most likely a hill-fort, in Latgale (PDC 1950, 4931).[3] It describes an old man who sat down to relax on a hill, and felt as if he was in a house. He was offered some expensive tobacco and told that a sunken town could be brought back above ground. It needed a cart and coil with enough flax to be spun around the hill in one go. Another legend (Urtāns *et al.* 2008, p.177) deals with a sunken church in the Spriņģi hill-fort in the Rēzekne district, in the parish of Ozolmuiža. A woman's husband and child had also sunk together with the church. The woman had to spin enough yarn to be able to twist it around the church 300 times. Then the church would come back itself above ground. The woman died when she was spinning. In the Ilūkste district, in the parish of Eglaine, a shepherd girl was knitting a sock on the Laši hill-fort, and the ball of yarn fell down and disappeared when she disentangled it (Urtāns 2006, p.103). The hill opened up, and showed a sunken castle down beyond the thread. The shepherd girl was disturbed by an old woman who brought her breakfast. Similar themes of legends are also found in Belarus (Zaikouski, Duchyts 2001, p.63). There was a sunken village in a lake. A shepherd saw a floating ball of yarn in the lake. When he started to take it out, a whole church came out together with it. The shepherd was frightened, and the church sank.

Protective functions of clothes and their raw materials

In our opinion, there is a unique legend linked with the motif 'flax life torture', where the story is linked to a stone (LFK 929, 56940). In the Madona district, in the parish of Barkava, there was a big stone in Akmeņpurvs. The devil was carrying it in the direction of Aiviekste, in order to disturb the raftsmen. Flax was following the same route in the opposite direction, and they met. While the flax was telling the devil about the anguish caused by humans, a cock crowed, and the devil discarded the stone and fled. In Kurzeme, in the Ventspils district, in a stone that is located in the barn of the manor at Pope, a footprint is visible that was left by the devil (LFK 929, 56940). The landowner had sold his soul to the devil. When the devil came to claim it, the landowner was sitting on flax and praying to God. Several legends about digging up old money are linked to the sacred role of cloth made from wool and flax. In order to dig up money, flax thread has to be twisted around the Raganas (witch) stone in Vidzeme (LFK 169, 2). In one legend coming from Latgale, it is said that a person has to take an unused towel and a black cat with him in order to find some money in a pile of stones (PDC 15450, 1). The cat has to be wrapped in the towel and then killed. Another legend (LFK 291, 171) from Bumbišķi, in the Rēzekne district, in the parish of Ozolmuiža, tells about a stone under which some old money has been placed. The devil stabbed the digger in the stomach, but he had oakum behind his belt and flax brake on his legs.

Different and common motifs in legends from Latvia and neighbouring countries

In Latvia, as in neighbouring countries, there is quite a number of mythological landscape objects, which in one way or another are connected with the making of clothes and footwear. The motifs of corresponding legends include characteristics of the folklore of neighbouring countries, with local variations.

Latvian legends regarding tailor-stones bear a strong similarity to Belarusian legends. This is manifested both in tailors' dislike of being told how to sew, and in the reason why the stone has stopped sewing. If in the case of the Belarus stone, the image of scissors could be visible in the structure of the stone, then our heroes had to search for them under the stone. A distant similarity can be seen even between Belarus tailor-stones in which a snake lived who was able to turn into a human being and sew, and the frog that was found under the Iča stone, as both the snake and the frog are crea-

[3] In this paper, the notation PDC N, M means the number (N, M) of information in the Republic of Latvia's Monument Documentation Centre of the State Inspection for Heritage Protection. The authors are grateful to the Monument Documentation Centre for the possibility to use the fund.

tures that are related to chthonic deities. In the Latgale dialect, sometimes the word 'tailor' is replaced by the word *kraucis*, which is a borrowing from Belarusian. Consequently, legends from Latgale, in two cases, have named tailor-stones. Some of the Latvian legends end up a little differently: namely, a stone that has been rolled into a river by a landlord possesses self-propellant properties. So one stone has not lost its ability to sew, but has just altered its location, moving 100 versts up. We can find partial parallels between these legends in Lithuanian and Belarusian material. In Belarus, in the Miori region, a stone had the ability to turn from a stone into a strong man and travel across the world (Volodina 2009, p.49). Mokas, a group of stones in Lithuania, is related to the phenomenon of swimming across a river (Vaitkevičius 2006, p.179).

Regarding the Belarus tailor-stones, it has been said that, as a rule, they are big and located on low surfaces, sometimes in the close vicinity of water (Duchyts *et al.* 2008). The same could be said about the size of the Latvian stones, and their location. Many of these are to be found either close to a river or a lake, or even on the riverbed. Belarusian research has emphasised that tailor-stones are associated with the devil, and are included in the basic myth pattern, which is especially vividly manifested in the legend about the Snake tailor-stone (Volodina 2009, p.48). In the Belarusian legend about the Snake tailor-stone, an important motif is that until the tailor-snake has been buried, rain will fall (Kashkurevich 2005). In Latvia, the motif of a duel is expressed profoundly in the legend about the devil-mender relating to stones and other natural objects alike. In this context, it is worth mentioning the haystack devil-mender named Steps. During a thunderstorm, it is stolen by Thunder. In its turn, in Belarus, tailor-stones by the name of Stepans are known. In one paper (Zaikouski 2002), this Belarusian archaeologist has substantiated the connection of the name Stepans with Velez (a Slavic pagan deity). In Indo-European mythology, the reason for the duel is either the female deity or water and cattle, which are subjected to the power of chthonic deities and are freed by Thunder. It appears that the Lithuanian and Latvian legends should also be regarded within the context of the basic myth and release of water, as well as being related to the devil-mender, and those where the main storyline is as follows: the devil, sitting on a stone, usually in water or close to it, during a thunderstorm teases Thunder. It is either struck by Thunder, or shot by a hunter. In Latvian legends about the devil-mender, the hunter appears as a mere onlooker of the duel between Thunder and the devil. In their turn, in legends about the devil-cobbler as the cultural hero, who struggles against the devil armed with a rowan stick, a night-herdsman appears. In the legends, a wolf also emerges, fighting against the devil, attacking the Līvānu devil-cobbler.

Unfortunately, the tailor-stone in the Aiviekste riverbed has been destroyed. In the legend, the emphasis is put on its whiteness. We will never know whether whiteness was the real colour of the stone, or whether it was only called that, as required by the mythological world-view. In Lithuania, white stones are found which in fact are not white at all (Vaitkevičius 2006, p.17). Let us recall the Slavic and Baltic incantation ladies, who sit spinning on a stone in the sea. The stone and a tree, which mark the centre of the world, are interchangeable symbols. In Belarus, a popular motif is rivers enchanted and darned by a witch or a gipsy woman, as result of which the rivers dry up or stop flowing. Sometimes there is a stone by such an enchanted river, and on rolling it the river resumes its flow (Zaikovski 2006). It is possible that in these legends an ordinary man, however, who has some supernatural or paranormal abilities, replaces the chthonic personage who is in charge of the waters of the Earth. In relation to the Latvian mythological landscape, this motif does not appear in its pure form; however, we may draw some parallels between the motifs of the Latvian and the Belarusian legends.

The place where the Ruskulova swamp is in Latgale was previously the sea. On it rode either Laima or Māra, depending on the legend's motifs. In one version of the legend, the deity has lost its comb; whereas in another one a key has been lost. Therefore, she had to put a spell on the sea, and it became overgrown. In the place where the key disappeared, the godhead conjured up a big stone, which is said to be located in the middle of the swamp (LFK 679, 2165; 1341, 17022). According to these cases, we can conclude that a connection emerges between the centre of the mythological domain in the midst of water, marked by a tree or a stone, and a particular object of nature. The snake and the female deities are connected to that centre, manifesting itself as a link to wool and fabric-making, and the water closing motif. The folklore material serves as proof of the fact that mythological creatures relating to water, stone and female work often show themselves to human beings at a full moon. A pronounced feature of the Latvian legends is connected with the devil-mender or the devil-cobbler. In Lithuania, stones are also known at which a cobbler has not appeared, although it has been narrated that on these stones the devil was sitting, looking at the moon. The stone-sitting devil is struck by thunder (Vaitkevičius 1998, p.421). From Belarus, the only connection between the devil and a stone known to us is obtained by verbal information supplied by Aleksandr Zaicev, a researcher into local history and folklore. It states that in the Vileika district,

there was a stone on which the devil was sitting and murmuring something at the moon. It is possible that tales about these stones are pieces of some voluminous plot comprising the figure of the devil-cobbler, which has survived until today. The Lithuanian and Latvian devil-mender or the devil-cobbler and tailor-stones fit into a broader stone group: people who turned into stones (Vaitkevičius 2003, p.123). In Latvia, there are widespread legends narrating how some mythological personage has turned into a stone, a human being, an animal, or even an object. However, these plots are not typical of the stone group in question. Theoretically, they may be attributed to the Mērsraga Holy Maid stone and the Aiviekste tailor-stones. Regarding the Mērsraga Holy Maid stone, alongside the spinning holy maid, there is a legend about an evil woman who, as a punishment for asking God to perform evil acts upon her neighbour, has been turned into a stone (LFK 924, 1). The Aiviekste tailor-stone has appeared on the river bank in a place where a tailor saw a black man splashing. It is appropriate to note that in the Vileika district in Belarus there is a cobbler-stone, about which, according to one version of the legend, it is said that the cobbler's house was turned into a stone on a clap of thunder. According to another version of the legend, in the place where the house stood, burnt by the thunderstorm, later on a big stone emerged (Duchyts *et al.* 2008).

In Latgale, there are numerous legends unrelated to tailor-stones and cobbler-stones, which end up with the story that a stone has emerged, where paranormal events took place, on the site of a house or a bath-house. One Belarusian researcher has stressed (Volodina 2009, pp.50-51) that in various East Slavic areas, modern field research notes are made regarding the large number of referrals to stones which appear to travellers like a stove or a house. In legends, people are often lured by the devil and invited to take a rest there. A man thinks that he is in someone's house. He takes his shoes and clothes off, and lies down on a stove, only to wake up in the morning on a stone. Volodina observes that a stone in Belarus was called both a tailor's and a devil's stone, and the aforementioned motif of undressing on the stone relates to that. Motifs of legends about a traveller undressing in a house, but waking on a stone, are familiar also in Latvia, mostly in Latgale. Although there is not one stone known in Latgale in relation to which both motifs are present, namely, sewing and undressing, there is an obvious similarity between Latgale and Belarusian motifs of legends about stones.

Belarusian researchers have noted (Duchyts 2005) that the cult of the stone in Belarus concerning the stone groups in question, and in general terms, is inherited from Baltic tribes. Tailor-stones in Belarus are found in areas represented by Dnieper-Daugava culture. In their turn, cobbler-stones are widespread in areas of Striated Pottery culture. In Latvia, both known tailor-stones and the majority of tailor-stones pertain to the area of Striated Pottery culture. Among the tailor-stones, the tailor-stone by Lake Alūksne remains outside the area of Striated Pottery culture. For their part, legends about the devil-mender in the area of Striated Pottery culture and in north Vidzeme are alike; in their time, when Striated Pottery culture existed, they were populated by Finno-Ugric tribes that used textile-impressed pottery, which was typical for them.

Speaking about stones which sew by themselves, Belarusian academic literature has communicated on numerous occasions the idea that such stones served as altars in pagan sanctuaries (Volodina 2009, p.48). The connection between the stones and the tradition of sacrifice is signified by the fact that these stories feature a window, through which an order is delivered. In Latvia the motif regarding tailor-stones and cobbler-stones is not as pronounced. Legends from Kurzeme tell about female deities who spin and twist, and either feature the door motif, or it is said that the stone opens up and a mythological creature comes into the stone.

Occasionally, a window and door motif is encountered at devil-stones. Thus, windows and doors are mentioned in stories about the Ģevrāni devil-stone in the Jēkabpils district, and the Māteri devil's foot-stone in the Ventspils district. In these legends however, the stone is emphasised as the devil's dwelling, rather than the place of sacrifice. Latvian tailor-stones and cobbler-stones are neither particularly associated with the tradition of sacrifice nor with information regarding people gathering by them on holidays. The only exception is the Aiviekste tailor, to which raftsmen gave needles.

The landlords' actions, rolling Latgale tailor-stones into rivers, create certain associations with the Christian fight against paganism, and may signify indirectly that tailor-stones were cult stones. Nevertheless, the statement that all stones were used as cult stones is not unambiguous. In our opinion, there may have been such tailor-stones, at which rituals were held, including sacrifices, as well as those which took only a certain place relating to the mythological scenery in the worldview of ancient people. The fact that not only stones but also other objects within the mythological scenery, such as a haystack, are related to the devil-mender, supports the latter assumption.

In mythology, a tailor, typically portrayed in legends as a lame man, is related to chthonic deities. Lameness as a trait of a chthonic personage, such as a tailor, is usually true, as physically weak people became tai-

lors, since they were obviously unable to perform the difficult work of a farmer. Motifs of legends related to the Latvian mythological landscape where tailors performed stone-rolling activities, interpret causes of the tailors' lameness in a peculiar way. In Belarusian writings, a hypothesis has been put forward concerning the possible identity of tailor-stones and pagan priests, highlighting it as the master's role in the creation of something new (Kashkurevich 2005). It must be said that there is a certain gap between the tailor as an unimportant, mocked person, and the tailor as a demiurge.

Conclusion

Some questions remain unanswered as to why in some legends a tailor makes an excellent garment, but in others a poor devil-mender can never succeed in completely mending his own trousers. Neither does this research provide an answer as to why in one case female deities appear in connection with objects of the mythological scenery, whereas only males are closely linked to tailor-stones and cobbler-stones. These questions currently remain as food for thought and further research. The objective of our article is to show that, as in neighbouring countries, there are many objects of nature in Latvia where mythical creatures deal with the making of wearing apparel.

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Received: 28 January 2010; Revised: 5 May 2011;
Accepted: 16 May 2011.

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MITINĖS BŪTYBĖS, DRABUŽIŲ SIUVIMAS IR KRAŠTOVAIZDIS

Janis Cepitis, Lilija Jakubenoka

Santrauka

Straipsnyje kalbama apie tai, kad Latvijoje, kaip ir kaimyninėse šalyse, prie kraštovaizdžio objektų (pirmiausia akmenų) mitinės būtybės verpiančios, siuvančios ir adančios drabužius, gaminančios avalynę.

Baltarusijoje gerai žinomi akmenys siuvėjai, t. y. akmenys, kurie patys geba siūti. Rytų Latvijoje, Latgaloje, tokių paminklų yra keletas, dar vienas – Vidžemės šiaurės vakaruose, Alūksnės ežero pakrantėje. Du akmenys Vidžemės ir Latgalos paribyje, Aiviekstės baseine, vadinami Siuvėjais, tačiau apie juos pasakojami padavimai nemini nei drobės, nei drabužių. Apie vieną iš šių akmenų sakoma, kad ten sėdėdavęs ir sau kelnes lopydavęs velnias. Apie antrąjį Siuvėju vadinamą akmenį, buvusį Aiviekstės upėje, pasakojama, kad pavasarį, tikėdamiesi laimingos kelionės upe, sielininkai jam aukodavę „adatas" arba karklų vyteles.

Baltarusių folklore akmenys siuvėjai pirmiausia siuva žmonėms, o Latvijoje paplitę panašūs padavimai turi savitų bruožų – velnias, atsisėdęs ant akmens, adąs savo drabužius. Beje, su adančiu velniu susiję ne vien akmenys, bet ir kiti Latvijos mitologinio kraštovaizdžio elementai: medžiai, kelmai, tam tikros upių vagos ir pakrančių vietos, taip pat klėtys ir daržinės; o ypatingas latvių folkloro bruožas – padavimai apie siuvėjus, kurie kitados ant kalno priridenę akmenų.

Baltarusijoje ir Lietuvoje plačiai paplitę akmenys, kurie, anot padavimų, siuvantys batus. Latvijoje žinomi tik du tokie akmenys, abu Latgaloje. Vidžemėje užfiksuoti analogiški padavimai nesiejami su akmenimis: vienu atveju velnias siuva batus miške, antru – kapinėse, o trečiu – netoli Velnio olos.

Unikaliu laikytinas padavimų motyvas apie tai, kad prie kai kurių akmenų pasirodančios mitinės būtybės moterys ir verpiančios, vejančios arba siuvančios. Latvijoje, Mērsrags vietovėje, žinomas vienas toks akmuo; esą šventa laikoma mergaitė šalia akmens verpianti, arba verpimo ratelio ūžesį galima išgirsti pačiame akmenyje! Ne mažiau kaip du analogiški akmenys yra Lietuvoje – ten verpiančios nepaprastos moterys. Viename padavime iš Latvijos Kuršo pasakojama, kad raganos šalia akmens vejančios virves, kitame – kad ant akmens sėdėdama močiutė mezganti velnio vaikams kojines.

Nepaprastos moterys verpėjos regimos ne vien prie akmenų, jos taip pat pasirodo greta olų, kalvose ir ant piliakalnių.

Latvių padavimų motyvai apie akmenis siuvėjus labai panašūs į baltarusių. Baltarusijos akmenys siuvėjai – tai paprastai dideli rieduliai, gulintys žemose vietose, kartais – vandens pakrantėje. Tokie patys Latvijos akmenys siuvėjai – daugelis jų yra upių arba ežerų pakrantėse, kartais – net upės vagoje. Panašumo esama ir kalbant apie tai, kad siuvėjai nepatenkinti, kai kas nors imasi juos mokyti siūti. Tačiau latvių padavimai turi savitą pabaigą – čia akmenys siuvėjai gali judėti iš vienos vietos į kitą. Antai vienas iš šių akmenų siuvėjų, pamokytas kaip reikia dirbti, ne prarado siuvimo galią, o upe persikėlė į naują vietą už šimto varstų! Tokia pasakojimo eiga primena Lietuvoje esančią akmenų Mokų šeimyną, kuri susirado sau naują vietą persikėlusi per upę.

Baltarusijos tyrinėtojai nurodo, kad straipsnyje nagrinėjamų ir apskritai visų šventų akmenų kultas yra baltų genčių paveldas. Akmenys siuvėjai Baltarusijoje paplitę ten, kur egzistavo Dniepro-Dauguvos archeologinė kultūra, o savo ruožtu akmenys, siuvantys batus, būdingi brūkšniuotosios keramikos kultūros teritorijai. Abu Latvijoje esantys akmenys, siuvantys batus, taip pat sietini su brūkšniuotosios keramikos kultūra. Iš akmenų siuvėjų tik Alūksnės ežero pakrantėje esantis akmuo yra toliau nuo brūkšniuotosios keramikos kultūros arealo.

Padavimai apie ant akmens adantį velnią žinomi ir minėtosios brūkšniuotosios keramikos kultūros teritorijoje, ir Šiaurės Vidžemėje, kur tuo metu gyveno ugrosuomių gentys, pažįstamos iš būdingos joms tekstilinės keramikos.

Vertė Vykintas Vaitkevičius

ANCIENT SACRED PLACES IN LITHUANIA: CROSSROADS OF GEOGRAPHY, ARCHAEOLOGY AND FOLKLORE

VYKINTAS VAITKEVIČIUS

Abstract

This article addresses the current stage of research on Lithuania's ancient sacred places. Numerous examples and discussions prove that these are cases for cross-disciplinary investigation. Although they are different, all the geographical, archaeological, linguistic and folklore aspects are important, and urgently require careful consideration, both by analysis and synthesis.

The article discusses the Lithuanian term *senoji šventvietė* ('ancient sacred place') and difficulties concerning the understanding of it. The division of sacred places into areas is presented from a geographical point of view; historical factors are mentioned, as well. Attention is drawn to the local geographical features of sacred places, such as, for instance, their association with the points of the compass. The amount of archaeological stray finds with respect to sacred places is discussed. Finally, some important details are pointed out, while presenting research into place names and folklore associated with sacred places.

Key words: Balts, *alka*, ancient sacred place, archaeology of religion.

Research into ancient sacred places was a rather slow and hard process during the 20th century. A lot of ideological and methodological controversies surrounded the subject. In fact, the religious role, which is still topical in some cases, the multidisciplinary character of sacred places, and the ambivalent ideological attitudes towards them were factors that affected the issue very much.

The initial professional approaches to the sacred places of the Balts that were proposed by Marija Alseikaitė-Gimbutienė (1943, pp.65-71) and Eduard Šturms (1946) were mainly ignored in Lithuania and Latvia, their homelands, in Soviet times, or, as in Šturms' case, they were left unknown, due to the extremely limited number of published copies.

Since the 1970s, which was a turning point in politics and culture, research into Lithuanian sacred places has changed significantly. Archaeological excavations of several sites have taken place for the first time, and interpretations based on their results have been proposed (Urbanavičius 1972; 1977). Also, the reliability of written sources on the religion and mythology of the Balts was newly verified. But real recognition of ancient sacred places in Lithuania should be counted from the 1990s. Substantial progress in recording and summarising material is also a characteristic feature of this period (Urbanavičius 1994; Vaitkevičius 1998a).

Nowadays, nearly 2,500 ancient sacred places have already been recorded across Lithuania. This consists of hills, arable fields and meadows, groves and trees, rivers and springs, lakes and wetlands, stones, and hollows. There are also some caves known in exposures on river banks. But statistics are not the main point. The data already allows analytical work. However, there is still an evident lack of academic discussion. Many aspects of the history of ancient sacred places remain undiscovered.

Perception and denotation of the subject

There are several Lithuanian terms denoting ancient sacred places. Because of numerous parallels in other Indo-European languages, the Lithuanian *alka* (feminine) and *alkas* (masculine) are regarded as the most archaic and appropriate terms. But since they have survived only in a few regions of Lithuania and are mainly used as proper names, this usually leads to considerable misunderstandings. In this regard, it was proposed to use the more neutral term *senoji šventvietė* meaning an 'ancient (pre-Christian) sacred place', which also presupposes that such a sacred place is either an object of a natural character or situated in nature (or both specifications together).

But not only is there the question of the term and its equivalents in foreign languages; the concept of a sacred place in Lithuania is not well established yet. An 'ancient sacred place' quite commonly covers a wide range of matters, including stones with carvings from historical periods, sites where evil used to appear, hidden treasure sites, and so on. This means that an ancient sacred place is still closely associated with the broad term 'mythological place', as well as with the particular archaeological term 'prehistoric cult place'.

A puzzle of evidence for 'ancient sacred place' illustrates the complicated pattern of details and phenomena that should be considered in the course of the investigation. The frequency of appearance of associations between archaeological, linguistic, folklore and ethnological evidence and ancient sacred sites is rather different (Table 1).

In fact, an ancient sacred place seems to be a kind of combination of evidence characteristic of mythological sites presenting mainly place names, folklore and traditions, and prehistoric cult places yielding different material evidence.

The Lithuanian *senoji šventvietė*, translated into English as an 'ancient sacred place', demands at least one type of association with particular evidence, but the whole complex of them remains always the primary objective of researchers. Experience shows that ancient sacred places, usually possessing specific names, accompanied by folklore and sometimes considered in religious treatment, are rarely associated with archaeological finds.

Later in the article, I intend to give a short overview of ancient sacred places, presenting some cross-disciplinary points of view.

The division of ancient sacred places into areas

The cognition of sacred places gradually arises with every research project. So far, the most comprehensive data originates from the west and east of Lithuania. Corresponding catalogues of ancient sacred places have already been published (Vaitkevičius 1998b; 2006). The catalogues include maps, photographs, drawings and descriptions: key resources for research. This collection of data clearly demonstrates that some geographical features, like highlands, lowlands, wetlands, and so on, influence the division of sacred places into regions. In certain cases, it also correlates with the cultural areas drawn by archaeologists and ethnographers.

The first region in the west is evidently oriented towards the Baltic Sea. It is distinguished first of all by the huge amount of sacred hills usually called Alka hill (Alkos kalnas) and sacred stones, usually boulders without artificial features. The second region has a continental character, and can be described as a part of the East European forest zone (Fig. 1A). The huge amount of fields and meadows called Alka, and water bodies of different sizes and character, are remarkable here. But the striking fact is that the boundaries of the areas of sacred places have been substantially affected by the historical development of the country. Since much evidence for ancient sacred places dates from the 14th to the 20th centuries, the ravages of political history might be as important in the course of research as the complex of geographical features.

There are no serious differences in nature in comparing the Užnemunė region (No. 1 in Fig. 1B) with others, but there are no *alka* / *alkas* place names recorded. This type of name is characteristic of the 'classical period', when holy places were established, used and accepted as legal appearance. The Užnemunė region was to a large extent deserted in the late 13th century (after 1283), was newly colonised from the early 16th century, became a part of the Prussian Empire in 1795, and was included in the autonomous Polish state in 1815.

The second area, which is called Klaipėda (Memel) land (No. 2 in Fig. 1B), was under Prussian/German rule for more than 500 years from the early 14th century. In the 16th century, the inhabitants of the region became mainly Lutherans. An important point to us is that there is a distinct lack of ancient sacred places. A slightly different situation is observed only in areas bordering on the Samogitia region (to the east and southeast).

The third example looks contrary to the ones mentioned above. The Vilnius area (No. 3 in Fig. 1B) was under Poland for 20 years in the period 1919 to 1939. Nothing essential happened there from the point of view of ancient sacred places. Perhaps this historical period was too short for essential changes? Or else it might

Table 1. The frequency of appearance of associations between particular evidence and different concepts of ancient sacred places, based on Lithuanian data (compiled by the author).

	Archaeological finds in particular context	Place names of a sacral character	Folklore texts: place legends, tales, etc	Religious treatment and particular ethnographic traditions
1) An ancient sacred place as a mythological site	- (Very rare)	+ (Often)	+ (Often)	+ (Often)
2) An ancient sacred place as a prehistoric cult site	+ (Always)	- (Rare)	- (Rare)	- (Rare)

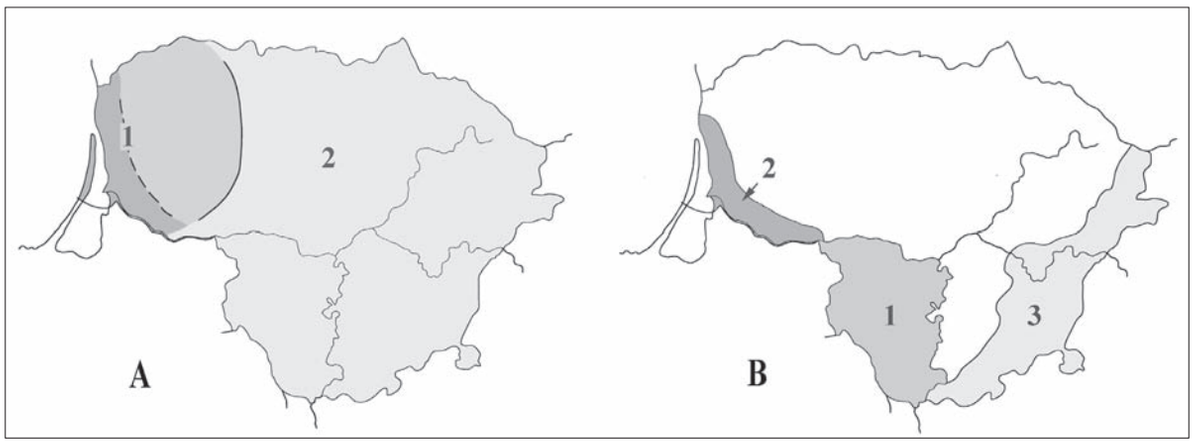

Fig. 1. (A) The geographical regions of ancient sacred places in Lithuania (1 the western area; 2 the eastern area); (B) historical regions dating from the 15th to the 20th centuries which affect the presence and character of ancient sacred places (1 the Užnemunė region; 2 the Klaipėda land; and 3 the western boundary of the Vilnius area) (drawn by the author).

be that the nature of the Polish state's policy, which was characterised by the dominance of the Catholic Church, the Polish language and slow economic progress, was similar to the previous situation in the area.

Examining the geography of ancient sacred places

In research into sacred places, their geographical features deserve special consideration along other features. The data we already possess is rich in variations, but it also clearly indicates the possible significance of global and local geographical factors. Although it has not been carefully investigated so far, we may sometimes observe the evident importance of the site's geomorphology, or the particular site's associations with the points of the compass. Examples worth mentioning are as follows: the northern bay of Lake Lūkstas, where most amber pieces used to emerge, is regarded as being sacred; natural mineral water springs often deserve more attention in comparison to other sources; mounds, stones, water bodies and trees with unusual shapes are usually pointed out as being of particular religious interest, and many others.

Concerning the points of the compass, in connection with ancient sacred places, we must underline the key axes: east–west, and north–south. For centuries, the east–west axis has been a special focus for the Balts. This statement can be supported by a number of burial sites in graves oriented in an east–west direction. The significance of facing east also appears in an examination of flowing water. In contrast to water flowing west, sacred springs approaching the east deserve special attention in terms of religious treatment; they used to possess vital powers of life, health, youth and beauty. This is still explained as a result of the positive influence of the rising sun (Vaitkevičienė 2001, pp.151-154). Moreover, in corresponding activities, the use of such spring water should be performed in the course of the sunrise.

An example taken from the Samogitia region, the area of the lower reaches of the River Dubysa (in the Nemunas basin), is of an even more global scale. Symptomatically, tributaries of the Dubysa flowing east, and some other water bodies (Fig. 2), have something special in their names, or traditions connected with them. This could rarely be stated in the case of rivers in the area flowing to the west or the south.

Particular water bodies (rivers or lakes) and roads (sometimes a network of them) used to act in a role of local factors affecting the geographical situation and topography of ancient sacred places. So far, this question has not been thoroughly investigated. Evidently, sacred places, water bodies on the one hand, and roads on the other, are so intimately connected that it is impossible to find out which element of them is more significant than the others.

Archaeology in action

Let us turn to archaeology, where we might find good prospects for research into ancient sacred places, along with considerable difficulties posed by the definition of their religious functions and the establishment of a chronology.

There are only a few examples of sacred places of which the archaeological context and chronology might be defined to a greater or lesser degree. These are first of all cup-marked stones.

Enormously numerous in northern Estonia, such stones are rather rare in Lithuania (Vaitkevičius 2004, pp.27-

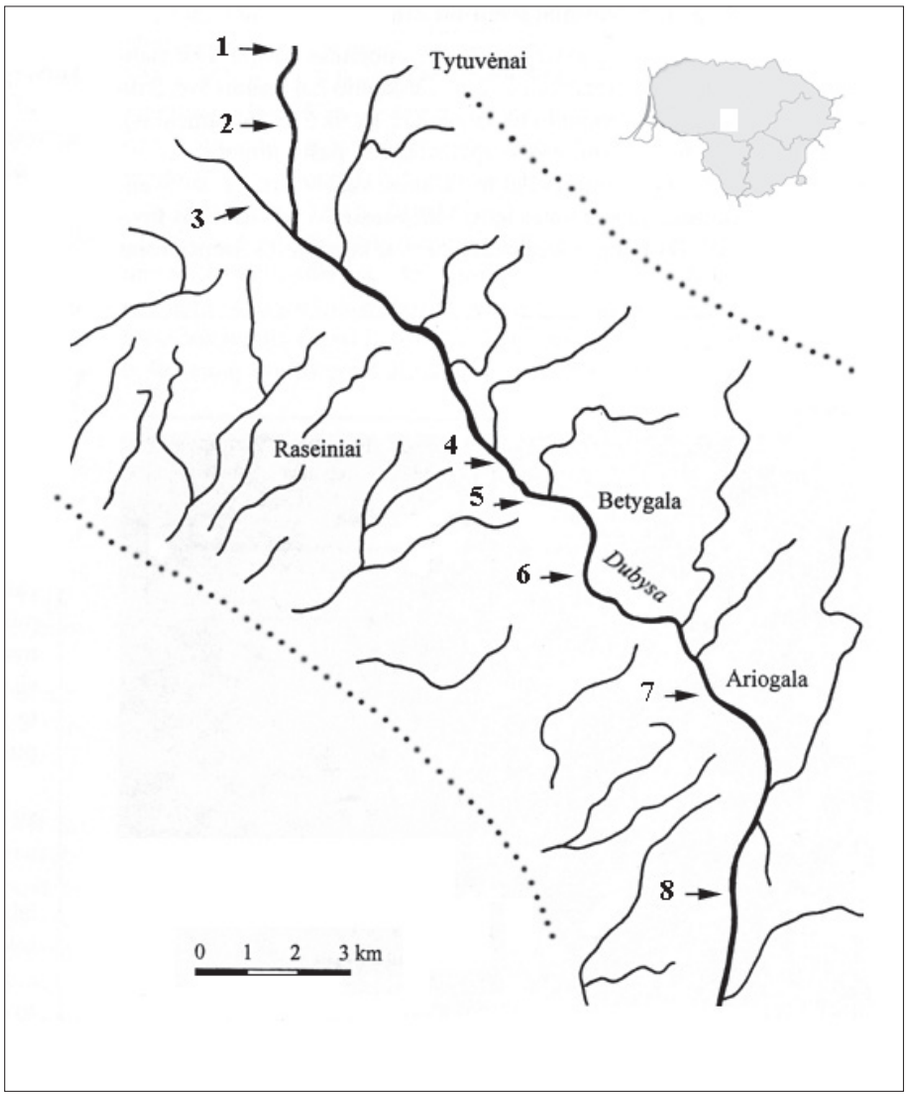

Fig. 2. The lower reaches of the River Dubysa. The Dubysa's tributaries and other water bodies with sacred names: 1 Maironiai holy spring; 2 Padubysis holy river (Šventravis); 3 Janapolis souls' river (Veliuonėlė); 4 Kengiai Alka river (Alkupis); 5 Žemygala holy river (Šventravis); 6 Kejėnai holy river (Šventupis); 7 Kalniškiai goddesses' well (Deivių šulinėlis); 8 Pašiliai Alka rivulet (Alkus) (drawn by the author).

28, Map XIV), Belarus (Vinakurav *et al.*, 2003) and Latvia (Urtans 1987; in fact, the data needs to be updated). The principal conclusions made by Andris Tvauri (1997) and referring to the Estonian data are also relevant to the above-mentioned region in the south. Originating in the Bronze Age, prevalent in the Early Iron Age, that appearance, linked to agricultural activities also covering appropriate rituals, lasted into the early first millennium AD in Lithuania.

Cylinder-shaped stones with a flat-bottomed bowl on their upper surface present a much more restricted distribution area, focused mainly on northwest Lithuania and southwest Latvia (Vaitkevičius 2004, p.28ff, Map XV). The shape of these Curonian stones still shrouded in the mists of the Iron Age is surprising and unique. The most recent archaeological evidence of the use of this kind of sacred place (potsherds in fireplaces right by the stones) is dated to as late as the 18th or early 19th centuries.

Altogether, archaeological finds appear comparatively rarely in ancient sacred places. Besides, we are forced to acknowledge that they usually represent completely different periods of prehistory, covering a long chronological period from the Late Neolithic to the Middle Ages, and even later. In spite of the difficulties with interpretations, the dozens of stray finds stored in museums and private collections constitute a great reserve for further research. The huge amount of artefacts found by changes (usually) or during investigations (exceptionally rare), like polished flint and stone axes, flanged bronze axes, bronze and silver neck-rings, crossbow fibulae, swords, and other artefacts without a certain archaeological context discovered in wet areas or just in water bodies, during the ploughing of

peat bogs or newly prepared fields, are worth mentioning (Plate V, Fig. 3) (Puzinas 1938, pp.198-204; Rimantienė 1977, pp.131-133; Vaitkunskienė 1981, pp.27-31; Kazakevičius 1996, pp.101-124; Bliujienė 2010). A careful examination of these stray finds might be of considerable benefit to the search for archaeological evidence directly in the area or just in the surroundings of ancient sacred places of those that lack prehistoric or early historical consideration. The discussion of the concept of a sacred place at the beginning of this article already presupposes that task.

For the present purpose, we might focus either on a particular type of find to study the possible regularity in their deposition or to reveal the possible connections between artefacts and lakes, stones, trees or other sites in nature.

In this case, a brief glance at a description of the circumstances in which stray finds like polished flint axes and shaft-hole axes were found shows that in this case we are also dealing with ritual depositions (Brazaitis, Piličiauskas, 2005, pp.94-96; Johanson 2005). Besides other rivers, rivulets, lakes, peat bogs and boulders, natural locations but not habitation sites are mentioned as find places. It is also easy to recognise a couple of well-known sacred places among them, like, for instance, Vilkų Kampas Alka site (in the Šilutė district), the River Aitra passing the Lembas Alka site (in the Šilalė district), Bajorai (Jagelonys) Cock's Stone (in the Elektrėnai district), Rokiškis Devil's Hill (Rokiškis) (Rimantienė 1974, pp.109, 146, 175, 196), and others.

The finds reviewed above are outstanding examples of mythology embedded in prehistoric religious treatment. Flint and stone axes, still known as thunderbolts, clearly refer to the myth of faith between the Thunder and the Devil still prevalent in the oral traditions of Indo-European lands (Balys 1939). But the question when flint and stone axes were deposited in ancient sacred places surely remains open. It might have happened following the same approach to thunderbolts as having supernatural powers in the Late Neolithic as well as in the Middle Ages (Piličiauskas 2007; Johanson 2009).

Another attitude towards finds as potential archaeological evidence for ancient sacred places might focus on 'simply' natural places, like lakes, trees or stones, where artefacts have been discovered. For instance, lakes have provided researchers with prehistoric artefacts of different types and chronologies. Worth mentioning are two polished flint axes found in Lake Dubingiai (in the Molėtai district) (Rimantienė 1974, pp.120-121), four shaft-hole axes found in Lake Daugai (in the Alytus district) (Rimantienė 1974, p.117), two unique stone head-shaped figurines found in Lake Galvė (Trakai) (Plate VI, Fig. 4), and stirrups, a horse's bell, a buckle and other items found in Lake Puikinas (now absorbed by the reservoir at Elektrėnai). At the same time, a collection of amber figurines, the Juodkrantė (Schwarzort) Hoard, should be mentioned, although certain circumstances surrounding that discovery have never been defined (Bliujienė 2007, pp.80-92).

Another location in nature from where stray finds sometimes originate is boulders. For instance, polished shaft-hole axes are known to be deposited near sacred stones in Antakmenė (in the Ignalina district), Bajorai (Jagelonys) (in the Elektrėnai district), Kadarai (Biržai district), Pakriaunys and Sidariškės (both in the Rokiškis district) (Vaitkevičius 2006, pp.321, 575, 587). Right by a stone in fields at Kusai village (in the Skuodas district), three silver neck-rings were found (Jablonskis 1993, p.185). In addition, people used to discover artefacts under stones, for example, in the Kūtymai site (in the Šilalė district) some bronze rings and arm-bands were found right under a stone (Rimantienė 1977, p.132), and in Gudė field at Černaučizna (in the Anykščiai district) at least 43 fire-damaged finds characteristic of the middle to late 13th century were found. Among them was a sword with an inscription on its blade, and also some spearheads, axes, knives, razors, awls, fire steels, stirrups, spurs, potsherds, and so on (Ribokas, Zabiela 1994). While talking about later periods of history, belongings of great value and coins hidden under stones appear rather well known in present-day Lithuania (Ivanauskas 1995). It is very likely that this phenomenon recalls in some ways the old custom of deposition, but now they are just looking for divine protection for a particular human's wealth.

To sum up, even though we handle a large amount of archaeological evidence linked to religious treatment, the question of putting together artefacts and ancient sacred places in many ways remains without a clear answer. It can only be assumed that single deposits might refer to what we call, or intend to call, ancient sacred places today.

Tracing sacred places in place names and folklore

An outstanding place name (the name of a mythological character or just one including a theonym) is often the only feature of an ancient sacred place that might be considered. The use of them in research is remarkably similar to that applied in linguistics, historical geography and folklore. However, many unsolved, sometimes even substantial, problems are related to terms

shared by both pre-Christian and Christian religions, and presented also in place names. Of course, the first in this range is the Lithuanian *šventas*, meaning 'holy'.

Šventas and its numerous cognates (Latvian *svēts*, Prussian *swints*, Old Slavonic *svętŭ*, Russian *святой*, etc), which have their origins in pre-Christian religions (Benvenist 1995, pp.344-346; Mallory, Adams 1997, pp.493-494), were used with the same meaning 'holy' as in Christianity. Problems caused by place names are not of such a global scale. But in any case, they need careful analysis and appropriate response, as, for instance, in the case of Sacred Fields or Meadows (Šventas laukas, Šventoji lanka), someone should find out whether such a name is inherited from pre-Christian times or whether it just expresses a link between the place and Christianity (if the ground was once donated to a church, or the altar of a particular saint in it).

The issue of place names that we are discussing is rather complicated, but sometimes, as successful investigation trials show, the only way to learn about the regional peculiarities of ancient sacred places is to find out how old they might be.

For instance, mapping place names considering the celebration of the feast of midsummer (St John's Eve) provides us with three different areas where specific place names denote this particular type of ancient sacred place (Fig. 5). Hills of the Sun (Saulėkalniai) in the west appear in a very archaeological context, on a spot together with Samogitian hill-forts and burial grounds of the mid-to-first millennium AD to the early second millennium AD (Fig. 5:A); whereas Kupolė Hills (Kupoliakalniai) in the east are evidently connected with villages established in historical times, in the 16th and 17th centuries (Fig. 5:B). Despite the extremely late chronology, latter sacred places have accumulated spectacular traditions from pre-Christian times, namely to provide food and drink for communal feasts on the upper flat surface of the unaltered table-shaped stone (Plate VI, Fig. 6). Šatrija Hills are common in the middle, between the two areas already mentioned (Fig. 5:C). The fact that *šatrija* is also a well-known witch's epithet directs us perhaps to the transition period from pagan to Christian culture. People familiar with old customs and still practising them were placed outside society and its Christian norms.

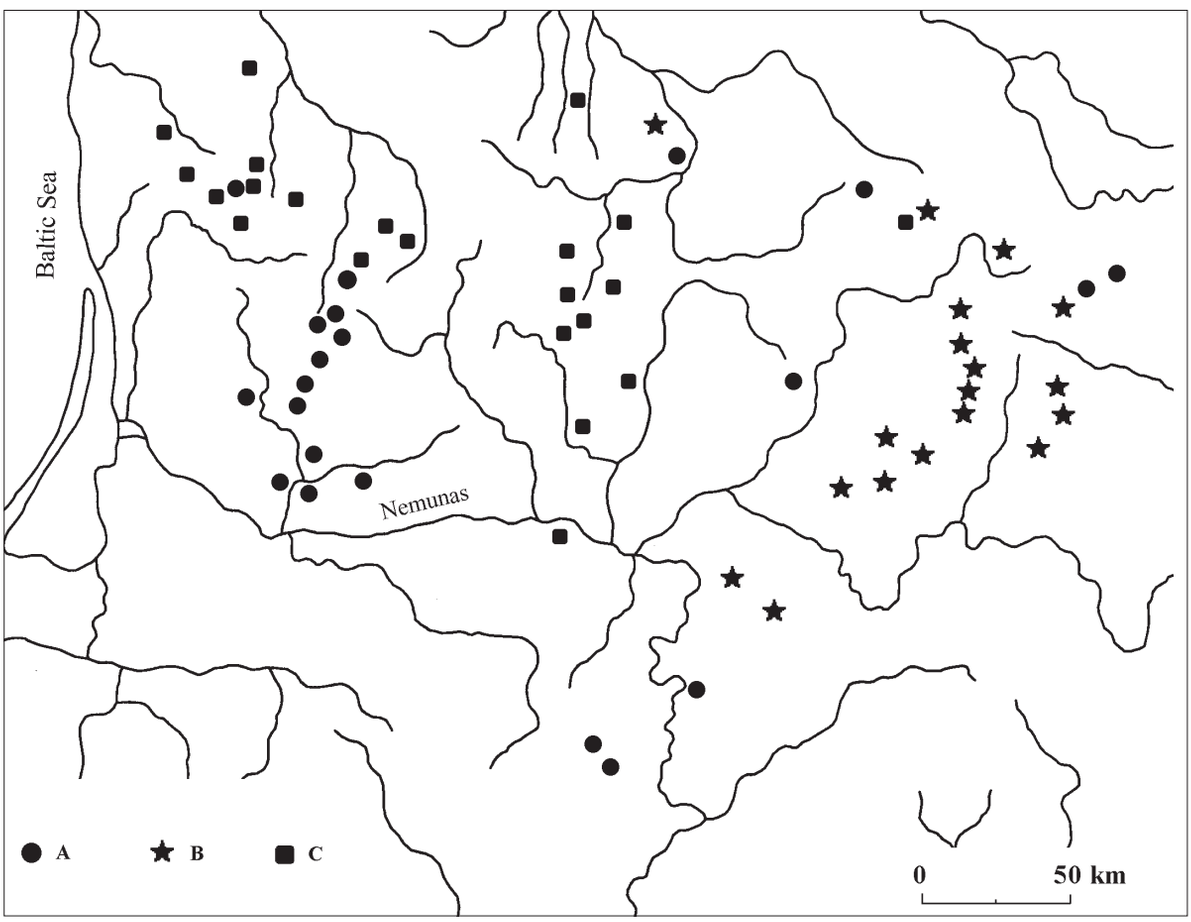

Fig. 5. The distribution of selected sites for the feast of midsummer (St John's Eve): A Hills of the Sun; B Kupolė Hills; C Šatrija Hills (according to Vaitkevičius 2004, Map V).

Fig. 7. Šatrija Hill (on the left) in the Telšiai district: an administrative, defensive and religious centre in northern Samogitia up to its conversion to Christianity in 1421. It later became closely associated with witches (compare also Šatrijos Ragana 'the Witch of Šatrija Hill', a widely known saw with a negative meaning) (photographed by V. Daugudis in 1964).

Places (the same ancient sacred places) for such performances became associated with evil (Fig. 7).

Folklore, like place legends, tales or just beliefs referring to ancient sacred places, plays a special role in our research. Usually folklore is the first, and often also the only, source that informs us about past and modern human experience related to sacred places. It is hard to say how big the entire body of folk narratives in Lithuania is. It consists of around 80,000 pieces in total, but these are rather different from the point of view of their content and length. Perhaps only a tenth of that amount of pieces accompanies ancient sacred places, as usual and first of all, hills, lakes, trees and stones.

Folklore contains at least four thematic sections that deserve our attention today. The first displays different relationships between ancient sacred places and living people, such as, for instance, their extraordinary visions, healing, miracles, and so on. It is quite easy to recognise pieces of this kind. The words 'it really happened to me ...' or 'believe me ...' appear at the beginning or the end.

The second folklore section represents mythological content: there are also, to a greater or lesser degree, descriptions of characters acting in the field of ancient sacred places. Some gods and goddesses, their manners, activities, figurative expressions, and so on, are remarkable. Of course, the devil (in Lithuanian *velnias*) is first in this particular range, but surely deserves special investigation in every case (Vėlius 1987; cf. Valk 2001).

The third section is of a mythological nature too, but it deals with symbols and metaphors, and also with a kind of encoded information from the point of view of modern society and its culture. An image of a church that once drowned in earth or water is the most prevalent one. It absolutely ignores the boundaries of all the regions, is presented in a huge amount of different variations, and at the same time preserves its keynote: the ancient sacredness (of a pre-Christian character) is now hidden in the underworld (Vaitkevičienė, Vaitkevičius 1996, pp.172-175; cf. Klintberg 2010, pp.359-374). In fact, it has died for people living in the present-day world. Sometimes there is only a 'passive' memory of the subject left, sometimes also particular attempts to save the church ('sanctuary') are known.

Remembrance of ancient times, or the 'pagan past' in other words, is the last piece I want to mention. It is not always possible to distinguish authentic remembrances from a kind of reconstructed history. Anyway, there are some typical motifs that are of special interest: 1) the making of sacrifices; 2) a holy fire burning constantly; 3) the presence of virgins, called *vaidilutės* (or just *mergos*, *panos* 'girls [not married yet]', or *vienuolės*

'nuns') who served the needs of the priest; 4) the high priest (or his servants) committing suicide soon after Christianity was introduced.

Sporadically, motifs one to three appear all over Lithuania, and are usually associated with sacred hills, hill-forts, stones, groves and trees. However, the most complete picture is observed within the boundaries of Samogitia, and is clearly connected with the distribution area of Alka hills. In this respect, the above-mentioned motifs might be considered as both reliable and valuable data from the point of view of the religion of the Balts.

Besides, one more area in eastern Lithuania (around Utena) should be mentioned. Here, already-reviewed motifs are often associated with hill-forts (fortified settlements) of Striated Ware Culture and dating from the first millennium BC to the Roman Iron Age. The origins of this appearance are not clear enough. The assumption might only be made that there were some later grounds for regarding hill-forts to be sacred places.

The fourth motif is rarer than the others. Usually it is associated with water bodies, and sometimes also with stones. The priest, priestess (sometimes there is also the status of a queen mentioned) and servants-virgins meet almost the same fate everywhere: they drown themselves in a river or spring in the area near the ancient sacred place, inspired by the land's conversion to Christianity. The occurrence of the last motif in different parts of Lithuania enhances in some way its reliability (Vaitkevičius 2011).

The possible correlation between the motif 'the priestess drowns herself' and historical events on the eve of Lithuania's conversion to Christianity in the late 14th century is a most intriguing issue. It concerns Birutė (died in 1382 or 1383), who was, before she married Kęstutis in 1349, a Samogitian virgin, or *vaidilutė*. This legend was recorded in the early 16th century, and it has been accepted to a greater or lesser degree by modern historians (Gudavičius 2004, pp.74-75; Bumblauskas 2005, pp.118-119). According to the chronicle written by Wigand von Marburg in 1394, Birutė was lured by Grand Duke Jogaila or his followers soon after her husband's murder in 1382 (Scriptores 1863, p.614; in 1386 Jogaila became a Christian himself, and was the initiator of the state's conversion to Christianity in 1387).

The story of Birutė's murder has very likely influenced the folklore considering ancient sacred places. Birutė appears sometimes in places names or place legends in the role of virgin *vaidilutė* or duchess. In addition, this fact draws our attention to water as a space and substance being perhaps in a particular way appointed to priests and priestesses.

Conclusions

These examples and the brief discussion prove that ancient sacred places are a case for cross-disciplinary research. Although they are different, all the reviewed geographical, archaeological, linguistic, folklore and also some other aspects of sacred places are important for their cognition and precise definition. The latter is not yet well established, and urgently needs a wide international discussion like this. Based on Lithuanian data and research experience, the assumption might be made that the concept of an ancient sacred place is a kind of combination of evidence characteristic of mythological sites presenting place names, folklore and traditions on one hand, and prehistoric cult places yielding different material evidences (artefacts, bones, etc) on the other.

The distinct interface between geographical regions and particular areas of ancient sacred places should be verified, while taking into account all possible historical factors: administrative boundaries, distribution areas of Christian faiths (Catholic, Orthodox and Lutheran), and so on. The definition of regular patterns of location and the appearance of ancient sacred places is another topical task of a geographical character.

Stray finds without a 'standard' archaeological context, otherwise known as single deposits, provide researchers with unique information about the nature of pre-Christian religious treatment, its time and space. But the theoretical question on putting together artefacts and ancient sacred places still remains in many ways without a clear answer.

The mapping of place names in detail and the determination of prevalent folklore motifs considering ancient sacred places is a huge project, but it will substantially benefit our cognition and enlarge the set of data for further analysis. In order to reveal particular national and international features, appropriate folklore studies should be fulfilled at a wide international level.

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Received: 22 April 2011; Revised: 14 May 2011;
Accepted: 21 May 2011.

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SENOSIOS LIETUVOS ŠVENTVIETĖS: GEOGRAFIJOS, ARCHEOLOGIJOS IR TAUTOSAKOS KRYŽKELĖS

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Santrauka

Straipsnis skirtas dabartinei senųjų Lietuvos šventviečių tyrinėjimų padėčiai aptarti. Jame akcentuojamas daugiaplanis šių tyrinėjimų pobūdis, o pateikiami pavyzdžiai iliustruoja geografinių, archeologinių, kalbinių bei tautosakos tyrimų ir jų metu gautų rezultatų analizės ir sintezės svarbą.

Pirmieji profesionalūs baltų šventviečių tyrinėjimai, atlikti Marijos Alseikaitės-Gimbutienės (1943) ir Eduardo Šturmo (1946) po Antrojo pasaulinio karo jų gimtinėse buvo ignoruojami, arba, kaip antruoju atveju, dėl nepaprastai mažo leidinio tiražo, nežinomi. Padėtis Lietuvoje ėmė keistis 1970-aisiais, Vytauto Urbanavičiaus tyrimų dėka. Lūžis, susijęs su oficialiu šventviečių pripažinimu ir sistemingo duomenų apie jas kaupimo pradžia įvyko 1990-aisiais (plg. Urbanavičius

1994; Vaitkevičius 1998b). Dabartiniu metu Lietuvoje daugiau ar mažiau išsamiai aprašyta apie 2500 šventviečių: kalnų, dirbamųjų laukų ir pievų, miškelių ir medžių, upių ir šaltinių, ežerų ir pelkių, akmenų, daubų, olų.

Senosioms šventvietėms pavadinti lietuvių kalba turi archajišką, kitoms indoeuropiečių kalboms giminingą terminą *alka* arba *alkas*. Tačiau bendrinėje kalboje ir tikriniuose pavadinimuose jis išliko ne visuose Lietuvos regionuose, o tai neretai kelia nesusipratimų. Atsižvelgiant į tai siūloma priimti ir vartoti neutralesnį pavadinimą *senoji šventvietė*. Tačiau tai tik iš dalies išsprendžia termino reikšmės ir sąvokos skaidrumo klausimus. Faktiškai senosios šventvietės sąvoka tebėra neiškristalizuota, ir tai esanti tam tikra mitologinės vietos (kurią paprastai apibūdina vietos pavadinimas, susijusi tautosaka ir tradicijos) bei priešistorinės kulto vietos (kurioje rasta materialinių šventvietės faktą patvirtinančių įrodymų) derinys.

Sukaupti šventviečių duomenys leidžia kalbėti apie du pagrindinius geografinius jų regionus: vakarinį, kuris visų pirma išsiskiria Alkos kalnų gausa, ir rytinį, kuris yra Rytų Europos miškų zonos dalis (1a pav.). Pastarajam ypač būdingi Alkos laukai ir įvairūs šventieji vandenys. Nepaisant gamtinių ypatumų svarbos ir įtakos, šventviečių regionus ženkliai paveikė istoriniai veiksniai. Apie tai byloja Užnemunės regionas, kuriame nėra užfiksuota nė vieno vietos pavadinimo su žodžiu *alka* arba *alkas*. Klaipėdos kraštas – tai pavyzdys, kaip veikiant specifinei regiono raidai (viešoji vokiečių kultūra, evangelikų liuteronų dominavimas ir kt.) tam tikroje teritorijoje senųjų šventviečių išliko labai mažai. Priešingai, Vilniaus kraštas, dvidešimt metų buvęs Lenkijos okupuotas, iliustruoja, kad šios aplinkybės neturėjo įtakos nei senųjų šventviečių likimui, nei jų sudėties pokyčiams.

Lokaliniai senųjų šventviečių geografijos ypatumai tebėra menkai pažinta tyrimų sritis. Nėra abejonės, kad svarbų vaidmenį vaidino vietos geomorfologija, topografija, padėtis pasaulio šalių atžvilgiu ir pan.

Visuotinai žinoma, kad archeologinių radinių šventvietėse yra reta. Tačiau tokį įspūdį sudaro tik iki šiol mažos apimties ir efektyvumo archeologinių tyrimų rezultatai senosiose šventvietėse. Muziejuose saugomas didelis skaičius priešistorinių radinių be aiškaus („tikro“) archeologinio konteksto, kuris sprendžiant iš radimo aplinkybių apibūdinimo (pvz., artefaktai buvo rasti šlapiose vietose, vandens telkiniuose, ariant durpynus ar kultivuojant numelioruotus laukus) (3, 4 pav.), yra labai artimas šventviečių sričiai. Gali būti, kad nuodugnus tokių archeologinių radinių, datuojamų laikotarpiu nuo neolito iki viduramžių ir net vėliau, nagrinėjimas ateityje pateiks senųjų šventviečių tyrimams reikšmingų išvadų – kai kurie iš minėtų radinių yra nuoroda į vietas, kurioms šiandien galėtų būti taikomas senųjų šventviečių pavadinimas.

Išskirtiniai (mitologinio turinio arba sudaryti su teonimais) vietovardžiai yra svarbi, neretai net vienintelė senųjų šventviečių nuoroda. Nepaisant visų sunkumų, su kuriais mokslininkai susiduria, nagrinėdami vietovardžius, žinoma ir labai sėkmingų senųjų šventviečių pavadinimų tyrimų. Jie nurodo svarbius lokalinius šventviečių ypatumus; kartais net suteikia duomenų apie šių šventviečių chronologiją.

Tautosakai: padavimams, sakmėms, tikėjimams, susijusiems su senosiomis šventvietėmis, tenka išskirtinis vaidmuo. Dažnai tai vienintelis šaltinis apie žmonių patirtį, susijusią su šventvietėmis praeities ir šiuolaikinėje kultūroje. Mūsų dėmesio nusipelno mažiausiai keturios tematinės tautosakos grupės. Pirmoji rodo žmonių ir senųjų šventviečių ryšius (plg. sakmes apie nepaprastus regėjimus, stebuklingus išgijimus). Antroji grupė byloja mitologinį turinį. Neretai šiuose tekstuose iškyla dievų ir deivių paveikslai, kuriuose matyti jų manieros, veiklos pobūdis, figūratyviniai raiškos būdai ir pan. Trečiosios grupės turinys taip pat yra mitologinio pobūdžio, tačiau perteiktas simbolių ir metaforų kalba. Populiariausias vaizdinys, susijęs su šventvietėmis, be abejonės, yra praeityje stovėjusios ir prasmegusios arba nuskendusios bažnyčios. Jis nepaiso geografinių ribų, turi daugybę variantų, bet išsaugo pastovų branduolį – senovinis (t. y. ikikrikščioniško pobūdžio) šventumas glūdi požemio pasaulyje. Taigi šiandienos žmonėms jis yra miręs.

Paskutinė svarbi tautosakos duomenų dalis kalba apie senovės laikus arba, kitaip tariant, apie pagonišką praeitį. Žinoma, ne visada galima tiksliai atskirti originalius ir autentiškus prisiminimus nuo tam tikros rekonstruotos arba naujai išmoktos istorijos. Bet kuriuo atveju, tiriant senąsias šventvietes, svarbūs keturi pagrindiniai motyvai: 1) aukų deginimas senovėje; 2) nuolat besikūrenančios šventosios ugnies motyvas; 3) vaidilučių (kitaip mergų, panų, vienuolių) buvimas; 4) žynys ir (arba) jo tarnai nusižudo po to, kai įvedama krikščionybė.

Pirmasis–trečiasis motyvai žinomi visoje Lietuvoje, jie paprastai siejami su šventaisiais kalnais, piliakalniais, akmenimis, miškeliais ir medžiais. Tačiau pats išsamiausias šių motyvų vaizdas matomas Žemaitijoje, kur jis faktiškai sutampa su Alkos kalnų paplitimo arealu. Tai netiesiogiai patvirtina minėto tautosakos motyvo autentiškumą.

Straipsnyje keliama prielaida, jog ketvirtasis motyvas „Žynė nusiskandina“ yra susijęs su istoriniais įvykiais Lietuvoje jos krikšto išvakarėse. Pagal Vygando

Marburgiečio kroniką (1394), žemaičių vaidilutė ir kunigaikščio Kęstučio žmona Birutė buvo nuskandinta Jogailos ar jo šalininkų neilgai trukus po Kęstučio nužudymo 1382 metais. 1386 m. apsikrikštijęs pats, 1387 m. Jogaila tapo Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės krikšto iniciatoriumi ir vykdytoju. Tikėtina, kad Birutės nužudymo istorija paveikė žodinę tradiciją, susijusią su senosiomis šventvietėmis. Kunigaikštienės arba vaidilutės vaidmenyje Birutė kartais išnyra vietovardžiuose arba padavimuose.

Apibendrinant tai, kas išdėstyta straipsnyje, dar kartą pabrėžiama tarpdalykinių tyrinėjimų svarba, akademinės diskusijos šventviečių klausimais nacionaliniu bei tarptautiniu lygmeniu svarba ir tolesnių plačių senųjų šventviečių tyrinėjimų, nukreiptų į jų geografinius ir istorinius aspektus, teorinius religijos archeologijos klausimus, vietovardžių paplitimo ir tautosakos motyvų analizę, būtinybė.

STONES-GODDESSES IN GRANARIES

NIJOLĖ LAURINKIENĖ

Abstract

The subject of this article is stones which were venerated in household surroundings. These stones that were kept in granaries were called goddesses (*Deyues*). Information about stones-goddesses is found in written sources on Baltic religion and mythology, mostly from reports by the Vilnius Jesuit College from the 17th and 18th centuries. The question arises: what deity is incarnate in theses stones, bearing in mind that the functions of the object are defined in relation to well-being in the home, full storage bins, the protection of grain and livestock?

Key words: stone, granary, Žemyna, earth goddess, Grain Goddess, Grain Mother, Baltic mythology.

In Lithuania, many stones situated in natural surroundings are known from written sources or folklore dealing with old beliefs, as incarnations of deities or demons, often tools or objects of their actions, where these mythical creatures have left a mark of their activity. Stones, objects of pagan adoration or cult places, may have been venerated not only in nature, but also in domestic surroundings as well. We have information about stones kept in homes with religious intentions from 17th and 18th-century written sources on Baltic religion and mythology. These sources supply rather fragmented information, sometimes indicating the placement of the stones in granaries, that is, in buildings set aside for the storage of grain, and that sacrifices to some goddesses were carried out on these stones. The first points to be clarified are: what cult is associated with these stones, what was the aim of the sacrifices made upon them, and who were they dedicated to? The Vilnius Jesuit College, having initiated its missions in Lithuania at the end of the 16th century, in one yearly report (the year 1600), mentions sacrificial stones called goddesses (*Deyues*). It could be in the region of Samogitia, but the precise place is not indicated. These stones are quite big, with a flat surface, dug into the ground and covered with straw.

Alibi lapines non parui in horreis, in terra defossi, superficie plana sursum versus, non terra, sed atramine contecti asseruantur, quos Deyues appellant, atque vt custodes frumentorum et pecorum religijose colunt. Focus ipse ita omnibus obseruatur religijose, vt nemo accedere propius audeat; quod si quis eum attingat, eum confractum iri credunt (BRMŠ 2001, p.620).

'In some granaries there are dug into the ground large stones, flat side up, not buried but covered in straw; they are called goddesses (*Deyues*), and are humbly revered as protectors of grain and livestock. This place of sacrifice is so protected by all, that none dare to come close to it. There is a belief that if someone touches it [the stone], that person will be struck.'

The meaning of the stones (*Deyues*) mentioned here was explained by Algirdas Julius Greimas. He claimed that the stones, written about by the Jesuits, are one of the forms of occurrence of the deity Laima (Laima-Dalia) (Greimas 1990, pp.214-217). Laima is the Lithuanian goddess of birth, destiny and happiness. However, it is difficult to think of her as a protector of grain and livestock, which is considered to be the area of *Deyues.* This field of operation is not typical of her. The available data enables us to presume that stones-goddesses and the rites performed around them were possibly related to Žemyna and her cult.

In Lithuania, it is known that there were many stones that were considered to be sacred and played a role in a cult. By themselves or together with other objects creating sacred spaces, they served as sacrificial stones where sacrifices were laid, poured or burned. Straw or hay are an attribute that was used to cover an object or a place where offerings were made and sacrificial ceremonies took place. Herodotus wrote that the hyperboreans (people of the north), when sending objects destined for sacrifice to the Sciths, would wrap them in wheat straw. Also, according to him, Thracian or Peon women (probably an Illyrian tribe), when sacrificing to the queen Artemisia, deposited sacrifices bound in wheat straw Herodotas (1988, 221-222; BRMŠ 1996, pp.116-117, 122-123). The Balts also used wheat straw or hay when making ritual offerings to the ancient gods. In a fragment of a lost text dated to the 16th century and published for the first time by Wilhelm Mannhardt (*Zedel zu einem verlorenem Briefe*, 'A Leaf from a Lost Letter') that has been conserved in the Secret State Archive of Königsberg, there is a description of a pagan Baltic sacrifice of a goat (the place is not defined), and the use of hay is also mentioned. Hay was spread under the body of the sacrificial animal, and its head was sprinkled with water from a handful of hay dipped in water. Later, the cooked flesh was laid in a bowl on a table strewn with hay (Mannhardt 1936, p.310; BRMŠ

2001, p.166). Hay was used in an offering to an 'earthly' god (*erdische goth*), which is what the goat is called here (there are quite a lot of such references among sources of Baltic religion and mythology about a connection between the goat and agriculture and its gods). Hay is also present in other rituals connected to the Baltic chthonic gods. Maciej Stryjkowsky notes that in sacrifices carried out at the end of October in Lithuania, Samogitia, Livonia, Curonia and Russia in some regions to the god Ziemiennik, the table was laid with bread and beer on hay or a towel (*stół sianem a indzie abrusem nakryją*, BRMŠ 2001, pp.515, 548). Pretorius writes that the descendants of the ancient Prussians, when blessing a calf that has been weaned, prepared a ritual meal on a basket, covered with a handful of hay instead of a tablecloth (*leget an statt des/Tisch–tuchs ein Flüßchen Heu hinauff*, Pretorijus 2006, pp.558, 559, 562, 563).

So, according to different historiographers, hay was used to cover a place where ritual meals were set, those offered to chtonic gods, or those associated with them due to their nature. Hay (in Lithuanian *šienas*) 'grass cut and dried for fodder' and straw (in Lithuanian *šiaudai*) 'a mass of grain stems after threshing' (LKŽe: *šienas, šiaudai*), were obviously connected with agriculture and animal husbandry, and not only with the practical side, closer to modern man, but with the religious side as well. Stones in granaries, stuck in the ground flat side up, were covered in straw, as was usual in the practice of pagan cults, in order to distinguish the place where symbolic communication with a deity was carried out. It might be considered as well that straw was used to cover and protect a sacred spot.

About stones that supposedly harbour deities, we can also find a mention in a later report by the Vilnius Jesuit College about the 'superstitions' of the inhabitants of Lithuania:

Nec praetermittendum in hac utraque missione quosdam tam crassa Dei et rerum coelestium ignoratione repertos, ut lapidibus ipsis nescio quid numinis inesse arbitrantes, cultu superstitioso eos venerantur et decimas omnium rerum eis offerent (1603; BRMŠ 2001, p.622).

'It must be mentioned that in each of our missions we have encountered people that know nothing at all about God or heavenly matters, but consider that some deity resides in stones, and superstitiously revere them, sacrificing one tenth of everything.'

In a report by the Vilnius Jesuit College dated 1605, there is confirmation stating that a stone can be considered a god (*Deus*), on whom the fullness of storage bins and domestic well-being depends:

Quidam rudissimi villani, opera nostrorum, prauam exuere consuetudinem colendi lapidem quendam, quem horrei ac foecunditatis, domesticaeque felicitatis Deum esse putarunt (BRMŠ 2001, p.623).

'Thanks to our efforts, more than one unlearned villager has given up the habit of offering to a stone that he used to consider the god of domestic well-being and full storage bins in the granary.'

In the 1605 report by the Vilnius Jesuit College, there is another mention of a stone kept in a home in the name of good harvests, which was rolled over a depression in the threshold:

Una superstitio pro felici fruge apud plures communis erat: servabant lapidem super orificium foveae, cui quicquid in esculentis aut poculentis habebant, promiscue ingerebant. Fecit Pater, ut domo lapines exturbarent et foveas humarent (BRMŠ 2001, p.624).

'In the hope of good harvests, many believe in the superstition of rolling a stone over a depression dug in the threshold, and taking there [a sacrifice] of what they ate and drank. The Father [Jesuit] made us roll the stone out of the house and fill the hole.'

That the threshold is a place of domestic sacrifice can be read in a service letter (1571) written in Labguva (in East Prussia) where there is a description of the Prussian sacrifice of a black goat in this place: the animal's head was chopped off 'on the threshold', after which there was prayer and other rituals (*Neben dem hat er sie dazu gebracht, dass sie ihm halfen einen schwarzen Bock heiligen, welchem sie auf der Schwelle des Hauses den Kopf abgehauen, und indem sie sämtlich herumgekniet, wie er ihnen befohlen, gebetet und andere Zeremonien mehr gebraucht*, BRMŠ 2001, p.227).

The threshold was considered holy since ancient times. Being the barrier between the safe space of the home and the outside world, it is related to various taboos and recommendations: *Su žmonėm nesisveikink par slenkstį, jei nenori su jais greitu laiku susipykt* ('Do not greet people over the threshold, if you do not want to have a falling-out soon,' LKŽe, *slenkstis*).

The inhabitants of Lithuania Minor had a tradition of leaving money on the threshold during a housewarming. According to Pretorius, during a house-blessing ceremony, the head of the family would secretly put a coin on the threshold *einen Dreypelcher* (Pretorijus 2006, p.556, 557; BRMŠ 2001, p.303). In folklore, there are references to being buried under the threshold, which would confirm beliefs found in many nations about the connection of the threshold to ancestors and the souls of the departed (Chevalier, Gheerbrant 1996, pp.997-998). *Kad gaspadinė badu miršta, reik ją*

po slenksčio pakasti ('If the housewife dies of hunger, bury her under the threshold,' LKŽe, *slenkstis*).

So the situation of a stone over a hole dug in front of a threshold, as was mentioned in the 1606 Jesuit report, would allow us to believe in a connection between this stone and what lies under the threshold with a mythical being, controlling the souls of the departed and the fertility of the earth. As we know, this part of the mythical world, ghosts and the fertile powers of the earth, traditionally belong to chthonic deities; although we will temporarily set aside the question of exactly for whom these sacrifices on the threshold stone were intended.

The Latvian belief about extraordinary stones kept in the kitchen, barn or storage buildings is referred to by a Venden Jesuit in a 1618 report (about the state of the Dunaburg, Ludsen and Rezekne parishes):

Lapides quosdam certos colunt tanquam sacros, quos servant in culina, in horreis aut in granariis, quos lingua sua vocant Atmeschenes Wête, quasi loca projectiva; nephas est apud illos magnum, talia loca prophanare, vel ab aliquo alio illa tangi, praeterquam ab eo, qui a Superiore habet facultatem; fundunt super lapides tales quorumvis animalium, quae mactant, sanguinem et a quolibet cibo portiunculum ibidem reponunt (BRMŠ 2003, p.565).

'They revere as holy certain stones kept in the kitchen, barn or storage building, calling them in their own language the place to cast things. It is a great crime to desecrate these places or to touch them, except for those that have permission from the elder. On these stones they pour the blood of animals that have been slaughtered, and bits of all kinds of food.'

The question arises, what god is incarnate in these stones, located in the barn, the kitchen or on (or maybe by) the threshold, if the deity was probably feminine (*Deyues*), and its functions defined as augmenting the fertility of the earth, the connection with well-being in the home, full storage bins, and the protection of grain and livestock? Let us remember that these stones received sacrifices of what was eaten or drunk, as well as the blood of slaughtered animals.

We know from written sources that the descendants of the ancient Prussians, as well as the Lithuanians, consigned their homes to the protection of the goddess Žemyna, who was also patronness of the earth and fertility, by simply libating the earth with food and drink: 'Before drinking, they [nowadays the Nardruvians and Skalvians, according to Pretorius] pour some on the ground for Zemynele (Žemynėlė), which is the goddess of the earth' (Pretorijus 2006, pp.482, 483). 'And guests during a wake would take great care to throw three bites of bread, the same amount of meat and as many spoonfuls, each wishing that Zemynėlė be kind to the departed in the other world, some say in heaven' (Pretorijus 2006, pp.688, 689).

Libations to Žemyna were made during religious ceremonies, when starting the seasonal cultivation or harvesting work or blessing animals, and during crucial moments of a person's life, such as birth, marriage and death.

It is worth noting the existence of stones in natural surroundings called *boba*, sometimes with an epithet. *Bobas* are associated not only with the stones-goddesses discussed above, but also with Žemyna, since some of her manifestations are called *boba*, as in *rugių boba* (Rye Woman, idols made from the last sheaf of rye) (for the relationship between Žemyna and *rugių boba*, see Laurinkienė 2008, pp.78-80).

It should be noted that in Germany, children used to be frightened by a mythical creature, the Grain Mother (like the Lithuanian Rye Woman, *rugių boba*). Her names were Kornmutter, Roggenmutter or Roggenmuhme, or the Grain Mother, Rye Mother or Rye Aunt (Mannhardt 1865, p.17). '*Kinder sollen nicht ins Kornfeld gehen, da sitzt die Kornmutter, Roggenmutter, Roggenmuhme drin*.' ('Children are not allowed into the fields of grain, because that is where the Grain Mother, Rye Mother and Rye Aunt sit.') Such warnings for children are well known throughout Germany (Mannhardt 1865, p.31). It is said that this Grain Mother or Aunt has many iron breasts. She makes children lie down and suckle until they die ('*Sie hat viele und grosze eisene Brüste. An diese legt sie die Kleinen, und zwingt sie, daran zu saugen, so dass sie sterben müssen*' Mannhardt 1865, p.31). So this German Grain Mother is a frightening and dangerous being, whose bodily parts reflecting her motherhood are big iron breasts (and in great number, too).

A stone in Levaniškiai (in the Molėtai district, near Čiulėnai) in Aukštaitija is also worth mentioning. It is called Geležine boba (Iron woman) and used to be on the edge of a swamp. The stories told about it are of some woman who later went into the earth and turned into a stone:

Senų senovėje buvo tokia boba su geležine kačerga, ir ji vaikščiojusi ir žmones mušusi su kačerga. Paskiau, sako, ji palindus žemėsna (Vaitkevičius 2006, p.238).

'In ancient times there was this woman who had an iron poker; she used to go around beating people with the poker. Later, they say, she went into the ground.'

Pasakojama, kad toj dirvoj [Gelažinėj] *yra didžiulis akmuo ir po juo sėdinti boba, kuri geležimi pavirtus. Ja kaimo žmonės baugina vaikus. Sakoma, kad vėlai*

vakare gaudanti mažus vaikus ir nešanti po akmeniu (Vaitkevičius 2006, p.238).

'It is told that in that field there is a huge stone and a *boba* [woman] sitting under it that has turned into iron. Local villagers scare their children with her. They say that late in the evening she comes out to catch small children and take them under her stone.'

The stone at the edge of a swamp, the Iron Woman from Levaniškiai, can probably be compared with this Grain Mother. The Iron Woman from Levaniškiai is probably connected with the Lithuanian grain goddess (Grain Mother) Žemyna.

As has been mentioned, stones-goddesses in granaries are keepers of grain and livestock. The goddess Žemyna is known as the goddess of grain, its cultivation and harvest, as well as of domestic animals. This can be read in a generalised form in a Vilnius Jesuit College report: '*Telluri, deae suae, utpote frugum et pecorum costudi offerunt*' ('They sacrifice to Tellus [Žemyna], their goddess, because she guards the harvest and livestock') (a letter dated 1634, from Ališauskas 2003, p.214). Žemyna, as the goddess of livestock and connected with all the goodness that comes from the earth, especially grain harvests, and not only the harvesting, but also the threshing, blessing and storing, is confirmed by Pretorius (Pretorijus 2006, pp.504-529, 559-569). In a hidden form, these areas of Žemyna's influence are mentioned in much later ethnographic sources, in Lithuanian agricultural and animal husbandry practices as late as the 20th century.

We can also associate the stones-goddesses with the earth goddess through the content of a sacrifice, a black suckling pig, whose sacrifice is described in the 1600 Jesuit report:

Mactant parcellum lactantem omni parte nigrum, quem coctum pater et mater familias, cum anu sacrifica comedunt; particulas autem tam ex porcello, quam ex aliis cibis, si qui forte parari fuerint, cum ter nouem buccellis panis, anus in horreum defert, vbi dictum Deyues sola, remotis omnibus, placat (BRMŠ 2001, p.620).

'They slaughter a suckling pig, completely black, that the father and the mother eat cooked in the company of an elderly woman sacrificer; small parts of the pig, as well as other food if they are having it, and twenty-seven pieces of bread, are then taken by the sacrificer to the granary, where she, and she alone, prays to the aforementioned goddesses [the stone].'

So in the sacrificial suckling pig feast, both the father and the mother take part, together with the sacrificer.

Pigs or piglets are typical sacrifices to earth and agricultural deities, and livestock associated with them. Pigs are the correct sacrifice to the Greek agricultural goddess Demeter. Pigs were also sacrificed to the Roman earth goddess Tellus, and the goddess of vegetation Ceres (Wissowa 1902, p.161; Guillen 1985, p.239).

That the Lithuanians made porcine offerings to the earth goddess (*tellurae dea*) is confirmed by Jacobus Lavinius (1583, BRMŠ 2001, pp.605, 608) and a 1588 Vilnius Jesuit College report: '*In oppido quodam tam crassa erat ignorantia rerum, ut porcam immolarent Deae Telluri*' ('In one small town the obscurantism was such that they sacrificed pigs to the goddess Earth') (BRMŠ 2003, pp.618, 626). The descendants of the Prussians symbolically sacrificed a pig during the sowing festivities, obviously connected with Žemyna: the pig's head, feet, and especially the snout, were the main dish in the ritual sowing meal (Pretorijus 2006, pp.500-501; BRMŠ 2003, pp.180-182, 287-288). The Jesuit Stanisław Rostowsky mentions that the people of Samogitia offered a pig to the Earth: *Telluri porca faciebant* (BRMŠ 2003, pp.140, 143; probably based on information from Lavinius).

A black piglet was also sacrificed to the Latvian Ceruoklis, the god of fields and grain, and lord of an area close to Žemyna. He was sacrificed to in forests, and not just a black piglet, but a black chicken and a black bull as well, with a couple of barrels of beer (a 1606 report by the Jesuits of Riga, BRMŠ 2003, p.555; BRMŠ 2003, pp.557, 562). Black animals were frequently offered to the gods of the earth and the underworld. According to Rostowsky, the Latvian Ceruoklis was 'the god of hospitality originating from hell' (*ex orco ille hospitalitatis deus*), to whom people libated the first bites of a meal, and the first sip of every drink (BRMŠ 2003, pp.142, 146; BRMŠ 2003, p.567).

Returning to the offering to the stones-goddesses, it is important that it was completed by the sacrificer, visiting the stone in the granary and praying alone, while everyone else stayed away, and offered the remains of the piglet and bread, divided into twenty-seven pieces. So the piglet is not the only offering, but bread is as well, as is usual when sacrificing to home or chthonic deities: Žemyna, Žemėpatis (Zemopatis, Zempattys), Pagirniai (BRMŠ 2003, pp.227, 323; pp.199, 302; 2001, pp.622, 630).

To resume, we can state that goddesses as stones in the granary that protect the grain can be interpreted as an incarnation in stone of the god of ploughed fields and the home. The sacrifice of a black piglet and bread to the stones-goddesses gives us reason to see these stones as chthonic deities, probably as an incarnation

of Žemyna. If we accept this supposition, we might conclude that the goddess Žemyna manifested herself not only in the earth and grain, but also in stones. In other words, these stones were considered a material representation of this goddess, venerated at home, and sometimes in natural surroundings.

Abbreviations

BRMŠ – N. VĖLIUS, ed. *Baltų religijos ir mitologijos šaltiniai. Sources of Baltic Religion and Mythology. Quellen der baltischen Religion und Mythologie*, vols. I–IV. Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidykla, 1996–2005.

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Received: 20 December 2010; Revised: 4 May 2011;
Accepted: 16 May 2011.

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AKMENYS-DEIVĖS SVIRNUOSE

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Santrauka

Akmenys, kaip pagoniškojo kulto objektai ir kulto vietos, galėjo būti garbinami ne tik gamtinėje, bet ir namų aplinkoje. Apie religine intencija namuose laikomus akmenis pateikia žinių XVII–XVIII a. rašytiniai baltų religijos ir mitologijos šaltiniai, daugiausia Vilniaus kolegijos jėzuitų pranešimai. Viename jų (1600 m.) kalbama apie akmenis, saugomus svirnuose ir vadinamus Deivėmis (*Deyues*), kuriems būdavo aukojamas juodas dar žindomas paršiukas ir 27 gabalėliai duonos (tai galėję būti Žemaitijoje). Šie akmenys – nemaži, plokščiu paviršiumi, buvo įkasti į žemę ir apkloti šiaudais. Jie pamaldžiai garbinti kaip grūdų ir galvijų saugotojai (custodes frumentorum et pecorum religiose colunt).

Keliamas klausimas, kokios dievybės inkarnacija buvo laikomi akmenys svirnuose, turint omenyje, kad su jais siejamos dievybės funkcijos apibrėžtos kaip ryšys su namų gerove, pilnais aruodais, grūdų ir galvijų sergėjimu.

Iš rašytinių šaltinių žinoma, kad senovės prūsų palikuonys namų aplinkoje atnašaudavę Žemynai, žemės ir jos derlingumo deivei, numesdami maisto ar nuliedami gėrimo ant žemės. Esama faktų apie aukojimus šiai deivei ir gamtoje ant akmens. Deivė Žemyna kaip tik globojusi javus, prižiūrėjusi nuimamą ir specialiuose trobesiuose saugomą javų derlių, pasižymėjusi ir naminių gyvulių patronavimu. Akmenis-deives su žemės deive leidžia sieti ir tiems adoruojamiems akmenims skirtos minėtosios aukos – juodas dar žindomas paršiukas ir 27 gabalėliai duonos. Tai – tipiškos aukos chtoninėms dievybėms. Duona ir kiauliena neretai aukota Žemynai. Jei priimtume prielaidą, kad akmenys-deivės svirnuose galėjo būti laikomi Žemynos inkarnacija, prieitume išvadą, kad ši deivė manifestuodavusi ne tik žemėje, javuose, bet ir akmenyse. Kitais žodžiais, akmenys, matyt, laikyti šios deivės materializuotu reprezentantu, garbinamu namų, o kartais ir gamtinėje aplinkoje.

THE SACRED LAKES OF THE DVINA REGION (NORTHWEST BELARUS)

ULADZIMER LOBACH

Abstract

The subject of research is the sacral geography of the Dvina region (in northwest Belarus), the sacred lakes situated in this region, and place-legends about vanished churches relating to these lakes. The author bases his research on the analytical method, and interprets folkloric sources, historical facts and data collected during ethnographic field trips. The main conclusion of the article attests to the fact that place-legends about a vanished church (they relate to the majority of the lakes) indicate the sacrality of these bodies of water. In the past, sacrality might have contained two closely interrelated planes: an archaic one, which originated from pre-Christian times, and that of the Early Middle Ages, related to the baptism of the people of the Duchy of Polotsk.

Key words: Belarusian Dvina region, sacral geography, sacred lakes, ancient religion, Christianisation, folklore.

During ethnographic field trips organised by researchers from Polotsk University between 1995 and 2008, a large amount of folklore data about lakes that still occupy a special place in the traditional vision of the world of the rural population was recorded. This means objects of 'sacral geography', which for the purposes of this article include elements of the natural landscape. They are related in a certain way in the collective folkloric memory to images of the afterworld, looking at it from a mythological point of view and construing an opposition to the human (profane) space. The notion 'sacral' does not always correspond with the notion 'sacred'. In Russian, it is expressed by two words, *святой* (holy) and *священный* (sacred). Therefore, a spring that is considered sacred and a bog named after the Devil can both be objects of sacral geography. The ambivalence of the term 'sacral' is determined by its original meaning: in Latin *sacer* means 'holy, sacral, generating a feeling of reverence', but also 'sacrificed to underworld gods, damned'.

The subject of this article is the lakes of northern Belarus that are known as 'sacred', and bodies of water to which place-legends about churches sunken in the lake are related. The scope of the study includes the entire complex of tales and beliefs related to these lakes, and the specific mythological and cultural/historical context surrounding these images and tales.

According to the linguistic, ethnographic and folkloric data available, as well as the results of field trips, 29 lakes of the type mentioned above have been identified in the Dvina region, 13 of which have names based on the word 'sacred' or derivations of it (Fig. 1). This concentration of sacral hydronyms, or lakes that are called 'sacred', is a peculiarity of the Dvina region. In the rest of Belarus, only seven lakes called 'sacred' have been found (four in the Homiel, and three in the Mahiliou region). It should also be pointed out that the concentration of lakes in the Dvina region (no more than 35 per cent of all the lakes in Belarus) is not as high as is commonly supposed. Due to popular belief, the region is often referred to as 'the land of blue lakes'. Therefore, it turns out that the reason lies in certain regional cultural peculiarities, and not in an accumulation of quantitative geographical factors. This thesis is supported by the identification of lakes called 'sacred', and related to a church that has vanished into thin air in the same area. The majority of lakes and other bodies of water to which place-legends of vanished churches are related are situated in the central part of the Dvina region, in the districts of Polotsk, Ushachy, Lepel', Beshenkovichi, Chashniki and Senno. This area corresponds with the area of Polotsk Krivichi and the distribution of their burial monuments, that is, burial mounds (Fig. 2). In the western part of the Dvina region, in the Braslav Lake District, populated predominantly by Balts, hydronyms of this kind are not known.

This peculiarity of the geographical distribution of sacred lakes makes it possible to assume that the historical precedent that became the basis for place-legends about sacred lakes was typical of the area populated by Polotsk Krivichi (the Duchy of Polotsk). Despite the archaic nature of Baltic-Slavonic lexical stock containing the root **šųenta-* (Lithuanian *švent-*, Russian *svęt-*), it is, as V.N. Toporov believes, 'secondary and should be considered to be of late origin, from the period of the introduction of Christianity'. Besides, 'the Slavs were baptised earlier than the Balts; to a considerable extent, the latter learned of Christianity thanks to the Slavs' (Toporov 1998, p.22). Attention is drawn by the fact that the Latvian word *svēts* was also

Fig. 1. The sacred lakes of the Dvina region (northwest Belarus): ● lakes called Sacred (Святые озёра); ■ bodies of water to which place-legends relating to a church sunken in the lake are related; ⭘ lakes called Sacred (Святые озёра) to which place-legends about a church sunken in the lake are related (compiled by the author).

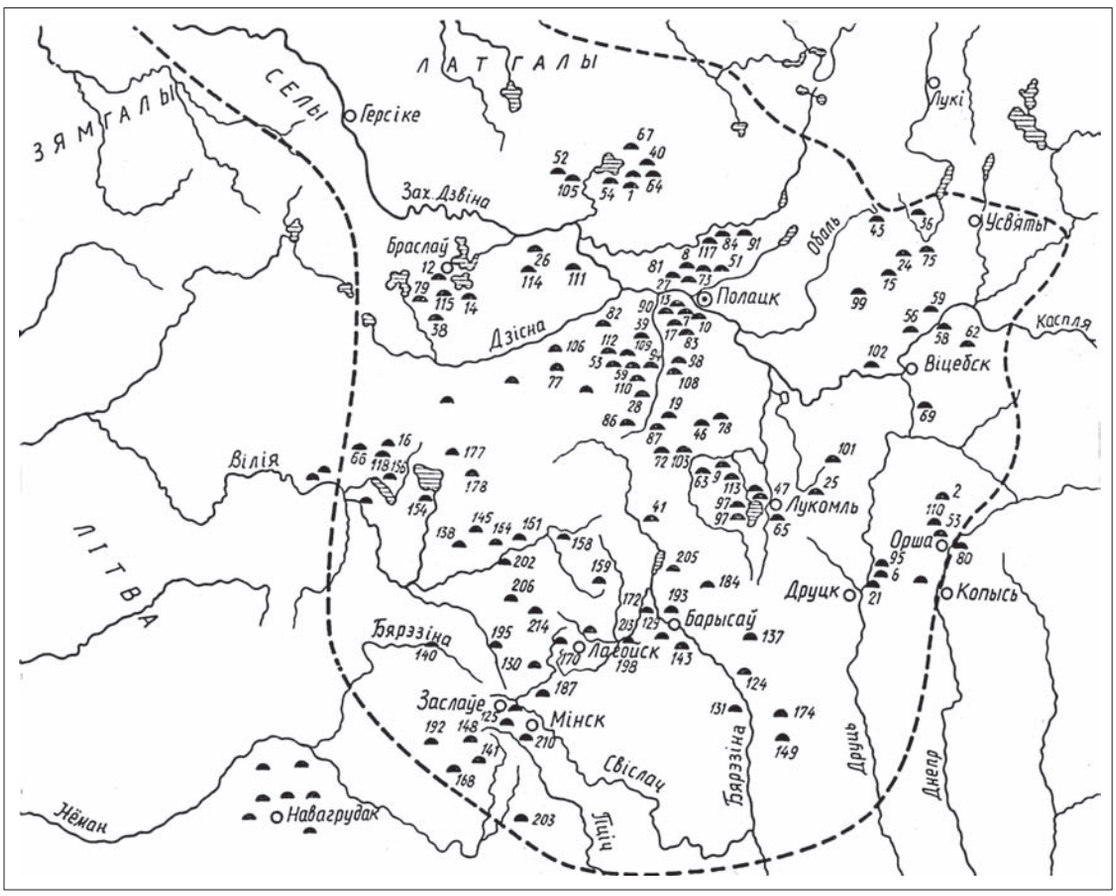

Fig. 2. A map of the Polotsk area in the tenth to 12th century, with burial mounds studied by archaeologists marked on it (Shtykov 1992, p.7, Table 1).

borrowed from the Old Russian *свят*(*ой*) (if it was borrowed from the Baltic **svent*- in the Latvian language the root would be **sviet*-) (Toporov 1988, p.22). In this context, the distribution of sacred lakes in the Polotsk area (it is the main centre for Christianity for the entire region) and their absence on the periphery of the Duchy of Polotsk, populated by Balts, lead us to the assumption that the motif of a vanished church might have originated during the baptism of the Slavic population of the Dvina region. Later in this article, we will attempt to substantiate this thesis by analysing folkloric data.

From a folkloric point of view, the majority of sacred lakes are linked to one another by place-legends about a vanished church (or a village, or a hamlet) and its attributes (such as bells). The legends say that a lake appeared at that place. K. Anikievich, who studied the southeast part of the Dvina region, drew attention to this fact as early as the beginning of the 20th century. 'When talking about scarfed lakes, people claim that these are the locations of vanished and sunken churches. For example, old people talk about a sacred lake situated not far from the village of Simakovo, in the Ostrovets bailiwick, where many years ago there was a church dedicated to St John the Baptist. When the church vanished, a lake appeared in its place. In general, it is highly probable that a long time ago there used to be churches standing close to these locations, and that in the course of time they disappeared' (Anikievich 1907, p.39).

An analysis of folklore shows us that the cause of the unexpected disappearance of a church was believed to be the violation of certain religious and ethical norms, and a punishment imposed by higher powers (God) on humans. For instance, a place-legend about a sacred lake next to the village of Selishche, in the Verkhnedvinsk district, runs as follows: 'People say that there had been no lake there earlier; there was a church standing there. People were angry with each other, or not everybody went to church regularly; therefore, the church, with the people inside it, vanished underground. Lake Sacred appeared in its place' (*Ад людзей чула, што раней возера не было, а на яго месцы была царква. А людзі то лі ругаліся, то лі дрэнна хадзілі ў царкву, патаму яна з людзьмі правалілася пад зямлю. А на гэтым месцы абразавалася Сьвятое азяро*) (AGFF R-95).

In some cases, place-legends mention human sins only indirectly. For example, the origin of Lake Sacred next to the village of Borovyye, in the Chashniki district (Plate VII, Fig. 3), is related to the corvée on Sundays: 'In times gone by, old people would say that there used to be a church there. People from our village, from Borovyye, would go there on their way to work. There was no landlord in Mihalov, only a housekeeper. The serfs went to rake hay one Sunday. On their way, they prayed in the church and then went on to Mihalov. When they came back, the church was not there. They used to walk to the fields along the same path every Sunday. Old people would say that the church used to be in the middle of the lake. And that all that was left was water' (*Калі што старыя гаварылі. Там была цэркаў. І ў гэту цэркаў хадзілі людзі з нашай дзярэўні, з Баравых. І яны на работу ішлі, а хадзілі… Ну, ён быў ня пан у Міхалове, а панскі эканом. І вот яны хадзілі туды сена грэсьці, ну, а гэта было васкрасеньня. Вот яны туды ішлі, людзі, зайшлі ў цэркаў, памаліліся і пайшлі ў Міхалова. А тады ішлі назад, а цэрквы ўжо нет. Яны кажны раз хадзілі туды ў васкрасенне на работу. Старыя людзі гаварылі, што гэтая цэрква стаяла пасерадзіне гэтага возера. А тады стала кругом яе вада і цэркаў*) (AGFF Ch-08).

The unexpected disappearance of a church and the appearance of a lake in its place is a consequence of words of damnation addressed to the sacred place. This can also be called a sin and blasphemy. A place-legend of this kind has been recorded. It tells about Lake Sviatets, next to the village of Mikulino, in the Polotsk district (Plate VII, Fig. 4): 'An old woman told about a church when she was 105 years old and I was 15. She knew this place-legend. A church used to stand there. A woman came up, stumbled and fell over. She said: "Damn you!" and the church disappeared under the ground. It was in the old days that my grandmother told me about it. There were even planks floating in the lake a long time ago. When someone approaches the lake at noon, he or she hears sounds, like the ringing of bells' (*Ну вот, гэта бабка расказвала пра цэркву, ёй 105 год было, када мне пятнаццаць. Гэта яна ўжо чула прэданьне эта. Стаяла цэркаў тут. Бабка ішла якая-та ў цэркаў і, гаворыць, што зачапілася там і павалілася. Гаворыць: "Каб ты правалілася!" І вродзі бы цэркаў гэта правалілася. Ну і раньшэ вось, гэта ўсё старушка расказвала, раньшэ дажа доскі плавалі якія-та па возеру. І вось ужо як падойдуць, так у вабед, – гул такі, як званы*) (AGFF P-08).

A story about Lake Sacred situated next to the village of Shchepernya, in the Polotsk district, which has been recorded only once, says that God consecrated the existing lake in a special way: 'Old people say (we would ask such questions, too) that we used to ask when we were small: "Why is this lake called Lake Sacred?" The answer would be: "The Good Lord blessed the lake with the sign of the cross, and some item of the Lord fell into the water." The old women would say

that the Lord threw something into the lake. He threw it into the water and blessed the lake. That's why this lake is called Lake Sacred. And it is deep! You cannot swim in it, you cannot do anything ... There are fish in it, but you cannot catch them, even if you try. It's a very, very deep lake, they say. That's how this Lake Sacred came into being!" (*Гавораць старынныя людзі, мы тожа так спрашывалі. Малыя былі, кажам: «А чаго гэта яго называюць Святое азяро?» Яны гавораць: «Божанька яго пераксціў і, – гавораць, – туды звaліў ад Божанькі нешта. Туды, у гэнае азяро». Гэта яны самі старухі падсказывалі, што Божанька, гавораць, туды нешта скідаваў. Да, скінуў і вот гэта вада стала свянцона. І вот гавораць, што і абразавалася Святое азяро! І яно топкае. Ў яго цяпер нялзя туды лезці, нельзя нічога... ну там ёсць рыба, но але там, калі і будзе рыбіна, то не паймаеш. Там дужа-дужа топкае, яно абразавалася, гавораць, там ужо на топкасці. Вот ано за тое абразавалася эта Святое азяро!*) (AGFF P-05).

Nevertheless, it should be admitted that in most instances the folkloric memory no longer records the appearance of sacred lakes on the site of a church, but states the very mythical precedent only. 'In the Lepel' region there were stories that Lake Sacred was called sacred because a church disappeared under the ground in a place where there is now a lake. You should not swim there, or else you will definitely drown. They say the lake gets very deep very close to the shore. And, they say, bells ring on the bottom of the lake at Easter' (*У Лепілі во, гаварылі, што Сьвятое возера называецца сьвятое, што вот правалілася царква там, у тое азяро. Гэта есьлі купацца – нельзя там, што ўсе раўно туды утопішся. Там ад берага глыбока зразу, кажуць. І ўродзе гаварылі, што ў Паску там чуваць, што званы звоняць, у тым азяры*) (AGFF L-06). A story about Lake Tserkovishche next to the village of Trudy, in the Polotsk district, goes like this: 'Yes, there was a lake at the foot of the hill. A church disappeared under the ground there. They say a man was fishing there. He caught a bell: "I'll be able to buy a lot of tobacco with this bell." But the bell slipped out of his hands, and a clear lake appeared. Whatever you throw into the water you can see, but there is no bottom' (*Да, пад гарой – азяро. Правалілася цэрква. Адзін чалавек лавіў рыбу. Гаварылі так. Паймаў звон. Ну і гаворыць: "Я цяпер табакі накупляю за гэты звон". А звон вылецеў з рук. Абразавалася зоркае азярко, там шуміну ўкінь – яна відаць. І дна нет*) (AGFF P-05).

It sometimes happens that in regions where people of different religions live, a Catholic church is mentioned in sites of this kind: 'I've heard that there used to be a church there. There is an islet in the lake. Do you know that there is a large lake between Mnyut and Valets? They say that people find bricks there: a church disappeared under the ground, and a lake appeared in its place. There wasn't lake there before, but then the church disappeared under the ground, and now there is an islet in that place' (*Гэта я чула, што касцёл нібы быў. І там ёсць остраў, на возеры. Вот между Мнютам тым і Вяльцом возера бальшое, знаеце? Ну і гавораць, што там і кірпічы, што там праваліўся нейкі касцёл і вот стала возера. Там не было возера, гэта самае, праваліўся касцёл і вот там такі востраў ёсць*) (AGFF G-07).

Place-legends about churches and settlements that disappeared under the ground are typical not only of the Dvina region but also of the ethnic Belarusian area in general. As Alexander Panchenko, a researcher into Russian sacral geography, notes: 'Stories of sunken towns, monasteries, churches, and so on, are widespread throughout Europe, and more often than not they are related to stories of blasphemy, a punishment for sins, or, vice versa, a miraculous escape from enemies and assailants. The plot develops in the form of a legend, a novelistic tale or a place-legend adapted to a certain object of the landscape (Panchenko 1998, pp.141-142).

When analysing such legend-related topography in Belarus, the archaeologist Edvard Zaikovskii drew attention to the fact that place-legends about a vanished church are related to three types of landscape objects: hill-forts, hills of natural origin, and lakes (Zaikovskii 2006, pp.165-166). He also believes that 'a certain number of place-legends about a church that disappeared under the water or the ground are a remote repercussion of a pagan shrine that actually existed there,' although he does not indicate any instruments for the verification of the place-legends that tell about shrines from pre-Christian times (Zaikovskii 2006, pp.164-165).

When characterising the structural scheme of place-legends about a sunken (vanished) church, A. Panchenko points out that it can be described in the following way: the sacred locus becomes a place where a conflict (due to blasphemy, the wrath of God, an onslaught by assailants and other kinds) takes place against the background of sacred/non-sacred and own/alien oppositions. As a result of the conflict, the church disappears under the ground, or it sinks, that is, it goes under the ground beyond the boundaries of the world of the living. Sometimes the disappearance of the church underground is replaced by its destruction (Panchenko 1998, p.148). However, he does not make any attempt

to reconstruct the historical realities that formed the basis for such a plot.

One approach to the study of the origin of place-legends about the sudden disappearance of churches and settlements emphasises geomorphological factors. According to L. Salavej, one of the reasons why such a folkloric plot came into existence is the fact that 'in the past, karstic phenomena would occur in our area: lakes would overflow and, quite often, flood places. This would have an impact on the fate of the settlements there' (Salavei 2006, p.535).

If this explanation of the extremely widespread folkloric motive is accepted, we should consider the fact that Belarus (and Europe in general) was still an area of active geological cataclysms in the course of recent millennia. Furthermore, the objects of the cultural landscape which have survived to this day virtually unchanged, that is, hill-forts, contradict this explanation.

Another explanation that 'hill-forts called churches (*Церковище*) can be related to the pagan cult' (Duchys 1993, p.9) raises doubts, too. If this is the case, then formally any hill-fort dating from the Iron Age might have had a sacral place intended for the religious needs of the community living there. However, in that case (if we admit that there is a direct cultural link between the archaeological cultures of the Iron Age and the population of Belarus of the feudal period, including their collective memory), place-legends about a church that sank into the ground should apply to most hill-forts, if not to all of them. Furthermore, in locations where the folkloric memory has preserved memories of a cult object of pre-Christian times, place-legends about a sunken church are not known (cf. Legendy 2005, pp.239, 278, 283).

When analysing folkloric plots (they accompany not only archaeological monuments, but natural objects as well, such as lakes and hills) we can see that the main cause of the disappearance of a settlement or a church is a conflict related to a violation of the norms of the world-view (moral/ethical, religious, and so on). In other words, it is a conflict between a group (the human) and the god (the church). However, in the folkloric tradition of the 19th and 20th centuries, the god is, without doubt, Christian. This fact is strongly supported by the place-legend about the origin of the lake situated next to the village of Novosiolki, in the Dzerzhinsky district. The lake appeared in the site of a village, the people of which were reluctant to accept the new religion: 'An old man drew aside those who would not go to pray in the church, and drove a stick into the ground ... A strong young man stepped forward from the crowd and pulled out the stick ... A strong jet of water shot out from the small pit and flooded the village and its people. Only those inside the church survived' (*Тых, што не пайшлі маліцца, дзядок адвёў крышку далей і ўваткнуў у зямлю кіёк... З натоўпу выйшаў адзін здаровы маладзец і вырваў кіёк..., з гэтай ямкі хлынула*) (Legendy 2005, p.410).

In this case, the transfer of people who do not accept or follow Christianity to the lower sphere of the world might reflect the clash between two cultural and religious traditions (paganism and Christianity). The official victory of Christianity does not annihilate paganism, but pushes it into a certain cultural 'underground'.

It is quite probable that a historic act of baptism of the population of a location and alleged conflicts served as the precedent for a folkloric plot. In this respect, information recorded on the basis of a story told by an old local resident about Lake Sacred situated next to the village of Strelka seems relevant. The place-legend tells of a sunken church, too: 'Lake Sacred is called that because pagans were baptised in it. That is what my grandfather told me' (*Святое азяро называецца так, бо ў ім храсьцілі язычнікаў. Мне так яшчэ дзед казаў*) (AGFF R-95). In place-legends of this type, the image of a church equals unification, and embodies the spiritual unity and the identity of a group of people. The fact that in a number of place-legends the main point is the disappearance of an entire group of people who had gathered in the church to pray is worth attention. For instance, in the place-legend about Lake Bottomless next to the village of Gorodilovichi, in the Verkhnedvinsk district, this theme is stressed: 'People gathered in the church to pray on Easter night. A girl went there, too. At night, someone knocked on the window of her mother's house and told her to go and bring her daughter back from the church. She did as she was told, while the rest sank into the ground together with the church. A lake appeared there. The mother and daughter survived because they were sinless' (*Сабраліся людзі на службу ў царкву на ўсю ноч (Вялікдзень). І дачка адной маткі тожа пайшла. А ноччу той матке нехта ў акно пастукаў і сказаў, каб ішла і забрала сваю дачку з царквы. Ну яна так і зрабіла, а астальныя разам з цэрквай правaліліся. Возера стала. А матка з дачкой спаслісь, што бязгрэшныя былі*) (AGFF Dr-03).

It is symbolic that, as people understand it, a church or a settlement with its people does not disappear for good, but is transferred to another world and goes on with life there. This is shown by human voices or the ringing of church bells, which can be heard at a time that bears a certain ritual significance (during holidays) when the boundary between this world and that one becomes absolutely insignificant.

This opinion does not imply that a location for the act of baptism and a legendary church cannot coincide with a natural holy place of pre-Christian times, rather the opposite. It should be pointed out that during archaeological research, a pagan sanctuary dating back to the ninth or the tenth century was discovered precisely on the shore of Lake Sacred in the Rogachov district in the Homiel region (Kuza, Solovjov 1972, pp.43-45).

The concentration of objects of sacral geography around certain sacred lakes is so high that it makes us think that they enjoyed a religious status in pre-Christian times. For instance, not far from Lake Sacred next to the village of Selishche, in the Verkhnedvinsk district, there used to be a Mount Sacred (destroyed in the 1970s) and a spring that was considered sacred; whereas the neighbouring lake called Strelkovskoye, just like the River Uzhitsa that flows out of the lake, enjoys a special status in the eyes of old residents of the location: 'There are two sacred lakes. Lake Strelkovskoye is sacred, too. The River Uzhitsa flows out of it. It is called that because, they say, there used to be a forest called Sacred in the place where the lake is now. The forest sank into the ground, and grass-snakes fled from it. There were so many grass-snakes that the River Uzhitsa appeared. In Lake Sacred situated beyond Strelka, the water has healing properties. Whoever drinks the water is healed' (*Але Святых азёр два. Стралкоўскае – тожа Сьвятое. З яго цячот рака Вужыца. А называецца так таму, што калі-та на месцы, дзе зараз возера, рос лес – яго звалі Святым. Ён праваліўся пад землю. А вужы сталі ўцякаць з яго. Іх было так многа, што абразавалась рака – Вужыца. А ў Святым возеры, якое за Стралкамі, вада лячебная. Хто п'ець – выздаравіць*) (AGFF R-95).

In the forest next to Lake Sacred (by the village of Borovyye, in the Chashniki district) there is a sacred spring called Jesus (Изус), a stone under which French soldiers allegedly hid their riches, a stone with the print of an apostle's foot (the stone has not survived), and two groups of Krinichi barrows dating from the tenth or 11th century; whereas on the shore of the lake there is a hill called Horodishcha (Городище) (not yet studied by archaeologists) and a place called Balgan (Балган). Balgan, they say, was the place where merchants would gather and trade. There are sacred springs next to Lake Sviatets (in the Polotsk district), Zhabinak (in the Lepel' district), Vochka (in the Shumilinsk district) and Lake Sacred (in the Chashniki district) too.

Special properties of the water of certain lakes, in which, as the stories go, churches sank, and the physical peculiarities of those bodies of water deserve special attention. The majority of recorded stories stress the unusual depth of these lakes (they are considered bottomless) and talk about underground rivers: '"Lake Bottomless." Where have you been, where did you pasture your cows? At Lake Bottomless, this is what they say. Yes, there used to be a church there. My mother or grandmother told me so. A man was reading the Gospel there. An old man came asking for shelter for the night, and then read the Gospel. And then something happened. A child began to cry, or something like that. And the church sank into the ground, and only the table with the Gospel on it stayed floating on the surface of the water. Who knows, it is a grandmother's fairy tale. The lake is bottomless. It is connected to Lake Asveya' („Бяздэннае азерка". А дзе ты быў, дзе каровы хадзілі? – Ля Бяздэннага азерка, – во такая гаворка. Ага, там цэрква стаяла. Матка ці баба гаварылі. А тады тамака мужык адзін Евангельлю чытаў. Дзядзька зайшоўся начаваць і чытаў Евангеллю. А тады, што ета нешта случылася. Рабенак плакаў, ну, нешта такое было. І гэта зразу правалілася гэта цэрква. Плаваў толькі стол, на тым возеры, дзе Евангельле ляжаў. Хто яго ведае, ну, можа, басню баба расказвала. Там нет дна. Там ці яно саедзіняецца з гэтым Асвейскім, можа, як з возерам" (AGFF Dr-03).

In this world-view, the immense depth of a lake, or the absence of a bottom altogether, means a special status for the lake and, accordingly, a number of prohibitions or taboo-type beliefs are based on it. As a rule, it is prohibited to swim in such lakes, because a human faces a deadly danger: 'There [in Lake Leshava], as some old fishermen say, springs appear in the middle. It looks as if something is swirling around, or chasing someone there. It can catch and pull you down, then it is the end' (*Там* [озеро Лешава]*, гавораць некатарыя старыя рыбакі, што там такія ключы паяўляюцца напасярод. Там нешта, як круціць што, як хватаіць. Да, й можыць схваціць, закруціць – і ўсё*) (SET).

On one hand, people believe that the water such as that in Lake Sviatets mentioned earlier is dead. 'The lake seems to be bottomless. There are no fish there. My son caught some crucian carp in a pond and put them in the lake. He let the fish loose in the lake. One side of the lake is deep, and the other is shallow. He says he came the next day (he had put a bucketful of fish in the lake), and all the crucian carp were floating in the lake bottom-side-up. There are no fish, only some large beetles. There are no frogs, no fish, nothing. In the winter the lake would freeze. People tied some poles together and tried to measure the depth, but in vain. There are no live creatures in the lake. Thank God, no one has drowned there, but they say even dogs never go into the lake' (*Гэта возера, як бяздоннае. У ім рыбы аніякай ня водзіцца. Вот даже мой сын, карасёў налавілі ў сажалкі і запускалі туды. Во запусцілі, з*

гэтай стораны яно топкае, а аттуда – яно нятопкае. Падашлі, і вот, гаворуць, назаўтра прышлі, вот ён вядро карасёў туды выліў. Назаўтра прышлі, а там гэтыя карасі, вот усе ўверх брушкамі плаваюць. Рыбы нет, толькі жукі такія бальшыя плаваюць. Ні лягушак, ні рыбы – нічога нет. І зімой там каток, і тады звязвалі жэрдзей, і піхалі, і канца нет.Там ніхто не жывець. Людзі там не тапіліся, слава Богу, але, кажуць, і сабакі туды ніколі не бегаюць) (AGFF P-05).

On the other hand, the water of most lakes, the geomorphological properties of which are similar (the lakes are deep), possesses a vitalising and extraordinary power. For instance, the waters in Lake Sacred by the village of Selishche (in the Verkhnedvinsk district) and Lake Leshava (in the Ushachy district) possess healing properties. They were used for the treatment of eye diseases. One characteristic of the water of Lake Sacred next to the village of Slobodka (in the Chashniki district) (Plate VII, Fig. 5) is, as local people say, the extraordinary and life-saving lightness, thanks to which not a single person has drowned in it. 'Elderly people say that there used to be a church, which then sank. That is why the lake is called Sacred. If someone is swimming and there's a danger of drowning, the person does not drown. Sometimes people would say that bells could be heard ringing in the lake; the lake is very deep' (*Гаварылі старыя людзі, што там стаяла цэрква і яна там утанула. Таму і называецца Святое возера. Тут, калі купаўся хтосьці і прыхадзілася тануць, але ніхто не тануў. Нікада і гэта ж бальшое возера як ізвесна. Інагада гаварылі, што нехта слышаў, як званы звонюць там. Возера гэта вельмі глыбокае*) (AGFF Ch-08).

Another fact, in our opinion, is no accident either: the majority of the sacred lakes of the Dvina region are small, circular bodies of water, and traditionally the circle is 'one of the most important mythopoetical symbols that reflect the cyclical notion of time (life, the year) and the structural notion of space (space is divided into "own" and "alien", whereas the circle serves as the boundary of an enclosed and protected space) (Belova 2004, p.11). This is important, especially when one bears in mind that old natural holy places and sanctuaries 'were usually circular in shape', whereas the majority of cult places were 'objects of natural origin' (Rusanova, Timoschchuk 1993, p.9). Most likely, when determining a site for teophany, the human of pre-Christian times would instinctively consider a small round lake, a circle. In the mythopoetical mind, the same lake would be perceived as an eye (*око*) and a window (*окно*) to the afterlife, and a point of connection with it. A number of lakes in the Dvina region are very small and, as a rule, circular in shape, and people believe that they are very deep or even bottomless. They are given corresponding names, for instance: Акно, Акенца (in the Polotsk district), Акнистае (in the Miory district), Вокнишча (in the Haradok district). The lake called Вочка in the Shumilinsk district, where, as place-legends go, a church sank, can be attributed to the same group.

It should be stressed that studies of sacred lakes of the Dvina region are still in their early stages. This means that factual data is collected first, and attempts are made to reflect on them. There are promising studies of bodies of water singled out in the folkloric memory ahead: the definition of their status on the mythopoetical map of the world, and ritual functions in the diachronic and synchronic cultural cross-section. The above-mentioned lakes require further studies of a complex and multi-disciplinary nature, based on modern archaeological, ethnographical, ethno-linguistic and geological (geodetic) methods, and best experience. We can draw a few preliminary conclusions to summarise this article:

1. Place-legends of churches that disappeared from the surface of the ground quite unexpectedly (sank in water or into the ground) occupy a special place in the mythological landscape of the Dvina region. Many of these place-legends are related to lakes found in the central part of the region, which in a historical perspective coincides with the nucleus of the Polotsk area in the tenth to the 11th centuries, and the area where the burial mounds of Polotsk Krivichi are concentrated.

2. An analysis of folkloric data leads us to the conclusion that in the 19th and 20th centuries the subject of a vanished church or settlement was related to the violation of moral/ethical and religious norms, and reflects a clash between two cultural/religious systems, paganism and Christianity. Place-legends related to actual landscape elements might reflect the historical act of baptism of the population of a certain micro-region.

3. The high symbolic status of sacred lakes in the world-view of the present-day rural population, the surrounding concentration of objects of sacral topography, and the well-known practice of 'assimilation' of sanctuaries of past epochs in the course of the introduction of Christianity make it possible to see lakes called sacred and lakes related to the story of a sunken church as loci of mythological and ritual importance of pre-Christian times. The issue of sanctuaries that were once situated on the shores of these lakes should be clarified on the basis of complex field studies.

4. Most of the above-mentioned lakes called *святое*, *священ*, *царкавишча*, *царкоўнае*, *вочка*, *бяздоннае* and considered to be sites of vanished churches are

quite prominent against the background of Baltic hydronyms recorded in the Dvina region. The origin of these lakes can be interpreted as Slavonic. The extraordinarily large accumulation of sacred lakes in the Polotsk region (a major religious centre in Eastern Europe in the 11th and 12th centuries) probably attests to the baptism of rural communities in the areas where the concentration of lakes was the highest. Most likely, Slavic groups in the population became the first neophytes. At this point, Vladimir Toropov's remark about the Slavic concept of sacrality is very important: anything that entered the field of sacrality would actually become sacred (Toporov 1995, p.489). It should be noted that in the locations with the largest number of sacred lakes, the largest number of sacred springs has been recorded too. Springs constitute a subject for separate research.

Abbreviations

AGFF – Archiu gistoryka-filalagichnaga fakulteta Polackaga dziarzaunaga universiteta (Archive of faculty and Philology, Polotsk State University).

SET – Archiu Studenckaga etnagrafichnaga tavarystva u Minske (Archiv of Students' association for ethnografic fieldwork, Minsk).

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Received: 20 December 2008; Revised: 18 April 2010;
Accepted: 16 May 2011.

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ŠVENTIEJI PADAUGUVOS REGIONO EŽERAI (ŠIAURĖS VAKARŲ BALTARUSIJA)

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Santrauka

Šiaurės vakarų Baltarusijoje, Padauguvos regione, esančių šventųjų ežerų tyrinėjimai, jų kartografavimas ir tautosakos šaltinių analizė leidžia išsakyti prielaidą, kad padavimai apie prasmegusią bažnyčią, susiję su minėto regiono vandens telkiniais, atspindi Polocko kunigaikštystės christianizacijos procesą. Šventas ežeras galėjo būti vieta, kur krikštą priėmė konkrečios vietinės bendruomenės nariai. Matyt, neatsitiktinai šventieji ežerai yra išsidėstę ten, kur didžiausia X–XI a. Polocko krivičių pilkapių koncentracija. Tuo metu Polocko kunigaikštystės periferijoje, kur daugumą sudarė gyventojai baltai, padavimų apie šventuosius ežerus neužfiksuota arba jie tik pavieniai.

Šventųjų ežerų savybės, tokios kaip mažas jų plotas, apskrita forma, vaizdiniai apie nepaprastą vandenį („miręs" ežero vanduo arba turintis gydomųjų savybių) rodo, kad šie vandens telkiniai sakralinę reikšmę turėjo dar iki krikščionybės įvedimo.

Vertė Vykintas Vaitkevičius

II. BALTIC WORLDVIEW: FROM MYTHOLOGY TO FOLKLORE

THE DITTY OF SOVIJUS (1261). THE NINE SPLEENS OF THE MARVELLOUS BOAR: AN INDO-EUROPEAN APPROACH TO A LITHUANIAN MYTH

PHILIPPE WALTER

Abstract

In order to understand the narrative about Sovijus (1261), the author proposes a comparative analysis with similar myths in other Indo-European cultures: Hindu mythology (Indra), Irish mythology (Finn), and Scandinavian mythology (Sigurd). These myths emphasise the role of a sacred animal (Indra's tricephalous monster, Finn's salmon, Sigurd's dragon, Sovijus' boar with nine spleens). The animal allows the hero access to secret knowledge (divination in the case of Finn and Sigurd, revelation about cremation for Sovijus). Rituals or narratives of other folklore genres, such as tales, could be additional sources for a comparative analysis.

Key words: etiological myth, initiation, ritualistic meal, culture hero, cremation, divination, symbolic numbers.

Sovijus[1] was a man. Having captured a marvellous boar and ripped out its nine spleens, he gave them to his children. They ate them and Sovijus was angry with them. He resolved to descend to Hell. He managed to pass through eight gates, but not the ninth one. Assisted by one of his sons, he passed through the ninth gate. His brothers were angry with him, and he only got free by imploring them: 'I will go and look for my father.' He arrived in Hell. After having dinner with his father, Sovijus prepared a place for him to sleep, and buried him under the earth. The next day, when both had woken up, the son asked him: 'Did you sleep well?' He complained: 'Oh, I was eaten by worms and reptiles.' Again, the next day, the son prepared a meal and then put him on top of a tree trunk and let him sleep there. The next day, he asked him the same question, and he answered: 'I was bitten by bees and a swarm of mosquitoes: alas, I had an awful night!' Again, the next day, he prepared a great stake for a fire, and threw him into the flames. The next day, he asked him: 'Did you have a nice rest?' He responded: 'I slept like a log.'

What a great blunder was introduced to the populace of Lithuania, to the Slavs, to the Prussians, the Samogitians, the Livs and many other peoples called Sorikai, who think that Sovijus is the conductor of souls to Hell, having lived in the times of Abimelech, and today they burn the corpses of their dead on a pyre like Achilles, Eant and all the other Hellenic peoples. The false belief was diffused by Sovijus so that they could offer sacrifices to abominable gods (Greimas 2005, p.42).

Today, this text is considered to be the first great Lithuanian myth preserved in Medieval sources. Written in Old Slavonic, it is an appendage to the translation of *Chronographia* by Ioannes Malalas by a Russian clerk. Malalas' *Chronographia* narrates the story of the world since the era of the hordes till the reign of Justinian (emperor from 527 to 565 of our era). Four manuscripts exist (Lemeškin 2009). Sovijus is presented as the conductor of souls to Hell. He is also considered to have introduced cremation to Lithuania (the cremation of corpses is definitively established in Lithuania between the ninth and the tenth centuries). The myth of Sovijus certainly falls within the context of the controversy of Christianisation concerning the care to be taken of a corpse's inhumation or cremation. The Lithuanians had returned to cremation in the fifth to sixth centuries of our era, and a tract in 1249 enjoined them to renounce this practice. On the other hand, a text from 1261 presents the rite of cremation as having emanated from an ancient foundation myth. Written during the reign of Mindaugas, who was known for his apostasy, it falls within the polemical context which underscores the falseness of paganism and the truthfulness of Christianity.

Interpretations of the text

For Philippe Jouet (1989, p.158), 'Sovijus is an Odin-like warrior-hunter who undertakes to traverse hell. One recognises the unfolding of the ritualistic meal, with perhaps the initiatory nine parts (nine gates to pass through), at the end of which the hero makes his expedition, directed by his sons. After that, he presides in

[1] The manuscript gives the form Sovij; the name Sovijus is the Lithuanian interpretation/hypothetical reconstruction: Sovij + Lithuanian –us.

psychopomp instances. This promotion naturally leads to heroisation by the flame, the antithesis of the infernal sojourn. Therefore, the cultural legend in all probability came from an infernal ritual of brotherhood.' The author then invites us to compare this text to the expeditions of the Scandinavian Odin, of Indra of the Vala, and of the Irish Nera in the Síd (the other world). Jouet's interpretation is based on the calender. Jean Haudry (1988) establishes the Indo-European entrenchment of this concept. Indeed, he attaches this mythical narrative to other similar stories with their common metaphorical reference to the nocturnal period of the year (the Twelve Days from the winter solstice). The hero is the one who can cross over the sombre stage and regain the beautiful season of the year. Sovijus is the one who manages to cross the ninth gate of the other world and open the way towards the new year.

At the same time (1988), the journal *Lalies* published an article by Algirdas Julius Greimas on Sovijus, 'the conductor of souls'. This article (Greimas 1988a) is the only one in French on our text. Greimas sets off with an analysis of the composition, before looking at content component motifs of the myth. For the composition: the narration of the myth itself (with verbs in the preterite), a present commentary on the myth (with verbs in the present tense). The myth attributes the institution of cremation to certain Baltic peoples. It is Sovijus who invented the practice. In fact, we will see that he owes the intuition for this innovation to a kind of supernatural intervention, and that it is a consequence of his slaying the magic boar and the ablation of its nine spleens.

As for the motifs, Greimas apparently stops at the figure of the boar. He underscores the link between this animal, the funerary rites and the feasts of the dead: the *skerstuves* described by Joannes Lasicius and which are identified with All Saints' Day (Greimas 1985, p.50). The link between the spleen and the great cold of popular Lithuanian tradition confirms a calendar tale and the ritual of myth. It is a narrative linked annually to the commemoration of a rite and a foundation myth of the cult of the dead.

In what he calls an 'analogous' reading of the text, Greimas proposes the following elements: 'Sovijus orders his son to roast the nine spleens of the boar in order to destroy once and for all his principle of fury: the sons, instead of destroying the "boarishness" of the boar, eat the spleens raw, thus absorbing the elementary energy of the boar. Sovijus becomes angry with his sons who have chosen the heritage of the Boar of the Earth and denied the blood kinship which linked them to their father' (Greimas 1988a, p.48). As we will see later on, from a comparative perspective, Greimas defines the capital motif of the myth, but searches for an overtly psychological motivation to explain the mythical narrative itself. From my point of view, this would be a mistake, for the logic of the text is not psychological but mythological.

The need for a comparative method

A mythical motif has no meaning on its own. In reality, it derives its meaning from the relations which it weaves with other motifs within a system, as well as its function in a narrative sequence. We cannot hope to decipher the meaning of mythological meaning by confining our analysis to a single text. For a myth is never reduced to the plain surface of a text, but functions interactively within the 'memory', which is referred to as Indo-European and in which we can find the key to its internal logic (Dumézil 1995). Greimas underlines this himself: 'Myth is not a narrative; it is the whole transformation of a narrative. Moving from syntagmatic to the paradigmatic, one could say that Indo-European culture is the whole transformation' (Greimas 1988a, p.29). In other words, in order to understand the system of Lithuanian myth, we must turn to similar myths in other Indo-European cultures.

Greimas' interpretation, accurate and learned as it may be, seems to rely on an insufficiently sustained study in Indo-European comparison. When faced with a Lithuanian myth, it must be possible to find some parallels to these myths in other Indo-European languages and cultures, since Lithuanian is itself an Indo-European language. This should allow us to establish a common archaic structure of all these narratives. It seems necessary to reinterpret Levi-Strauss' dichotomy of the raw and cooked in order to see in the motif of cooking on a grill the essential pivot of a comparative reading. The crux of the magical boar myth is, indeed, the consumption of the sacred meat which renders possible an exceptional phenomenon.

Why does the boar have nine spleens?

Obviously, the answer is because is it a magical animal. In the Slavonic text, the adjective *divij* qualifying the boar can mean both '*sauvage*' and '*merveilleux*' (Greimas 1988a, p.42). As Greimas reminds us, the spleen is the seat of choler, of black humour. I prefer to speak of 'fury', for this notion is strongly indicated in Indo-European mythology. Fury is a state of possession which betrays a divine origin (Dumézil 1984, §44). It is a characteristic of diviners visited by inspiration, just as Pythia, the priestess of Apollo, is regularly consumed by a strange and brutal force which tortures

her before she pronounces her prophecy. In German popular belief, the witch (another possessed) has a white spleen (Hoffmann-Krayer 1927 IX, p.341). The spleen, therefore, seems to be linked to the supernatural. Undoubtedly, we must bear in mind one element of the Old Prussian world which is related to the Balts. According to Praetorius, the Prussians examined the spleen of a pig which they had killed (Schrader 1909, pp.13-55). The spleen was thus used for divinatory practices. In the Roman world, the haruspices examined the entrails of the victim and read the omens (Ernout Meillet 1967, p.289; Haack 2003). The spleen is therefore the most divine part of the animal, the one that receives directly the signs that the divinity wants to transmit to human beings.

Before being the motif of excitement or the furious energy of the warrior, the fury contained in the spleen is the supreme manifestation of the mythical creature which the warrior must face. This frightening creature is tricephalous, in other words it is the three-headed dragon or monster of Indo-European myths (Dumézil 1942), the most famous example of which is Geyron, beaten by Heracles. Three threes are nine, the number of spleens of the magic boar. It seems, therefore, that in the Lithuanian narrative, the nine spleens (three times three) are the exact equation of the three heads of the tricephalous monster. Mythologically speaking, they define the boar as a triple creature, that is to say, the initiatory creature for the battle against a triple adversary, which always gives the warrior a heroic stature as well as the privilege of knowledge. In the *Taittiriya Samhita* (Dumézil 1967, p.28), Indra beats the tricephalous monster, but cannot finish it off. A carpenter arrives with an axe over his shoulder. In return for a fee, he agrees to finish the work, and separates the heads of the monster with his axe. From each head escapes a bird (a hazel grouse, a sparrow, a partridge). This motif can be used to explain that in certain traditions the dragon (or the tricephalous monster) confers the hero who has conquered it with the gift of understanding the language of birds, that is to say, the power of divination.

Moreover, we must underscore the importance of the figure of pigs in the oldest European mythology (Walter 1999). The mythical role of the boar (or the swinish monster) is surely to allow the elevation of the cultural hero who will enact a remarkable innovation in society (Dumézil 1936). After the brutal murder of the sacred monster, the hero paradoxically acquires a divine part of the creature which he has slain (Walter 2002). Myth is reversible, as Gilbert Durand (1994, p.60) once remarked. After his exploit, the hero becomes the guardian of science and knowledge, which were traditionally inaccessible to common mortals.

Three parallel myths allow us to test the scenario. The Celtic myth of Finn the diviner, the Lithuanian myth of the boar with nine spleens, and the Germanic myth of Fafnir the giant are mythical equivalents of the salmon, the pig and the dragon, as primordial and initiatory creatures as triple creatures (Walter 2006).

The Lithuanian text brings to mind an old Indian tradition appearing in the *Taittriya Brahmanan*. A boar safeguards the treasure of demons enclosed by seven mountains. Indra manages to open the seven mountains with a sacred herb. He kills the boar, and can then discover the treasure (de Gubernatis 1974, p.10). The Lithuanian text follows a similarly clear pattern. It makes the boar the mediating animal standing between two worlds, and, in addition, the guardian of a secret which the hero must acquire.

Initiating the son

In a somewhat puzzling narration, the myth tells of the acquisition of new knowledge, that of the cremation of corpses by one of the sons of the hero, Sovijus, who, having killed the boar and removed its nine spleens, wants them roasted. He gives them to his children to eat, and then gets angry with his progeny. He decides to leave for Hell (that is to say, the Other World), and only manages to cross the ninth and last gate with the help of one of his sons. The latter will resort to a convenient mode, that of cremation, for the transportation of his father's body.

The Lithuanian myth reproduces concisely the primordial myth of initiation. This is acquired through the warrior's test: killing a mythical boar. This boar is none other than the triple monster of Indo-European myths of heroic initiation (Dumézil 1942): its triple character is found in the fact that it has nine spleens (three times three). The killer of the triple boar inherits a curse, in the same manner as Tristan's combat against his pig adversaries warrants his punishment. Sovijus inexplicably loses his temper with his sons. In reality, after his crime of divine lese-majesty (he kills the divine boar), he goes mad and has no other solution but to leave for the Other World (a euphemism for death). Once the spleens have been roasted and eaten, fury enables one of his sons to help his father in his posthumous destiny. This charitable son has probably a particular rank among the siblings. Although the text does not specify it, everything leads us to believe that it is not the eldest but the youngest son (the ninth or, once more, three multiplied by three). In siblings of this kind, it is always the last-born who performs a feat that the other brothers cannot carry out (Aarne 1961).

If the father has indeed gone to the realm of the dead, his corpse is suffering. It must be rescued. The son first thinks that he must bury him, but the father (the soul of his father) complains about its fate. The son then exposes the body on a tree, but the father complains again. The son finally burns the corpse, and the soul of the father finally finds peace and comfort. This exemplary son is the initiator of cremation. This perfect idea occurs to him after his initiation, and after having served as a guide to his father in Hell. This initiation involves undergoing a particular rite: the roasting and the eating of the spleens of the boar. In an elliptical manner, the narrative clearly attributes the acquisition of the gift of knowledge to the manducation of the sacred meat of the savage boar by the hero.

In Irish mythology, Finn acquires the gift of similar knowledge by sucking his thumb which he burnt while roasting a salmon (Nagy 1985). We can see the number nine indirectly linked to the salmon. Nine hazels grow around the fountain of Boyne. The hazels, true fruits of wisdom, fall into the fountain, where a salmon swallows them. This fish is in reality a primordial being which preceded the existence of all things. Whoever eats its flesh first will receive the gift of divination. He will know all that is possible to be known. For seven years, Finnegas fishes in vain. One day, moments after the arrival of his student Finn, he finally captures the salmon of knowledge and asks his apprentice to roast it. Under no circumstances must Finn eat it. But during the cooking, a swelling appears on the skin of the fish. To remove it, Finn puts his finger on the fish and burns himself. He then licks his finger to soothe the pain. Thus, the divinatory gift infuses within him. He has tasted, involuntarily, the flesh of the salmon of knowledge. From now on, he will be the guardian of prophetic power. Whenever he wishes to use his power, it will suffice to suck his thumb. In Celtic myths of the initiation of the diviner, it is a salmon or a pig which confers the gift of knowledge. The name of these two animals (*orc*) is the same in Old Irish (Vendryes 1960, §28).

In the Germanic world, the heart of the dragon is the mythical source of the supreme knowledge of the diviner. It is a new analogy with the Baltic boar. This episode in Scandinavian mythology is represented on an engraved rock in Upplsand in Sweden and told in *The Poetic Edda*. Sigurd the hero pierces Fafnir the giant with his spear. On the Swedish megalith, the dragon is represented in the form of a serpent by a long script in which a runic inscription is found. Within this figure, Sigurd roasts the heart of Fafnir on the grill. He then slips the finger of his left hand into his mouth, for he has burnt himself by touching the heart of the dragon to check on the progress of the cooking. In fact, without wanting to, he tastes the blood of the monster, and he suddenly understands the language of the birds (Boyer 1992). The same motif is found in popular tales such as tale type No. 673 of the international repertoire (Aarne 1961). Tasting the meat of a serpent (a substitute for the dragon) enables someone to gain access to a comprehension of the language of animals. This means that the dragon or the pig-like monster has primitive magic powers which are transmitted to men under specific conditions. On the basis of these three European myths, it can be seen that the salmon, the boar and the dragon are homologous. These three animals are the main sources of the gift of divination.

The Poetic Edda tells how Sigurd kills the dragon and roasts its heart. He burns his finger on the grill, puts his finger in his mouth, and immediately understands the language of the birds. Tristan, like Sigurd, kills the dragon. What makes the dragon a pig? What makes it the source of knowledge? The Lithuanian myth provides some answers: the magical boar endows its slayer with a superior form of knowledge. Thus, Tristan's victory over the dragon has the symbolic value of a revelation: although Tristan does not roast the heart of the beast, he simply cuts out its tongue. It is enlightening that, after this exploit practised upon the pig-like dragon, he obtains the hand of Yseut. The endowment of sovereignty is acquired, almost magically; but, inexplicably, he refuses it. On the contrary, it is significant that the gifts of music shown by Tristan come after his victory over the Morholt. Everything takes place as if the Morholt had allowed Tristan to acquire the power of divination which will come to him in the form of the gift of music. In any case, the Morholt is an initiating character for him.

Conclusion: from roasted spleens to cremation

Fire plays an essential role in diverse stages of myth, and also in Baltic mythology (Vaitkevičienė 2001, 2003). It implies a symbolic link between the two main motifs of the myth. The roasting of spleen by Sovijus is itself an audacious act. But the gesture prefigures the final invention of cremation by Sovijus' son. During the course of the myth, three modes of handling corpses are tried: inhumation, exposition in the open air, and cremation. Only the third, cremation, is presented as legitimate and necessary. The role attributed to fire in this Lithuanian myth explains why Sovijus develops the cult of other gods mentioned in the final notice. They all have a close link with fire: Andojas and Perkūnas (that is to say, thunder to celestial fire), and Teliavelis the blacksmith utilising terrestrial fire (Gimbutas 1995).

Fire constitutes an essential cultural moment. To refer to C. Lévi-Strauss' famous insight, fire allows man to move from the 'raw' to the 'cooked', that is to say, from nature to culture. Fire transforms the flesh of the boar (nature) into an initiating and spiritual food (culture). Cremation transforms a corpse (nature) into a spiritual body (culture). The Ditty of Sovijus thus appears as a sacred narrative which recounts the way cremation was introduced on Earth. It establishes a magic concept of the sacred which makes Sovijus and his son the masters of fire.

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Received: 18 December 2010; Revised: 15 April 2011; Accepted: 16 May 2011.

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SOVIJAUS GIESMĖ (1261). DEVYNIOS NEPAPRASTOJO ŠERNO BLUŽNYS: ŽVILGSNIS Į LIETUVIŲ MITĄ IŠ INDOEUROPIEČIŲ PERSPEKTYVOS

Philippe Walter

Santrauka

Siekdami paaiškinti 1261 metais užrašytą pasakojimą apie Sovijų, turime jį palyginti su panašiais indoeuropiečių mitais – indų mitologija (Indra), airių mitologija (Finu) ir skandinavų mitologija (Sigurdu). Visi šie mitai pabrėžia švento gyvūno vaidmenį (trigalvė pabaisa Indros atveju, lašiša – Fino, slibino širdis – Si-

gurdo ir devynios šerno blužnys – Sovijaus). Gyvūnas leidžia kultūriniam herojui įgyti slaptą žinojimą (pranašavimą Fino ir Sigurdo atveju, mirusiųjų deginimo atradimą – Sovijaus). Lietuviškas pasakojimas veda link pirmapradžio iniciacijos mito. Karys yra inicijuojamas naudojant kovotojo testą: jis turi sumedžioti ir nukauti mitinį šerną. Pagal G. Dumézilio teoriją, šis šernas būtų ne kas kita kaip triguba pabaisa indoeuropietiškuose herojaus iniciacijos mituose. Jo triguba prigimtis atsiskleidžia per devynias blužnis (triskart po tris). Indoeuropiečių tikėjimuose blužnis yra siejama su pranašavimu ir antgamtinėmis galiomis. Bet trigalvio žudiką persekioja prakeikimas: Sovijus be paaiškinamos priežasties supyksta ant savo sūnų. Iš tiesų, kai jis įvykdo nusikaltimą prieš dievišką įstatymą (nužudo stebuklingą šerną) jis netenka proto, todėl vienintelė išeitis yra pasitraukti į pragarus (tai mirties eufemizmas). Sovijus paprašo savo sūnų iškepti devynias blužnis. Kai blužnys iškepamos ir suvalgomos, dieviškas įtūžis, pasireiškiantis per vieną iš sūnų, leidžia padėti jam savo tėvui pomirtiniame gyvenime. Gailestingasis sūnus tarp brolių turi ypatingą statusą. Nors tekstas šio dalyko nedetalizuoja, bet iš visko galima spėti, kad tai ne vyriausias, o jauniausias sūnus (devintasis sūnus iš trijų po tris). Sprendžiant iš pasakų logikos, būtent jauniausias sūnus (ar dukra) šeimoje susiduria su iššūkiais ir juos sėkmingai įveikia. Sovijaus sūnus atranda mirusiųjų deginimo ritualą ir nebelaidoja savo tėvo žemėje. Mirusiųjų deginimas, turintis atitikmenį senovės indų ritualuose, liudija archajišką lietuvių civilizacijos pagrindą. Pasakojimas apie Sovijų savo ruožtu yra etiologinis mitas.

Vertė Daiva Vaitkevičienė

CIRCUM-BALTIC MYTHOLOGY? THE STRANGE CASE OF THE THEFT OF THE THUNDER-INSTRUMENT (ATU 1148B)*

FROG

Abstract

The myth of the Theft of the Thunder-Instrument (ATU 1148b) is found almost exclusively in the Circum-Baltic area. It is found among both Indo-European and Finno-Ugric cultures. This implies that it was adapted from one into the other, unless both assimilated it from a common cultural stratum. This paper surveys this mythological narrative tradition that is found in Baltic, Finnic, Germanic and Sámic cultures. It proposes that the tradition's persistence in a Circum-Baltic isogloss is a consequence of historical contact and interaction between these cultures, and that its evolution has been dependent on that history of contact and exchange.

Key words: comparative mythology, folklore, thunder-god, folk tale, cultural contact, *Þrymskviða*.

The present paper[1] is concerned with a narrative of mythological proportions: the Theft of the Thunder-Instrument (ATU 1148b).[2] The narrative may be summarised as follows:

> *A devil/giant steals the sleeping thunder-god's instrument (musical, mechanical or symbolic) and conceals it in his realm or home. The god assumes the disguise and role of a servant, either entering the service of the thief directly or entering the thief's house with his master. Others cannot play the instrument successfully. A challenge is initiated by either the host or the god (through his master). The host unwittingly provides the instrument to the god, expecting a positive return (entertainment). The god plays successfully, destroying the host, household and/or otherworld community.*

ATU 1148b is found almost exclusively in Circum-Baltic cultures among both Indo-European and Finno-Ugric linguistic-cultural groups. This implies that it was adapted from one into the other, unless both assimilated it from a common cultural stratum. Whatever the case, ATU 1148b clearly crossed linguistic-cultural thresholds: examples are found among Sámic (Skolt, [possibly] Inari), Finnic (Finnish, Karelian, Estonian, Setu), Baltic (Latvian, Lithuanian) and Germanic (Icelandic, Faeroese, Norwegian, Danish, Swedish) language families in distinct conventional traditions (cf. Uther 2004 II, pp.9-50). However, ATU 1148b is not found among Slavic groups (cf. Barag *et al*. 1979, p.267), which have only held their increasingly significant presence in the Circum-Baltic for about the past millennium.[3] ATU 1148b is otherwise only attested in one early Greek poem, where it is combined with a narrative about the theft of Zeus's sinews.[4]

[1] I would like to thank Jūratė Šlekonytė, Aldis Putelis and Eila Stepanova for help in investigating sources in so many archives and so many languages – without them, this study would not have been possible. I would like to thank Professor Satu Apo for her comments and suggestions on an earlier version of this paper, and also Nijolė Laurinkienė. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to Daiva Vaitkevičienė for the tremendous amount of time and attention which was required to make both the conference and this publication possible.

[2] Initially approached as type 1148 'Der Teufel und der Donner (das Gewitter)' (Aarne 1910, p.45; 1911, p.108); Thompson (1928, p.156) separated 1148 'The Ogre Afraid of the Thunder (the storm)' into subtypes A 'The ogre asks the man to tell him when it thunders. The man deceives him until at last the thunder kills him [K 1177]' and B, 'The ogre steals the thunder's instruments (pipe, sack, etc.) [G 610]'; Uther (2004 II, pp.48-50) reclassifies 1148a as 1147 and titles 1148b 'Thunder's Instruments' with a synopsis based on the Estonian tradition (adding 'hammer' as a possible instrument). Cf. Thompson's (1955–1958) motifs A162.3 ('Combat between thundergod and devil'), A162.3.1 ('Devil (ogre) steals thunder's instruments'), A162.2 ('Thunder and lightning slay devils'), G610 ('Theft from ogre'), K1816.0.1 ('God disguised as menial'), also A189.1.1 ('Man as helper of thundergod').

[3] On possible Slavic parallels and the possible Rumanian parallel, see Balys (1939, pp.43-47, 51-52; cf. Krohn 1931, pp.127-128). These traditions and surrounding arguments will not be reviewed here.

[4] U. Masing (1977) proposed that the Circum-Baltic ATU 1148b is a special development of a widespread tradition of the struggle between the thunder-bird and a water-monster with a history of some 5,000 to 10,000 years. The treatment is speculative and not unproblematic (cf. Uther

* **The above article is published here without prior review by our language editor.**

Koptjevskaja-Tamm and Wälchli (2001, p.622) emphasise that one of the interesting aspects of the Circum-Baltic region is that it 'has never been united, but has always been an extremely dynamic area, constantly redivided among spheres of dominance – economical, political, religious and cultural.' The overview of ATU 1148b offered here is intended to approach the relevance of that long history of cultural contact and exchange to mythology, beliefs and the narrative traditions through which these are communicated and maintained. Once overviews of the traditions as they survived and (when possible) how they evolved have been established, it will be possible to return to the observation of Koptjevskaja-Tamm and Wälchli in order to consider how histories of cultural interaction are relevant to the evolution of ATU 1148b in the Circum-Baltic arena.

1. Circum-Baltic thunder-god traditions

According to Hans-Jörg Uther (1997–1999, p.763), narratives about thunder and a devil are especially prominent in Baltic, Finnic and Germanic cultures around the Baltic Sea. These narrative traditions are only one part of a remarkable system of thunder-related traditions distributed across diverse cultures in the region. These systems warrant detailed comparison, but only a few basic points will be presented here to provide some frame of reference. Oskar Loorits (1949–1957 II, p.5) suggested that the rise of the thunder-god to the supreme god among Finnic populations was attributable to Indo-European influences.[5] Ülo Valk (1996) stresses that such influences may have been heavily stratified through interaction with multiple Indo-European cultures across history, and that such interactions were never one-sided. For example, Anna-Leena Siikala attributes the range and diversity of Germanic influences in Finno-Karelian mythology, epic and magic (where the thunder-god has a central role) primarily to processes of radical cultural change which took place across the Iron Age, when Germanic cultural influences were dominant (Siikala 2002a; Salo 2006; Frog 2010, pp.118-141; cf. Loorits 1949–1957 III, pp.286-317). These influences dominate our field of vision in documented sources, but they no doubt overlaid earlier ethnocultural substrata (cf. Eila Stepanova's contribution to this volume). Conversely, the identification of a fire-striking stone in Thórr's head with the polar 'nail'-star is likely the result of reciprocal influence.[6]

Influences from Germanic or Baltic culture can appear quite clear in Finnic and Sámic cultures because the latter are assumed to lack Indo-European linguistic and cultural foundations. A comparison between Germanic and Baltic languages and traditions becomes more complex. For example, cognates with the name Perkūnas are readily recognisable in Finnic languages,[7] as are cognates with Thórr.[8] However, the vernacular Germanic name Fjǫrgyn (cognate with Pērkons/Perkūnas) is not a 'loan', yet the use of this name for Thórr's mother is likely under the ægis of Baltic influence (cf. Biezais 1972, p.95; West 2007, pp.241-242). Corresponding linguistic interference owing to phonetic resonance with Pērkons/Perkūnas may underlie Estonian *Pikne*, *Pikäne*, etc. ('Lightning') and Livonian *Pikne* ('Lightning') as central vernacular names for the thunder-god (cf. Loorits 1926, pp.49-50; 1949–1957 II, pp.8-9; Salo 2006, pp.9-12). Vladimir Toporov (1970) has plausibly argued that Thórr's companion Thjálfi crossed into Baltic traditions to become Perkūnas's smith-companion Teljavel' (Телявель).[9] However, our perspective may be skewed because the majority of the sources for vernacular Germanic mythology are West Norse (roughly Norway, Iceland, etc.), rather than East Norse regions (roughly Denmark, Sweden, etc.), which were on the Baltic Sea. Place name evidence in Sweden discussed by Vykintas Vaitkevičius (2009) clearly shows separate patterns of interaction oriented eastward, hence it is not clear whether the Gotlandic (East Norse) Thjelvar (Þieluar)[10] may have been more akin to Icelandic (West Norse) Thjálfi or (Old Lithuanian or its antecedent) Teljavel'.

Some features of the thunder-god appear almost universal in the Circum-Baltic, such as patriarchal epithets and the epithet 'Old Man' (even where he is

1997–1999, p.764), and it stands beyond the scope of the present discussion.

5 See also Salo 1990, 2006. The anthropomorphic figure appears to have gradually displaced conceptions of a 'thunder-bird' (Loorits 1926, pp.51; 1949–1957 III, p.303n; Siikala 2002a, p.207).

6 See examples and discussion in Tolley 2009, pp.275-276, 281; cf. Koch 1990; Salo 1990, pp.119-129; 2006, pp.33-48. This motif and its history are complex and problematic.

7 Common nouns meaning 'devil' (*Suomen sanojen alkuperä* II, p.340, listing Swedish and Danish cognates; Loorits 1949–1957 II, p.13).

8 Sámic *Horgalles* ('*Þórr karl*', 'Old Man Thórr'), Finno-Karelian *Tuuri*, Estonian *Tooru* (Krohn 1915, pp.117-118; Itkonen 1946, pp.2-3; de Vries 1956–1957 II, p.115; Bertell 2003, pp.73-81; Kulmar 2005, pp.24-28).

9 Mansikka 1922, pp.69-70; Vėlius 1996, p.266; cf. p.260; cf. also Biezais 1972, pp.130-131; Vėlius 1989, pp.52-53. For an overview of attempted etymologies, see Vėlius 1987, pp.206-207; 1996, pp.257-258.

10 Peel 1999, p.xvii-xviii, 2; for Östergötlandic (East Norse) Thjalfar (Þialfar), *ibid*.: 17; cf. also Rendahl 2001; on the world-creation imagery associated with Thjelvar, see Frog 2010, p.240. Note that throughout its history, Gotland has been an exceptional tradition area distinguishable from the rest of Germanic Scandinavia.

described with a red beard).[11] Other attributes of the god exhibit more complex patterns of relationships. For example, the axe or hammer is an attribute common to Germanic, Lithuanian (also sharing attributes of chariot and goats with Germanic), Finno-Karelian, and Sámic; in the midst of this, however, Latvian Pērkons has a ball or mace (*milna*, etymologically associated with *Mjǫllnir*, the name for Thórr's hammer) and Estonian Pikne plays a blown instrument (as in ATU 1148b, where it is often referred to simply as a *pill* ['instrument']).[12] This distribution of attributes is of note because of the common inclination to systematise vernacular mythological systems – i.e. if an axe is an attribute of Finno-Karelian Ukko in one context or region, this should be valid for all contexts or regions (or else the tradition is 'corrupted' or has 'decayed'). However, Ukko's axe maintains prominence in certain fields of activity such as incantations and the widespread tradition of thunder-stones (Haavio 1967, p.332; Siikala 2002a, pp.204-208), while aetiological legends most often present the god's wagon as the source of thunder, never mentioning the curious objects or machine of ATU 1148b. In contrast, the *pill* is well established in Estonian and Setu traditions, where the axe attribute is absent, although there are also aetiologies of thunder associated with the god's wagon (Loorits 1949–1957 II, pp.22-25). The realities of circulating traditions often maintain several or even many parallel narratives, conceptions and beliefs, coexisting in a tradition ecology without a need to reconcile inconsistencies and contradictions, whether they are distributed in relation to contexts, functions and social groups, or are more actively competing with one another (Tarkka 2005, pp.160-194; Frog 2010, pp.230-231). This is significant for approaching ATU 1148b because – with the exception of Estonian traditions – it presents a conception of the source of thunder as a musical instrument or other device which does not otherwise emerge as a conventional attribute of the thunder-god or conventional aetiology of thunder (neither synchronically nor historically).

2. The nature of the survey

Studies on systems of relationships among thunder-traditions in the Circum-Baltic tend to focus on traditions in only two or three Circum-Baltic cultures. This has been conditioned by the history of scholarship for each tradition, scholarship which can never completely sever its roots in arguments over whose culture has been borrowed from whom – arguments heated by Romanticism and slick with the sweat of nationalism.[13] A central factor in the persistence of these attitudes is, however, the language barrier: any comparative study requires knowledge of minimally half a dozen languages, and realistically several more. Had it not been for the generous assistance of Jūratė Šlekonytė with Lithuanian materials, Aldis Putelis with the Latvian example, and Eila Stepanova with one Sámic example (available only in Russian translation), this overview could not have been completed. The language barrier is a serious obstacle in Circum-Baltic comparative research, and it is imperative that the corpora of these diverse traditions are made accessible, much as Daiva Vaitkevičienė (2008) has recently done with the corpus of Lithuanian healing charms.

This survey is organised by linguistic-cultural group. Although the earliest documented evidence is found in medieval Germanic sources, these present certain issues which require addressing them last. The Sámic material will be presented first, approaching the traditions on the east side of the Baltic Sea, moving from north to south. Although ATU 1148b is largely if not completely extinct in the cultures in question, this survey should not be considered completely exhaustive. The diverse evolution of ATU 1148b in different linguistic-cultural groups makes finding relevant materials problematic for two reasons. First, not all examples are readily traceable through archive indices, and some sources may simply not yet have come to light.[14]

[11] Krohn 1906, p.165; Holmberg [Harva] 1915, p.67; Loorits 1926, p.49; 1949–1957, pp.7-14; Harva 1948, pp.77-80; Haavio 1967, pp.161-164; Biezais 1972, p.111; Laurinkienė 1996, p.16; Bertell 2003, pp.73-81; Salo 2006, pp.8-9. The lack of evidence for this epithet in medieval Germanic sources in spite of the (apparent) loan into Sámi may be attributable to regional biases of the early (West Norse) sources (cf. Nordeide 2006; de Vries 1956–1957 II, pp.116-120), where Óðinn was at the top of the pantheon and received these epithets (de Vries 1956–1957 II, pp.84, cf. pp.38-39).

[12] Krohn 1906, p.164; Holmberg [Harva] 1915, pp.67-70; Mühlenbach, Endzelīn 1923–1932 II, p.627; Loorits 1932, pp.109-111; 1949–1957 II, pp.22-23; de Vries 1956–1957 II, pp.113-115, 124-127; Haavio 1967, p.332; Biezais 1972, pp.111-115; Laurinkienė 1996, pp.17-19; Siikala 2002a, p.204; Bertell 2003, pp.73-81; West 2007, pp.251-255. The poorly attested Livonian tradition appears to parallel the Latvian (Loorits 1926, p.56), including the identification of Pikne with the smith of heaven (Loorits 1926, pp.51-52; cf. Biezais 1972, pp.105-106; cf. also Salo 1990; 2006). Cf. also Thompson's (1955–1958) motifs A157.1 ('Thunderweapon'), A157.7 ('Hammer of thunder god').

[13] E.g. studies rooted in schools of Germanic studies tend only to take Baltic cultures into account where etymologies are concerned, even in broad comparative surveys: cf. DuBois 1999, pp.2, 78; Bertell 2003, pp.72, 190-191.

[14] E.g. no index of Sámic materials has been generated (cf. Kecskeméti, Paunonen 1974, p.249, where Charnoluskii 1962, pp.35-40 appears under AT 1148b, but not Itkonen 1931, p.37-47); the archive's index card for SKS KRA Krohn, Kaarle 8261 has been lost or misfiled; additional

Second, evidence of ATU 1148b is diffused across multiple genres (proverbs, belief legends, aetiological legends, ballads, etc.) and may be filed according to the interpretation of the collector without cross-indexing. Nevertheless, additional data is not anticipated to significantly impact the findings of the present survey, except to offer perspective on the Sámic and Latvian examples. This survey is the first stage in a long-term plan for a 'mostly-exhaustive' collection of sources of ATU 1148b with critical text and accompanying English translation.

3. ATU 1148b among the Sámi

The Sámic tradition presents the capture and binding of the thunder-god rather than the theft of his instrument. Axel Olrik (1906), followed by Kaarle Krohn (1906), introduced it into discussion for comparison with Germanic materials, and their works became themselves sources for later research (cf. Balys 1939, p.41). Their source was a dictionary of Sámic mythology in Jacob Fellman's (1906) *Anteckningar under min vistelse i Lappmarken*. The dictionary was purportedly developed from both Sámic and Finnish informants owing to their long history of cultural contact and exchange (Fellman 1906, p.74). The entry '*Atshe*, father, *Aija*, *Aijeg*, grandfather or grandmother [...]' describes a sacrificial cave on (Inari[?] Sámic) Aijegjavre / (Finnish) Ukonjärvi – 'Old Man's Island' or 'Island of the Thunder-God' – in Lake Inari (northeast Finland), where 'Aijeg' was imprisoned for a time by 'Jeettanas' (Fellman 1906, pp.82-86). A fuller account of the narrative appears under '*jettanas*, *jeettanas*', cannibalistic monsters of insatiable appetite (Fellman 1906, pp.102-103). The term *jēttanas* appears to be a Germanic loan (cf. Old Norse *jǫtunn*, Modern Swedish *jätte*), and the description resonates strikingly with the term's etymology, which connects them to 'eating' (Harris 2009, pp.488-493; Tolley 2009, pp.232-238).

In this narrative, the capture and binding of the thunder-god 'Termes' (*sic*) in a cave is not elaborated. The majority of the text is concerned with the resulting drought and the harm it caused to men and animals. Two sayings are included for which the narrative supplies an explanation: *Termes läi tshadnum gidda* ('Termes was bound fast'); *Pajan läi tshadnum gidda* ('Thunder was bound fast'). The *jēttanas* are suspected because drought was in their interest (?!). While they sleep, the servant of Termes sneaks in and frees the god, who ascends into the sky and generates seven weeks of rain to wash out the *jēttanas*. The rain and storm is in no way related to an instrument.

Two additional versions of the narrative imply that its significance waned sufficiently for it to be subordinated as a resource in other narrative frameworks (cf. Frog 2010, pp.88-102).[15] A narrative recorded in Skolt Sámi in Norway, north of Finland, in 1927 or 1929, opens with the statement that a devil (*tsuartt*) once (literally 'some times') bound 'Tiermas' (Itkonen 1931, pp.37-47). The example has no concern for rain or a conflict between the thunder-god and the devil: a man who is the servant of the devil is the protagonist, and he is given keys but forbidden to enter a single chamber (cf. ATU 312). Tiermes is bound in that chamber and liberated by the servant while the devil sleeps. The man remains the protagonist and rides on Tiermes's back in a Magic Flight sequence (ATU 313), in which Tiermes functions as a magic helper. A variant published in Russian by V. V. Charnoluskii (1962, pp.35-40) presents the same pattern except that the devil appears as a cannibalistic bear; the captured god is simply named 'Thunder'[16] and locked in a forbidden storehouse, while the protagonist is a maiden, kidnapped by the bear, who also escapes in a Magic Flight on the god's shoulders once she frees him. On reaching her home, he states that he will return to marry her when she comes of age and they will fly through the sky and herd clouds.[17]

Finno-Karelian material may be sitting in audio archives, as yet untranscribed and unindexed; LFK 765/587 (in Balys 1939, p.36) is not listed under AT 1148b (cf. Arājas, Medne 1977) and according to Aldis Putelis, the last item in this collection to be properly indexed was, oddly enough, LFK 765/586; no Lithuanian examples are presently indexed under AT 1148b (cf. seven printed in Balys 1939, pp.34-36); large quantities of Sámic and Finnic materials are preserved in archives of the former USSR where they are filed and indexed by collector rather than by item type or typology.

[15] This presupposes that the preceding local/regional/(potentially) Inari Sámic example was relevant to the Skolt Sámic tradition; cf. relationships of Finnish and Karelian (§4) and Estonian and Setu traditions (§5).

[16] This is consistent with variation in naming in other traditions, but it could potentially be attributable to the translator.

[17] I am thankful to Maths Bertell (p.c.) for pointing out that Erich Johan Jessen-Schardebøll (1767, p.20) describes how (South[?]) Sámi shamans would 'free' 'Horagalles' with yoiking, drumming and sacrifice. Although the motif of 'freeing' the god may be traditional and related to ATU 1148b, the motif of capture is absent: 'freeing' the god is equivalent to sending him on a mission as a shamanic helping spirit, and the account is concerned with actual ritual practice (or narratives thereof) rather than a myth, legend or tale about the god. Jessen-Schardebøll comments that if Horagalles is unable (!) to harm the adversary that he is sent against, he will return and turn on the shaman who 'freed' him. (Jessen-Schardebøll 1767, p.20.) This seems less in character for the god than a helping spirit (cf. the god's role as a magic helper in the narratives above). This account seems to support that Sámic beliefs carried a conception that the thunder-god was 'set free'. It also offers

4. ATU 1148b among Finno-Karelians

The Finno-Karelian corpus consists of eleven narrative accounts. The examples were collected in a band crossing Finland into Russian (Ladoga) Karelia from east to west. Two were collected in North Ostrobothnia in 1883 (Balys 1939, pp.38-39). Eight were collected by Kaarle Krohn in 1884 and 1885 (Balys 1939, pp.39-40), presumably because the two earliest examples took his interest and he began explicitly requesting related material wherever he happened to be doing field work. A final, exceptional variant was collected in 1935:[18] the basic Finno-Karelian ATU 1148b schema had been adapted to a conventional aetiology of thunder from Elijah's wagon,[19] and the theft of the god's wagon is presented as an aetiology of the hostility of thunder toward devils. It is clear that the narrative was not prominent in the era of collection and had to be actively sought: one account consists of only a few phrases; two others mention memory failing the informant.

The *jyristimet* ('objects which thunder') are normally not described: in one case these are clearly disk-shaped stones; in another it is a *kone* ('machine'). Only two examples present the circumstances of the theft – while the thunder-god sleeps – and three examples fail to mention the theft entirely. A fear of thunder and associations with rain are rare; only two examples mention hiding the object and locking it in a room. The thunder-god assumes a disguise and becomes the devil's servant. They go fishing and the god displays one or more feats of strength. These take the form of using a tree as a beater or rowing with such strength that the boat breaks in half and the devil must swim to shore. The first of these displays of strength is otherwise encountered in the mythological poetic narrative tradition (cf. Krohn 1928, pp.35-38; 1931, p.126). The second is found in variants of ATU 1087, The Rowing Contest, which Uther (2004 II, p.32) lists only in Finnish, Sámic and Scandinavian Germanic traditions. Finno-Karelian ATU 1087 variants fall more or less evenly into two groups: *a*) combinations with ATU 1148b; *b*) a comic series of a mortal hero's adventures (or independent adventure) as a servant of a devil, indexed as a series of tale-types.[20] It seems likely that the latter are adaptations subordinating the episode to a new narrative framework as ATU 1148b dropped out of cultural activity (cf. Frog 2010, p.88). The recovery of the instrument exhibits a wide range of variation. The majority express the devil's inability to play the instrument, while the god's playing is characterised by a gradual increase in volume. The narrative climaxes with the devil (and his children, if mentioned) collapsing or being destroyed and may include the destruction of the devil's house.

The Finno-Karelian narratives all exhibit extremely narrow fields of emphasis and concern, normally with one strength test (which leaves the devil looking foolish) and the playing of the thunder-instrument (which may be no more than a strength test). How or why a devil came into possession of the thunder-instrument does not seem to have interested informants. There is rarely any indication of a connection between the instrument and weather or between this narrative and more general patterns of hostility between thunder and devils.

5. ATU 1148b among Estonians and Setus

The richest corpus of ATU 1148b, both in terms of the number of examples and the length and complexity of their manifestations, was documented in Estonia. Oskar Loorits (1932, p.95) stresses that there are remarkably few variants considering the interest of collectors: 25 items (including Setu examples) are identified as ATU 1148b. This corpus is also the most accessible: German translations of 24 examples appear in Loorits (1932) and Anderson (1939). These scholars reduce the corpus to 20 basic examples, with five examples exhibiting dependence on a written exemplar. The Orthodox Setu of southeast Estonia (often treated as Estonian) maintained distinct forms of the narrative, identifying the thunder-god with Ilja ('Elijah'). Additional material (not identified as ATU 1148b) demonstrates the cultural activity of the narrative through its reflection in other genres. A legend recorded in Rõuge (Võrumaa, southern Estonia) claims a devil was witnessed fleeing from the thunder-god with a stolen *piibar* ('flute'), which the god immediately recovered (Loorits 1949–1957 II, pp.23-24). Variation (or perhaps fixity) in the conception of the thunder-instrument – normally *pill* ('instrument') (§1) (Loorits 1932, pp.109-111), allowing it to remain unresolved in the social transmission – may have been more common in southern Estonia (Võrumaa and Setumaa). Estonian tradition exhibits consistent conceptions of this as a blown instrument. According to Loorits (1949–1957 II, pp.26-27), the god's instrument is only presented as a drum in variants of ATU 1165, where it reflects the Swedish or

a connection between Sámic ATU 1148b and magical practice, but this could be a mistake, misunderstanding or conscious (ideological) misrepresentation of the tradition.

[18] SKS KRA Pulkkinen, Hannes KRK 113, p.197.

[19] SKS KRA Syntytaru card catalogue, group Maailmansynty, sub-group Ukkosenjyrinä, where SKS KRA Pulkkinen, Hannes KRK 113, p.197 is cross-indexed.

[20] E.g. SKS KRA Taipale, Matti 3, p.6, 1859: AT 1005 + 1012 + 1006 + 1115 + 1116 + *1087* + «?» + 1063 + 1091 + 1092 + «?» + 1130.

Germanic 'Drum-Beater' Thórr (see §9), and in 'Die Donnertrommel' ('The Thunder-Drum'), an anonymous text published in *das Inland* (1858), the earliest preserved example of Estonian ATU 1148b, where German *trommel* may be a translation interpreting the ambiguous *pill*, particularly considering that a 'drum' does not necessarily accord with the description of the devil's attempt to play the instrument in the text.

Loorits shows that 'Die Donnertrommel' is a German translation or adaptation of an item presented to the Learned Estonian Society by Johann Lagos in 1835 (Loorits 1932, pp.50-51), most probably already influenced by Lagos's conceptions of an ideal Estonian mythology (Loorits 1932, pp.102-108). If Loorits is correct, the original was provided to Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald (with whom Lagos worked closely) for his publications of Estonian folklore, and subsequently disappeared. Kreutzwald published two versions of ATU 1148b in 1866. One, developed from this text, was two and a half times the length of 'Die Donnertrommel' (Kreutzwald 1866, pp.123-126): the expansion and variations are generally attributed to Kreutzwald's invention. The other was a very different version in the same collection (Kreutzwald 1866, pp.118-122). No sources for either survive.[21]

Kreutzwald's publication circulated widely and influenced the oral traditions. It is uncertain where his publications introduced ATU 1148b into a community and where these publications may have augmented or reshaped vernacular traditions. U. Masing (1977, p.118) was right to question whether any later documented versions of the narrative were completely free of influence from Kreutzwald's texts. This issue was augmented by early scholarship (Loorits 1932, de Vries 1933, Anderson 1939) which was not well equipped to deal with these problems when approaching the corpus – e.g. regional patterns in 'corrupt' or 'plagiarised' variants stood completely outside their field of vision; correspondences between variants which cannot be attributed to Kreutzwald's texts were overlooked as superfluous. It must be emphasised that there is a tremendous difference between the published texts introducing ATU 1148b into oral circulation (or simply providing informants with sufficient familiarity to present a summary in response to a collector's direct question) and the published texts interacting with conventional traditions already established in circulating discourse. In the latter case, the publication may have augmented an existing tradition, introducing complementary and alternative motifs, sequential arrangements and interpretations or meanings, or it may have done little more than assert the tradition's value and a particular form or forms, stimulating the tradition as individuals in the communities responded to the concretised narratives in printed form. Estonian and Setu examples of ATU 1148b must be approached with caution and reserve, but it is nonetheless possible to develop a general overview of certain sets of characteristic features.

Devils' fear of thunder or thunder's pursuit of a devil is often mentioned if not emphasised at the beginning of the narrative. The theft is accomplished while the thunder-god sleeps. A number of variants provide the devil with an assistant, raised to the sleeping thunder-god on the devil's neck and who accomplishes the theft. This is combined with setting a louse to bite the god so that he will move his arm or head from the instrument without waking. The scenario is similar to the Germanic myth of the theft of Freyja's necklace by Loki (Jónsson "Vihjálmsson", pp.98-100) and thus suspected to be Kreutzwald's invention (Loorits 1932, pp.100-101; de Vries 1933, p.108; Anderson 1939, pp.19-20). The devil takes the instrument to his realm (the bottom of the sea, Hell) and may specifically lock it away. The thunder-god disguises himself and takes work as a servant, most often with a fisherman (developed or maintained in relation to the Estonian devil's strong predilection for hiding in water). The fishing sequence results in the capture of the devil in the net and gaining an invitation to a wedding which the devil is holding. At the celebration, the devil brings out the *pill* and he (and perhaps all present) are unable to play it. The fisherman suggests that the disguised thunder-god be allowed to try. The thunder-god plays and destroys all of the devils. One version (in two examples) presents the motif of increasing volume (§4) (cf. Anderson 1939, p.52). In a few variants, the thunder-god asks his companion to get onto his back (cf. §3).

6. A uniquely Livonian tale

The Livonians are a Finnic linguistic-cultural group in Latvia whose language is almost extinct. Their traditions were closely related to those of southern Estonia. Information on Livonian thunder traditions is limited, and ATU 1148b is unattested (see Loorits 1926, pp.49-56, 252-253). A remote parallel may potentially be found in a popular and well-attested narrative which appears otherwise unique to Livonian tradition. Comparison is practical for discussion rather than any relationship being demonstrable. The narrative describes a fisherman and his companion fishing, of whom (as in ATU 1148b) only one observes a mythic being (not the devil). The being invites him to an undersea wedding where he (rather than the thunder-god) serves as a musician. (Loorits 1926, pp.143-163, 261-262; 1949–

[21] Walter Anderson (1939, pp.17-27) proposed that the second version was entirely the invention of Kreutzwald.

1957 II, pp.249-252; III, p.342.) This tale exhibits correspondences in narrative pattern and motif-systems to Estonian ATU 1148b without the thunder-god and conflict over the instrument.[22] If it were more widely known, this tradition could have provided material which was synthesised into the fisherman-companion of Estonian ATU 1148b. However, if the parallels are not merely typological, the system of narrative material from ATU1148b may have been radically revised into a new narrative where the subordinate figure became the protagonist, as in Sámic examples (§3).

7. ATU 1148b among Latvians

Only one Latvian variant of ATU 1148b has been identified (LFK 765/587; Balys 1939, p.36), which Aldis Putelis has generously helped me to investigate. The example was recorded in the Ilūkste region (southeast Latvia) in 1933 from the collector's mother, who purportedly heard it from her parents. The account says that God laid down his lighter / tinder box and his trumpet and went to sleep. A devil takes these and tries to play them for seven years, during which time there is neither thunder nor lightning in the world. When God wakes up, he has no work without his instruments and takes employment as a shepherd. No employer is mentioned. One day while herding, he notices a passing devil and follows him into a cave where he finds his instruments and all of the devils trying to play them. God asks to try, and the collector (presumably) notes, 'we must assume he looks like a simple shepherd'. There is thunder and lightning, all of the devils flee, and God returns with his instruments to work in the sky.

The pattern of seven years without thunder or lightning generally accords with the Estonian and Setu traditions (§5), where the *need* to take different employment is also encountered, albeit less often. The instrument is a 'horn' in a variant from Setumaa, where Ilja serves as a shepherd, and conceptions of thunder as a shepherd of clouds are reflected in the legend from Rõuge (Võrumaa). It is noteworthy that there is a congregation of devils rather than just one or one and his family. Balys (1939, p.51) emphasises that this variant presents the thunder-figure as 'God' rather than a secondary figure such as Ilja, but overall it falls in neatly with the Setu material. However, the variant offers no indication of emphasis or significance in the telling, and one variant does not offer insight into the broader Latvian tradition.

[22] A fuller discussion of how this narrative tradition relates to and contrasts with other traditions in the Circum-Baltic that associate water-spirits with music and musicians playing for supernatural beings is beyond the scope of this article.

8. ATU 1148b among Lithuanians

The first five examples of Lithuanian ATU 1148b presented by Balys (1939, pp.34-35) were collected by students on questionnaires in 1925 and 1935 in the Marijampolė District (southwest Lithuania). One variant collected by students reports that a devil stole Perkūnas's *pypkė* ('pipe [for smoking]'), and rather than 'thunder', the account claims that anyone who looks at Perkūnas dies. This begins as an aetiology of Perkūnas hunting the devil, then the devil raises a man with a mirror on his back (cf. Kreutzwald's text); the devil dies on seeing Perkūnas, Perkūnas dies on seeing his reflection, and the man goes home. Two examples, collected in different parts of the Vilkaviškis Municipality, report that God quarrelled with Perkūnas and threw him out of heaven, variously because Perkūnas stole God's axe, knife and *dviratis* ('two-wheeler' [bicycle, chariot]) (1935), or Perkūnas took these (and a goat) when being cast out of heaven (1925): the 'theft' of the thunder-god's attributes (§1) present an implicit aetiology of their association with Perkūnas while maintaining the basic theft scenario of ATU 1148b. The knife is not an attribute of Perkūnas: it is stolen from him by a devil as an aetiology for why Perkūnas throws his axe at devils. The collection of two versions of this account across ten years implies some type of underlying conventional form which warrants comparison with the apparent reorganisation of ATU 1148b's motifs (cf. §3). A student also collected an aetiology of Perkūnas's hostility toward the devil in an account of a devil stealing an axe (not associated with thunder) shared between Perkūnas and his brother. Balys (1939, p.36) compares this to a local legend about two giants who share one axe, into which the schema of the theft as an aetiology of hostility has been synthesised. The most peculiar of this group is an account in which the devil disguises himself as a beautiful woman, so that when Perkūnas kisses 'her', his lips knit shut;[23] now as soon as he sees the devil, 'he immediately opens his mouth, and the roar which is released is called thunder' (Balys 1939, p.34). It is unclear whether this should be identified with ATU 1148b or is an unrelated aetiology of thunder. Balys (1939, p.35) presents two additional Lithuanian examples. One, collected in central Lithuania in 1935, presents an aetiology of the Pleiades in an account of a sieve, hung in the sky by the Virgin Mary, stolen by the devil and recovered by Perkūnas. The other, collected in northeast Lithuania in 1935, is another aetiology of hostility, owing to the theft of a stone intended for Perkūnas's house. Of the examples presented by Balys, six appear to be evidence of ATU

[23] Cf. the Thórr-myth involving his wife and an aetiology of his hammer in which Loki's lips are sewn shut (Faulkes 1998, p.41-43).

1148b traditions. Four present thefts of a thunder-weapon object (axe, stone), but in the two examples where the axe is identified as a weapon, the devil steals another object.

Jūratė Šlekonytė found four additional narratives not listed by Balys catalogued as belief legends (Kerbelytė 1999–2002 III, p.178) and one as an aetiological legend (Kerbelytė 1999–2002 III, p.21). Three of these describe a devil refusing to return money borrowed from Perkūnas,[24] which may be the result of interference from Lithuanian ATU 1165 (§9). The fourth is the only variant which mentions that Perkūnas was asleep when a devil stole his guns/bullets,[25] clearly identifiable as the thunder weapon (Vėlius 1987, p.131; Laurinkienė 1996, pp.18-19). The aetiological legend states that the devil stole Elijošius's ('Elijah's') and Einokas's ('Hananja's') axe, chisel and hammer, explaining that when Elijošius travels, it thunders.[26]

9. Preliminary overview: from Lapland to Lithuania

The motif of sleep during the theft is reflected to varying degrees in all ATU 1148b traditions. The god appears immediately aware of the identity of the thief, otherwise encountering the adversary/instrument is accidental. From Finland to Latvia, the theft is followed by a period of disguise in which the god takes employment of low status, working for the devil (§4), or for the figure invited to the devil's celebration (§5), or without specification (§7). The Finnic traditions (§4-5; cf. §6) associate service with a fishing adventure. Finnic traditions and the Latvian example present an inability of the devil or community of devils to play the instrument, which is then unwittingly provided to the thunder-god who plays it effectively. Playing the instrument incapacitates, destroys or drives off the devil and the devil's community. Fundamental to this narrative is an underlying conception of a) the thunder-instrument as an object which a devil can obtain, but b) not get to function properly; the instrument can also c) be presented to the disguised thunder-god as though d) appropriate use or playing is not in itself dangerous and may even be positive and desirable. Conceptions of thunder and attributes of the thunder-god (§1) must therefore be considered a factor in the cultural activity of ATU 1148b.

Estonian and Setu traditions (§5) appear to be the most vital: they are the most well-attested in the number of examples, the examples are generally longer and more complex narratives, and they clearly participate in the communication and maintenance of aspects of the conceptual system and belief traditions to which they are connected (cf. §7). This includes the correlation between the thunder-instrument and rain (or its absence), which maintained currency, and also the relationship of thunder and devils. The latter included devils' fear of thunder and the power of thunder to overcome or drive away devils.[27] In contrast, Finno-Karelian examples (§4) are few, short, and simpler narratives, almost all of which are preserved owing to the work of one enthusiastic collector. However, the Finno-Karelian examples are relatively widespread and the short, simple form was consistent and clearly conventional. The only explicit aetiological use is in the unusual example in which ATU 1148b was mapped over the widespread aetiology of thunder from God's wagon. Other examples express the power of thunder to overcome or destroy the devil, but fear is merely characteristic of the 'stupid devil' who is intimidated by feats of physical strength. Finno-Karelian ATU 1148b appears to have become dislocated from conventional conceptions about the aetiology of thunder. Although ATU 1148b is one of many Circum-Baltic narratives about thunder and the devil (§1), and it both affirms the power and significance of thunder as well as the inferiority and stupidity of devils, it is not connected to the hostility between thunder and the devil (which otherwise both emerges in and as aetiological legends): the Finno-Karelian ATU 1148b tradition appears primarily oriented toward humour and entertainment (cf. Frog 2010, pp.235-236).

Each Finnic tradition exhibits culturally specific social patterns in how ATU 1148b was used and of its significance in society: they reflect shared sets of conventions in its cultural activity *per* linguistic-cultural group. Insofar as these shared sets of conventions can be considered inherited through processes of social communication, it is reasonable to suggest that social patterns of use shaped the narrative's evolution as an historical process – i.e. that patterns of social conventions are not arbitrary within a culture but rather they are conditioned by the history of conventional applications, and as innovations, deletions and strategies in application become socially established as conventional, they become part of that historical process.

The evolution of the tradition can be considered according to scales of probability through correlations of social patterns of use, relationships to other material in the tradition ecology and in the broader conceptual system, and to the corresponding traditions in

[24] LTR 832/489/, 1935; LTR 832/492/, 1936; LTR 3116/4312/, 1947.
[25] LTR 1627/174/, 1938.
[26] LTR 1813/13/, 1937.
[27] On hunting or chasing as a motif in this context, see Vėlius 1987, pp.126-139; Ajkhenvald *et al*. 1989, p.158; Laurinkienė 1996, p.23; Valk 1996.

other cultures. This does not mean that questions can be simply and readily resolved. Comparison of Finno-Karelian (§4) and Estonian/Setu (§5) traditions implies that either: a) the Estonian/Setu tradition underwent an *accumulation of information* as a consequence of interest in and the significance of the narrative, expanding the thunder-god's service to the devil and the fishing adventure through the introduction of the fisherman who is invited to a wedding (cf. §6); or b) the Finno-Karelian tradition underwent a *loss of information* as a consequence of dislocation from belief traditions and increased emphasis on adventure and humour, reducing the devil and the fisherman with whom the thunder-god enters service to a single figure and consequently eliminating the celebration in the devil's home as grounds for inviting guests (see §11.4, §12).[28] Comparison of only these two traditions cannot resolve which is more probable.

Lithuanian sources (§8) are, for the most part, highly problematic. Nonetheless, they reveal that there was a tradition of the theft. They also reveal that in the culture where the thunder-god hunting devils was most pronounced, the tradition of the theft maintained conventional value as a social resource for the aetiology of Perkūnas's hostility. Comparison with other Circum-Baltic traditions presents a high probability that Lithuanian ATU 1148b underwent a tremendous loss of information: the narrative is reduced to the schema of the theft, 'losing' the identification of the stolen object with the god's loss of the sound or power of thunder, as well as 'losing' narrative material dependent on that identification (i.e. everything which follows on the initial episode).[29] This loss of information appears directly related to variation in the object stolen (knife, wood axe, tools, building stone, pipe, unreturned money) and the emphasis on the act of theft as the aetiology of hostility and pursuit. This contrasts sharply with the development of ATU 1148b in Sámic traditions where no theft appears. Sámic examples place emphasis on the relationship between the god and rain, and the god who embodies that power (rather than an attributed instrument) is locked away, apparently in a loss of information synthesising motifs associated with the theft and recovery into a single episode.[30] The Sámic tradition exhibits different priorities, such as the maintenance of a god–rain relation rather than a god–devil relation, and developments related to emphasis on different ATU 1148b episodes (theft versus recovery). More strikingly, synthesis with the Magic Flight presents the liberated god fleeing from the devil rather than pursuing him. This is a Sámic development in the evolution of ATU 1148b which does not seem like it could be possible in Lithuania, where Perkūnas's hostility and pursuit of the devil appears more central than his association with thunder or rain. Sámic and Lithuanian examples both reveal the maintenance of indexically associated systems of motifs mapped over new objects and adapted to new contexts. The evolution of each appears conditioned by the broader tradition ecology and conceptual system in which it participates. I propose that there is a correlation in the cultural milieu between social patterns of use and broader conceptions of the thunder-god and the aetiology of thunder, and that these impact the evolution of the narrative tradition.

The loss of information does not mean that the narrative material simply ceased to exist. Linda Dégh (1995, pp.97, 125-127, 218-219) emphasises that compelling narrative elements continue to be adapted to new contexts and applications even when the narratives or genres with which they are associated move toward extinction (cf. Frog 2010, pp.72-102). Although the recovery of the thunder-instrument is not exhibited in Lithuanian ATU 1148b, the thunder-god shows up as a musician at a different wedding – in ATU 1165, 'The Troll and the Baptism', a popular Circum-Baltic narrative.[31] ATU 1165 commonly represents a man required to invite a troll or devil to his child's baptism; the man dissuades the devil's attendance by mentioning mythic figures in attendance, culminating in 'Drum-Beater' (the thunder-god / Thórr), in response to which the devil declines the invitation (cf. Balys 1939, p.158; Vėlius 1987, p.131), often mentioning a past injury. Lithuanian and Latvian ATU 1165 clearly follow the common pattern, one example even mentioning the drum (Balys 1939, pp.140-141), but the celebration is a man's *wedding*; a devil has loaned money to the groom (cf. §8); and the devil flees the wedding because the thunder-god is present *as a musician* (Laurinkienė 1996, p.23; for variants, see Balys 1939, pp.137-161). This unusual form of ATU 1165 could be related to a synthesis of narrative material associated at some earlier period with the recovery of the thunder-instrument, much as examples of Lithuanian ATU 1148b (§8) appear fused with other material. This potential reuse of narrative material is interesting for comparison with the Livonian tale of a fisherman attending a wedding as a musician (§6), as another potential example of an episode finding renewed social value.

[28] On accumulation and loss of information, see Frog (2010, pp.119-121, 178-179, 190-191, 310, 314-315).

[29] See also Vėlius (1987, pp.127-128) for an overview of aetiologies of hostility and other associations of the devil with a 'theft'.

[30] There is also a possibility that the Sámic tradition reflects a synthesis of ATU 1148b traditions with an established tradition of the captured thunder-god (cf. Anderson 1939, p.72n).

[31] Balys 1939, pp.137-161, 213-216; Uther 2004 II, pp.57-58; cf. Barag *et al*. 1979, p.270.

10. The Greek analogue of Nonnos

The only clear example of ATU 1148b outside of the Circum-Baltic cultural area is the Greek myth of Zeus and his great opponent Typhoeus in the *Dionysica* of Nonnos of Panopolis, composed in the fifth century A.D.[32] Nonnos combines ATU 1148b with a corresponding myth about the theft of Zeus's sinews, attested elsewhere. These have been discussed in detail by Uku Masing (1944; cf. Masing 1977, pp.124-129) and William Hansen (1995; 2002, pp.305-314). In Nonnos's poem, Zeus lays aside his lightning in order to go to bed with Plouto ('sleep') and Typhoeus accomplishes the theft (*Dionysica* I.145-162). The weight of the lightning makes it difficult to wield and it does not resound as it should (I.294-320). Typhoeus then hides the lightning in a cave. Zeus disguises a man as a pipe-playing shepherd. Typhoeus challenges him to a playing match (I.362-480), in which Typhoeus will play the lightning, described as an *ὄργανον αὐτοβόητον* ('self-playing instrument') (I.432). This competition does not take place. Nonnos abruptly introduces a parallel tradition about Zeus's stolen sinews: the shepherd claims Zeus burnt away the strings of his seven-stringed lyre (*κιθάρα*), but that if only he had the sinews of Zeus, he could play a tune that would affect the whole world (I.486-508). Typhoeus provides the sinews, the shepherd conceals them in a rock (they are never mentioned again) and resumes playing his pipes. Meanwhile Zeus recovers the hidden thunder-instrument without conflict (I.507-II.41). The peculiarities of Nonnos's account avoid the competition of playing music in which the thunder-god of ATU 1148b would demonstrate his ability and destroy his adversary (presented as a separate conflict). This analogue provides evidence of the potential age of ATU 1148b, presenting: a) the theft during 'sleep'; b) thunder as a 'self-playing instrument' which nonetheless c) requires strength to play, d) should be played appropriately, and e) cannot be played by the 'devil'; f) hiding the instrument; g) a god–servant relation with h) a disguise as a shepherd; and i) a challenge of playing which results in j) the 'devil' offering the/a stolen power attribute of the god (sinews) k) for a musical instrument l) to play for him as entertainment.

11. Approaching ATU 1148b in Norse Germanic cultures

Sources for the Germanic tradition are early, limited, and problematic. Two eddic poems recorded in the 13th century have been central to discussions of Germanic traditions of ATU 1148b. *Þrymskviða* (*Þkv*)[33] describes the theft and recovery of Thórr's hammer, and *Hymiskviða* (*Hkv*) is conventionally treated as an authoritative presentation of Thórr's fishing expedition. Finally, evidence of ATU 1148b reflected in Thórr's adventure to the home of a giant called Geirrøðr will be considered.

11.1. *Þrymskviða* and ATU 1148b

Þkv is the only versified tradition of ATU 1148b,[34] with its descendents in later Icelandic *rímur* poetry and Scandinavian ballads;[35] there is no evidence of a corresponding prose tradition (cf. Liungman 1961, p.267), and *Þkv*'s relationship to tradition has been subject to much debate.[36] *Þkv* opens with Thórr waking up to discover that his hammer has disappeared. He sends a subordinate figure (Loki) to search for it, and the thief, a giant called Thrymr, demands the goddess Freyja in exchange for the hammer. Thórr travels with his companion Loki to Thrymr's home for the wedding, with Thórr disguised as the bride and Loki as 'her' handmaiden. Thórr astounds the giant Thrymr with a display of appetite rather than strength, for which Loki offers excuses. Thórr's hammer is brought out and placed in Thórr's lap to consecrate the bride, at which point Thórr uses it to kill everyone.

Þkv exhibits the principle system of ATU 1148b's motifs: theft during sleep, a servant, disguise, infiltrating the household of the adversary/thief, a wedding celebration, feats which impress the host, the thunder-instrument unwittingly given to the god, and the destruction of the adversary with the instrument. There are also noteworthy contrasts; Thórr resists rather than makes the plan and disguise; his thunder-god appetite threatens his disguise (as the goddess of sexuality) rather than threatening or impressing the devil; the disguise is not one of service and explicitly humiliates the god. A man assuming a woman's gender role, particularly in sexual relations (an implied con-

[32] Cited according to Rouse's (1940) edition; on Typhoeus, see West (2007, p.257-258).

[33] All eddic poems are cited according to the Neckel and Kuhn (1963) edition by poem title, stanza number and line number within the stanza, e.g. *Þkv* 17.3-4 = *Þrymskviða*, lines 3-4 of stanza 17.

[34] Krohn (1922, pp.205-206; 1931, p.126) suggested that the Finno-Karelian tradition may have had an earlier verse form, largely based on an unwarranted assumption that the authoritative form of mythological narratives should be versified. Nonnos represents the tradition in verse, but there is no reason to believe that this reflects a conventionally versified narrative tradition for ATU 1148b.

[35] On the later traditions, see Grundtvig 1853, p.1-7; Bugge, Moe 1887; Jónsson 1905–1912, pp.278-289; Nielsen 1911; Liestøl 1970, pp.15-18; Bertell 2003, pp.53-61.

[36] See de Vries 1928; Hallberg 1954; Jakobsen 1984; Magerøy 1991 (1956); von See *et al*. 1997, pp.509-575; McKinnell 2001; Bertell 2003, pp.53-61; Thorvaldsen 2008; Frog 2010, pp.213-216.

sequence of the wedding) was the highest possible offence in early Norse culture (Meulengracht Sørensen 1983). In *Þkv*, Freyja states that the proposed union would be offensive to her because of implications of excessive female sexual appetite (*Þkv* 13). This establishes the offensive quality of the role which Thórr is compelled to fill in his disguise, concerning which he objects: *'Mic muno æsir / argan kalla // ef ec bindaz læt / brúðar líni'* (*Þkv* 17.3-6) – the offensive sense of which is roughly equivalent to modern English 'The gods will say I was out to get f***ed up the arse if I let them do me up in a wedding dress'. Where Freyja's objection succeeded, Thórr's fails. Thórr's initial attempt to trade Freyja for his hammer is contrary to his role as defender of the gods' realm and their women from giants (Clunies Ross 1994). Moreover, he fails to give the goddess to those he should protect her from, and he is subjected to the role which she rejected. Thórr's appearance in a wedding dress is contrasted with the storm raised by his goats and chariot on his journey to meet Thrymr (*Þkv* 21), his appetite (*Þkv* 24-26), and the furious blazing of his eyes when Thrymr tries to kiss him (*Þkv* 27-28). The phallic farce of castration through losing his hammer while he slept (which Margaret Clunies Ross [2002, p.188] suggests would have been understood in terms of homosexual rape) comes to a climax when the hammer is placed in the lap of the emasculated Thórr-bride, and he rejoices at the return of what is his, using it on everyone (*Þkv* 30-31; Clunies Ross 2002, pp.188-189).

Þkv is purely concerned with the adventure of the hammer's recovery by Thórr and Loki: Thrymr does not threaten the gods, their domain, and there is no indication that he would otherwise take Freyja by force; there is no mention of Thórr's hammer as an object which the giants feel in any way threatened by, nor that they are intimidated by thunder (the chariot splits cliffs with thunder and lightning), and there is no indication that the hammer was associated with thunder or rain at all. The priority of presentation appears to be on making Thórr look foolish, humiliating him through gender transgression. Although individual motifs of *Þkv* are traditional, there is no support in early sources for the narrative as a whole, the name of the adversary, nor for individual mythic events depicted (for example, the bursting of Freyja's necklace, Thórr borrowing it, or any association of Thórr's hammer with brides).[37] A number of features of *Þkv* as a composition are unconventional, and moreover unconventional in ways that associate the composition with later traditions of poetic narrative.[38] The lack of evidence for the *Þkv* narrative in early sources contrasts sharply with its later translation and persistence in those later poetic traditions – Icelandic *rímur* poetry and Scandinavia ballads – where it exhibits no connection to belief traditions. Among *rímur*, this is one of three preserved 'mythological' narratives, the others being *Lokrur* (Jónsson 1905–1912, pp.290-310), adapted directly from Snorri Sturluson's parodic account of Thórr's visit to Útgarða-Loki (Jónsson 1905–1912, p.290), and *Skíðaríma* (Jónsson 1905–1912, pp.10-42), a beggar's comic Christian visionary journey to Valhalla. The corresponding ballads were recorded in Norway, Denmark, Sweden and the Færoe Isles into the 19th and 20th century. This distribution is more remarkable because it is the only known Scandinavian ballad based on a 'pagan' mythological narrative (Liestøl 1970, p.18). Features of *Þkv's* composition associate it with changes taking place in the poetic tradition across the 13th to the 15th centuries while the narrative, for which there is no early evidence, thrived in the later Christian cultural milieu.

11.2 Thórr's fishing expedition and ATU 1148b

In contrast to *Þkv*, Thórr's adventure of fishing for the world serpent exhibits tremendous early popularity

[37] Thórr's remark about what the gods will say about him makes it seem remarkable that the event is never referred to in insult exchanges with other gods (*Lokasenna*, *Hárbarðsljóð*). The placement of the phallic hammer in the bride's lap would very possibly threaten her sexuality or nullify the hammer's masculine power (Itkonen 1946, pp.212-213; Salo 2006, pp.38-41), which in this case turns the bride into an angry man who kills the groom. The tendency to identify any reference to a hammer or axe in any way connected to a wedding with *Þkv* (e.g. ATU 1165; Motz 1997, p.335) requires comprehensive reassessment, particularly considering that the examples derive not from Iceland, but primarily from Sweden, the function of the instrument may not be bound to weddings *per se*, or even strictly associated with the thunder-god (Lindow 1994, p.490; Siikala 2002a, p.293), a possibility which becomes still more prominent when the motif is framed in a Circum-Baltic context (§1).

[38] E.g. *Þkv* exhibits limited end-rhyme (avoided in eddic verse), over-alliteration (cf. Aðalsteinsson 2009), and uses of parallelism and repetition more characteristic of later *rímur* poetry and ballads; parallelism includes the use of terms for the two classes of gods (*Æsir* and *Vanir*) as mutually equivalent in parallel lines (*Þkv* 15.1-4) – and apparently also the placement of Thórr's hammer to bless the bride with the blessing (*vígja*) by the hands of the mysterious (alliterating) goddess Vár (*Þkv* 30.5-8) – inconsistent with eddic poetry but consistent with *rímur*; correlations in the verbal text and motif-constellations of *Þkv* with other poems are uncharacteristic of eddic poetry and appear intended to generate intertextual references for contrast after the manner of parody rather than summary or conventional uses of common poetic themes; these correlations coupled with over-use of archaic-sounding expletive particles (Fidjestøl 1999, pp.207-230) would be consistent with a strategy to 'sound' eddic in the generation of parody (cf. Fidjestøl 1999, p.228).

ty.[39] Thórr disguises himself as a youth and enters the household of the giant Hymir. In *Hkv*, this visit is motivated by the acquisition of a mythic cauldron rather than the thunder-instrument. *Hkv* is uniquely connected to another poem, *Lokasenna*, in manuscript prose (Neckel, Kuhn 1962, p.96): it precedes the drinking feast of the giant Ægir, lord of the sea, for which Thórr fetched the brewing-kettle – although *Lokasenna* presents Thórr arriving after the feast has begun. In *Hkv*, Thórr enters the household of the giant through association with a companion and is subject to a series of strength-tests. The final strength test is moving the cauldron: Thórr's companion attempts twice and fails; Thórr succeeds and the accomplishment is identified with a ringing noise (*Hkv* 34). Among the strength tests is the fishing expedition, from which the companion (not attested in any other source) is absent and only Thórr and the fisherman-giant participate. In the prose account of Snorri Sturluson, Thórr makes this visit to Hymir alone, the challenges in the hall are absent, and the motivation for the adventure is awkwardly linked to the preceding narrative, which describes a celebration in Útgarða-Loki's hall (Faulkes 1982, pp.42-45) (§11.4). The rowing challenge (ATU 1087) is associated with this fishing expedition, but rather than breaking the boat through strength of rowing (§4), Thórr's foot or feet go through the bottom of the boat in raising the serpent (Meulengracht Sørensen 2001 [1986], pp.63-64).

11.3. Visiting Geirrøðr and ATU 1148b

Thórr's visit to the giant Geirrøðr was also popular (Mogk 1924; Simek 1986; McKinnell 1994, pp.57-86). The instigating event is uncertain, but Thórr makes a dangerous journey with a companion and without his hammer; he engages in a series of games or strength-tests in the giant Geirrøðr's hall, concluding with slaying the giant (and everyone else). In the earliest example, the allusive skaldic poem *Þórsdrápa* (ca. 1000 A.D.), Thórr is mysteriously in possession of his hammer at the conclusion of the adventure (Faulkes 1998, pp.29-30). Alfred Vestlund (1911, pp.109-112) and Jan de Vries (1933, pp.64-65) argue that this adventure concerned the recovery of Thórr's hammer, although the aetiology of the hammer has also been proposed (Jackson 2005, pp.495-496; cf. Faulkes 1998, p.42). Examples emphasise Thórr's strength and power without clear reference to either rain or 'thunder',[40] although the fear of the giant may be present within the conflict.

Thórr does not appear to make this journey in disguise. However, in a later (15th century) euhemerised account, Thorsteinn bæjarmagn ('Thórr-Stone Mansion-Might') enters the hall of Geirrøðr as the invisible companion of a giant, who, with his entourage, has been invited to a celebration. Thorsteinn lends invisible aid to his companion in the series of strength tests until he is revealed as the servant of this giant. His companion gives him as a gift to Geirrøðr (allowing Thorsteinn's companion to depart safely), who wishes to see a display of the Thorsteinn's ability. (Jónsson, Vihjálmsson 1943–1944 III, pp.405-412.) Thorsteinn has a magical stone (*hallr*) of three colours with an accompanying metal spike (*broddr*); when the different colours of the stone are pricked with the spike, different varieties of weather are produced;[41] the parts will hit anything they are thrown at and return to Thorsteinn's hand (Jónsson, Vihjálmsson 1943–1944 III, pp.400-402). Jacqueline Simpson (1966, pp.5-8) has discussed this peculiar object in relation to corresponding objects called 'Thor's hammers' in later Icelandic tradition: these were used in magic by pricking the hammer with its accompanying spike. Thorsteinn refers to the product of this object as *leikinn* ('playing' [either a game or musical instrument]). Geirrøðr is entertained and encourages Thorsteinn to generate different weather until Thorsteinn performs something called *svipuleikr* ('whip-play', perhaps 'whip-song' [cf. Cleasby, Vigfússon 1896, p.611]). This throws fire and sparks in the eyes of Geirrøðr, who laughs and asks for more. Thorsteinn gradually increases his playing and concludes by throwing the two parts of his object into the eyes of Geirrøðr and fleeing, the object's parts returning to him thereafter. (Jónsson, Vihjálmsson 1943–1944 III, pp.412-413.)

11.4 Overview: ATU 1148b in Norse Germanic cultures

Thorsteinn bæjarmagn is attributed with a weather-producing object in two parts, comparable to the (always plural) Finno-Karilian *jyristimet* (§4). Like the thunder-god of ATU 1148b, he enters the hall of the giant in a deceptive manner, presenting himself as a servant although he orchestrates the action. The giant expects entertainment without the possibility of harm when the two-part object is used in a performative ac-

[39] See Meulengracht Sørensen (2001 [1986]); on the early loan into Finno-Karelian, see Setälä (1932).

[40] The poem *Þórsdrápa* is so allusive that it is ambiguous. Saxo Grammaticus presents this myth in his *Gesta Danorum* ('History of the Danes') as a sort of guided tour of Geirrøðr's hall by human adventurers (tourists) long after the battle. Saxo states that Thórr destroyed Geirrøðr's daughters with *fulmina* ('lightning bolts') (Olrik, Ræder 1931, p.243). Saxo's handling of material is so free that it is unclear whether this reflects tradition, invention, or an interpretation of Thórr's weapon or power as a *fulmen*-symbol for the Latin text.

[41] This is exceptional for weather magic (Simpson 1966, p.6).

tion described as 'playing', appropriate to a musical instrument. This performance is accompanied by the motif of gradual increase (§4-5), and Geirrøðr appreciates this performance in spite of its violent products. Thorsteinn throws the two parts at the giant (as Thórr uses his hammer), killing him. The property of these parts to return to the hero is identical to the description of Thórr's hammer (Faulkes 1998, p.42), to which it is somehow equivalent. This increases its probable identification as a thunder-instrument within a motif-complex and narrative pattern paralleling the recovery episode of ATU 1148b, even though the theft and recovery of the object are absent. This account has been manipulated by the saga author and is clearly intended to be entertaining, but these correspondences make it appear that the material being manipulated included some form of ATU 1148b. This consequently increases the probability that the apparent acquisition of Thórr's hammer after his arrival in the hall in *Þórsdrápa* (four or five centuries earlier) also reflects some form of ATU 1148b.[42] However, this does not eliminate the possibility of an aetiology of the hammer, or interaction and variation between ATU 1148b and an aetiology of Thórr's hammer.

Hkv presents a narrative which has potentially mapped ATU 1148b over another mythic object held by a giant. John McKinnell (1994, pp.57-86) points out that the 'games' or strength tests in the giant's hall related to acquiring the cauldron appear to follow the same story pattern as in the visit to Geirrøðr's hall. In *Hkv*, the mythic object acquired is accompanied by a sequence of one figure failing before the god succeeds with a resounding noise. Although a 'disguise' does not generally appear in the visit to Geirrøðr, it was associated with Thórr's fishing expedition. In *Hkv*, Thórr's fishing expedition is embedded in the story pattern discussed by McKinnell, presenting the possibility that the episode has undergone a (potentially unique) accumulation of information, through which material from an adventure to a giant's hall for the acquisition of a mythic object exhibiting a common pattern with ATU 1148b has accumulated around Thórr's adventure with the fisherman.

This accumulation of information may reflect a loss of information from a longer narrative sequence – i.e. if Thórr's adventures in the service of the giant-fisherman was a means of advancing to the home of another giant for the acquisition of the lost thunder-instrument (§5, §9). The possibility is not unreasonable considering that this basic schema appears in Óðinn's adventure for the acquisition of the Mead of Poetry: Óðinn first engages as a reaper in the service of one giant, gains audience with the possessor of the mead through that association, and eventually accomplishes the theft (Faulkes 1998, pp.4-5). A loss of information could have resulted in the identification of the fisherman with the lord of the hall and a synthesis of distinct narrative sequences. This would parallel the potential loss in Finno-Karelian ATU 1148b (§4) resulting in the god's service with the thief rather than a fisherman (§9).

This possibility is augmented by Snorri Sturluson's connection of Thórr's fishing expedition to his adventures with Útgarða-Loki. Snorri presents these narratives in a fictional dialogue, which the Útgarða-Loki narrative is carefully constructed to reflect and comment on (Lindow 2000). The narrative itself is a burlesque which repeatedly shows Thórr deceived and defeated by his adversaries (see Tolley, forthcoming). McKinnell (1994, pp.57-86) shows that this narrative is developed according to the same story pattern as the visit to Geirrøðr, of which it is the only example where Thórr fails to defeat his adversary. Its reception as a burlesque is emphasised by the direct translation of the written narrative into *rímur* poetry (§11.1). Snorri's (unique) connection of the fishing expedition to this narrative is as peculiar and clumsy as the connection of *Hkv* to *Lokasenna*: he presents it as a revenge action for the humiliation Thórr suffered in one specific challenge, with the additional jibe that Thórr succeeded in deceiving the (stupid) world serpent with his fishing hook 'no less than Útgarða-Loki had made a mockery of him' with illusions of cosmological proportions (Faulkes 1982, p.44). There is at least the possibility that Snorri connected these two scenarios on the basis of a conventional association. This possibility may find some small support in that both Snorri and *Hkv* (37-38) link this cycle to the myth of the laming of Thórr's goat, which might also be paralleled in the wagon accident on the departure from the Geirrøðr adventure in Book VIII of Saxo Grammaticus's *Gesta Danorum* (Olrik, Ræder: 1931, p.243). It is possible that these three narratives formed a (variable) system or cycle in which the fishing expedition was associated with ATU 1148b.

All Germanic examples are concerned with action-adventure scenarios, expressions of power, and all engage in varying degrees of humour. It is not clear

[42] A conventional form of ATU 1148b may be parodied in an episode of the burlesque *Bósa saga*, where it would have been mapped over a bridal-quest narrative: the stolen object is a princess, the adversary is named Guðmundr (the name of the positive companion in adventures where the adversary is Geirrøðr), the hero and his companion enter the wedding feast in disguise, the hero plays a harp which magically affects people and objects alike, the adversary is struck senseless and the hero escapes with the instrument (in which the princess is concealed, notably for a companion, not for himself) (Jónsson, Vihjálmsson 1943–1944 II, pp.487-491).

how any of these examples may have related to belief traditions – except possibly *Þkv*, with its orientation toward parody. If Germanic ATU 1148b were a system of narratives including the Geirrøðr adventure and fishing expedition, there are some noteworthy inconsistencies: a) the companion on the visit to Geirrøðr is never the giant-fisherman, it is normally Thórr's servant; b) Thórr's hammer appears to be absent from the fishing adventure but then is used in the climactic conflict with the world serpent; c) Thórr is disguised for the fishing adventure but (apparently) not for the visit to Geirrøðr; d) only the parody *Þkv* presents the theft during sleep. There is the possibility that ATU 1148b had already splintered into separate narratives which had developed conventional forms divorced from the unifying thread of the stolen thunder 'instrument'. Factors involved in this process may have included the interaction of Thórr's fishing expedition with traditions of Christ/God fishing for Leviathan (Gschwantler 1968) and the stimulation of and changes in the cultural activity of Thórr's hammer/axe in response to the parallel cultural activity of the Christian Cross (Capelle 2005).[43] In other words, the tradition of the fishing expedition may have been subject to radical changes in both form and cultural activity in relation to the rise of Christianity. The splintering of Germanic ATU 1148b would be comparable to its (aetiologically oriented) evolution in Lithuanian (§8). The Geirrøðr adventure (§11.3) may also have developed from ATU 1148b as the latter waned in cultural activity, without ever being associated with the fishing adventure itself. The diversity in the sources (including evidence of a potentially unified theft scenario parodied in §11.1 and §11.3) persisting in tandem could be a consequence of the majority of sources being documented in Iceland: Iceland was a colony of migrants from across Scandinavia and beyond, who brought their diverse traditions with them – a plurality of conventional forms which may have been as inclined to compete as to synthesise into a unified form (see §13).

12. Perspectives on ATU 1148b

The service with the fisherman shared across Finnic and Germanic traditions (§4-5, §11.2, cf. §6) is paralleled by service as a shepherd in Setu, Latvian and the Greek examples (§5, §7, §10). A Sámic example (§3) and the legend from Võrumaa (§5) betray a concept of the thunder-god herding clouds ('service' is not exhibited in Lithuanian examples). It is not possible to make any determination about the significance (or lack thereof) in the herdsman versus fisherman disguise/occupation. The Finnic-Germanic isogloss may be partly an illusion following from the paucity of sources and the variant forms of the traditions encountered in more peripheral cultural areas. Nonetheless, Germanic parallels make it more probable that Estonian traditions of the thunder-god's service with a fisherman are related to an early Germanic form. This supports that Finno-Karelian traditions underwent a loss of information, but the process of loss remains ambiguous. The majority of the early Germanic examples were documented in Iceland (West Norse), and traditions in Germanic cultures on the Baltic Sea (East Norse) may have maintained markedly different, distinct traditions (§1). The loss of information may have happened already in a Germanic tradition (cf. §11.4) potentially introduced into the Finno-Karelian traditions (§4) – or vice versa – superseding conventional ATU 1148b or reshaping the narrative pattern according to new priorities (cf. §5).

The early Greek example of ATU 1148b (§10) provides an interesting point of historical reference, even if it is not entirely certain when or within what horizons the underlying tradition may have been conventional, nor even that the tradition manipulated by Nonnos was indeed linguistically or culturally 'Greek' (cf. Rouse 1940, p.xiii; Tolley 2009, pp.93-102). The Greek example emphasises that *Þkv* is most likely a uniquely Germanic or uniquely Germanic Scandinavian adaptation of ATU 1148b (§11.1), of which other cultural forms are independent. There is strong evidence of a Germanic ATU 1148b tradition which shared many features with Finnic ATU 1148b traditions. This further increases the probability that *Þkv* was a conscious (parodic) adaptation of ATU 1148b intended to make fun of Thórr in the wake of the process of conversion to Christianity, founding a new tradition of ATU 1148b which persisted into the 20th century. This implies that any relationship to Finnic traditions predates the 13th century. The *Þkv* tradition with its history of conservative maintenance of the narrative for a minimum of six centuries emphasises that the evolution of a tradition such as ATU 1148b may have been characterised by fits and starts of radical (and socially relevant) transformations rather than being a slow, gradual and fluid progression.

The deeper roots of the tradition remain obscure. The conception of the thunder-instrument on which the narrative is dependent (§1, §9) correlated with conventional conceptions in Estonian/Setu traditions (§5, cf. §7) where thunder was conceived as 'blown' on an instrument. However, this does not mean ATU 1148b developed around this particular conception. Norbertas Vėlius draws attention to a correlation between the devil's fear of thunder and the devil's fear of the sound

[43] This should not be confused with conscious semiotic 'protest' as has sometimes been done (cf. Nordeide 2006, p.222), although such conscious competitions were no doubt significant in some cases or areas.

of a mill (grinding stones) in Baltic traditions. He proposes that this is not simply typological but reflects some form of historical association of mills or milling with the thunder-god. (Vėlius 1987, pp.132-133.) This finds some support in the Latvian term *milna* ('stick; handle of a hand-mill') for Pērkons' club (Mühlenbach, Endzelīn 1923–1932 II, p.627), etymologically related to both *Mjǫllnir* (Thórr's hammer) and terms for 'mill' and 'milling' (West 2007, pp.253-254), and Finno-Karelian *jyristimet* appearing as two stones like those of a mill.[44] An underlying aetiology of 'thunder' from a mill may be supported by a Komi-Zyryan[45] aetiology of thunder from a 'self-grinding' mill worked with great effort (like the 'self-playing instrument' [§10]?) by a goat that lives with the supreme sky-god (Konakov *et al*. 2003, p.96). Although ATU 1148b is not attested in Komi, the role of the goat is striking because evidence of ATU 1148b is distributed across precisely those Indo-European mythologies (Baltic, Germanic, Greek) in which the thunder-wielding god is associated with goats (West 2007, pp.240, 248, 250). Like the Estonian blown instrument, the aetiology of thunder from a mill is non-percussive, and once 'thunder' is identified with 'music' there is no reason a 'mill' might not be 'played' – in which case, Estonian conceptions could thus be rooted in the ambiguity of the term *pill*.

Similarly, the Norse term *hamarr* ('hammer') had a conventional meaning of a stone wedge or cliff (see Motz 1997) and Thorsteinn's curious instrument involved striking with a spike (§11.3). These might be compared to traditions of the 'nail'-star's association with fire-striking (§1) (Tolley 2009, pp.275-276, 281), which is connected to the technology of iron-working and the use of iron in fire-striking (cf. Salo 1990; 2006). Indeed, evidence of ritual fire-striking artefacts in the Circum-Baltic from the beginning of the Iron Age have been identified with thunder-god worship, and even the rise of the thunder-god to dominance in the region (Salo 1990, pp.119-129; Kulmar 2003, pp.28-29; Salo 2006, pp.33-48) (cf. §1). If the associations of grinding and striking stones across these cultures are relevant, it is very possible that ATU 1148b formed under a corresponding aetiology of thunder which held currency in an early period, probably long predating the earliest documented example from the 5th century (§10). However, these conceptions in any given culture at any given time are so diverse and stratified, entangled in their long and unique histories of transmission, reinterpretation, synthesis and rejection, spanning both genres and cultures, that the conceptual foundations of the identification of 'thunder' with an 'instrument' recedes like a Minotaur into the shadows of a labyrinth, and seems to have long since become irrecoverable, leaving the emergence of ATU 1148b, as the theft of a thunder 'instrument', a mystery.

13. The evolution of ATU 1148b as a historical process

The single Greek example suggests that ATU 1148b was subject to significantly more cultural activity across other regions and linguistic-cultural groups in an earlier period. This emphasises that ATU 1148b traditions only persisted in the Circum-Baltic area. In this light, a possible connection between ATU 1148b and the Komi goat-mill does not seem inherently unreasonable, even if it remains ambiguous. It is also more remarkable that ATU 1148b persisted among Sámic, Finnic, Baltic and Germanic linguistic-cultural groups as an isogloss in spite of the radical transformations to which it was subject in each culture. Within this isogloss, transformations appear to have been more radical or to have begun earlier in cultures at the periphery (cf. Koptjevskaja-Tamm, Wälchli 2001, pp.638-640) – Sámic, Lithuanian and earlier Germanic. There appears to be a correlation between persistence of ATU 1148b in any one linguistic-cultural group and its persistence among one or more adjacent populations.

In their survey of linguistic developments through historical contact in the Circum-Baltic, Koptjevskaja-Tamm and Wälchli (2001, p.622) emphasised the culturally dynamic history of this area. The cultural dynamism of this history also seems relevant to understanding narrative traditions such as ATU 1148b. The persistence of ATU 1148b across all of these diverse linguistic-cultural groups appears to be at least partially dependent on their history of contact and interaction. Persistence was supported, maintained and conditioned within the system of traditions related to thunder and the thunder-god found in each of these cultures (§1, §9). However, we should not underestimate that the system of beliefs, conceptions, rituals and narrative activity associated with thunder was also supported and maintained through ongoing contact with adjacent

[44] *niinkun leipäkakkaraa vaan* ('just like pancakes') (SKS KRA Krohn, Kaarle 2201. 1884); Finno-Karelian aetiologies of thunder from god's wagon describe it as coming specifically from its wheels grating against stones in the heavens (e.g. SKS KRA Valkonen, Jaakko TK 112:393. 1961). It is interesting to consider that an accumulation of information from ATU 1148b could explain the mysterious motif of sleep in the epic theft/recovery of the Finno-Karelian *sampo* from the otherworld, or perhaps even, in some archaic and remote cultural stratum, the *sampo*'s identification as a 'mill' (see Frog forthcoming).

[45] The Komi are a Finno-Ugric culture which was still in direct contact with Finnic cultures in the first millennium of the present era; linguistic evidence suggests a primary direction of exchange from Finnic to Komi languages (Laakso 2001, p.202).

cultures which had corresponding traditions. The significance of adjacence in the persistence of traditions is poorly understood. It appears to be relevant to aesthetic compositional priorities such as alliteration (Roper 2009, pp.90-93; Frog, Stepanova 2011, pp.209-211; cf. Koptjevskaja-Tamm, Wälchli 2001, pp.638-640). On the level of genre, adjacence has been considered a factor in the persistence of oral epic traditions, such as Slavic *byliny* and kalevalaic epic in Karelia (Bailey, Ivanova 1998, p.xxxvii; Frog 2010, p.235). It may also be relevant to the lamentation traditions addressed by Eila Stepanova (this volume), who demonstrates the genre's intimate connection with belief traditions. The evidence of ATU 1148b suggests that adjacence and a history of cultural contact is not only relevant to conceptions and beliefs related to thunder in the Circum-Baltic, but also to the persistence of individual narrative traditions associated with those conceptions and beliefs.[46]

Interpersonal contact is implicit in this process. It has been observed that introducing individuals from outside of a community or generating temporary communities of individuals (e.g. for work, travel or trade) has a stimulating effect on performance activity in different oral genres (e.g. Dégh 1969, 1995). A similar phenomenon has been observed in patterns of population movement which brings together diverse communities: this appears to have a more general stimulating effect on oral traditions (Siikala 2002b, pp.41-42; Frog 2010, pp.234-235). Such interactions on the level of isolated individuals and larger social groups were ongoing around the Baltic Sea for thousands of years, and it is reasonable to assume that this interaction had a stimulating effect on different traditions.

In the introduction to thunder-god traditions in the Circum-Baltic (§1), attention was drawn to Ülo Valk's address of probable Indo-European cultural influences in Estonian traditions of thunder slaying the devil. Valk (1996) stresses that these influences are most likely heavily stratified and that 'the influence has been mutual rather than one-sided since the very beginning of the relations' (Valk 1996, p.20). The impact of interaction may not be merely one of simple transference as early 20th century scholarship was inclined to assume, particularly if corresponding traditions are already established in the other culture (Valk 1996, p.20). This was emphasised when addressing the potential impacts of Kreutzwald's published texts on Estonian and Setu oral traditions (§5), and also in the changes undergone by both Thórr's fishing expedition and the cultural activity of his hammer as a symbol in response to corresponding Christian traditions (§11.4). Contact appears to stimulate sensitivity to the value and significance of traditions, as well as presenting options and alternatives of form, contents and applications. Stimulations, revaluations and transformations of ATU 1148b in Circum-Baltic cultures appear to have been part of that process. The persistence of ATU 1148b in these cultures, its maintenance and transformations, appear to be the product of patterns of interaction to such a degree that it becomes impossible to reduce its history to a simple linear model of origin in one culture and transmission to the next, and to the next, and to the next, and so forth. The Greek example implies that ATU 1148b was not limited to the Circum-Baltic, and the conceptions on which the instrument is founded may be extremely archaic, yet in the Circum-Baltic, ATU 1148b evolved through processes of cultural contact involving stimulation, response and exchange to such a degree and over such a history that this tradition is most reasonably approached as belonging, not to an isolated mythology of any one culture, but to a common Circum-Baltic mythological heritage.

[46] Cf. Lina Būgienė's (this volume) discussion on beliefs in a supernatural 'milk-stealer' emergent in a system of narrative legends.

Abbreviations

ATU – Aarne-Thompson-Uther tale-type (Uther 2004)
LFK – The Latvian Folklore Archives of the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art
LTR – The Lithuanian Folklore Archives of the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore
SKS KRA – The Folk Poetry Archive of the Finnish Literature Society

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Received: 26 April 2011; Revised: 31 May 2011;
Accepted: 16 May 2011.

BENDROJI BALTIJOS REGIONO MITOLOGIJA? GRIAUSTINIO INSTRUMENTO PAGROBIMAS (ATU 1148B) KAIP BENDRASIS BALTIJOS REGIONO MITAS

Frog

Santrauka

Straipsnyje aptariamas naratyvas apie mitinius santykius: Griaustinio instrumento pagrobimas (ATU 1148B). Trumpa teksto santrauka:

Velnias/milžinas pavagia miegančio Griaustinio instrumentą – muzikos, mechaninį ar simbolinį – ir paslepia jį savo valdose ar buveinėje. Dievas, apsimesdamas tarnu, stoja tarnystėn pas vagį arba pakliūva į jo namus kartu su savo šeimininku. Pagroti Griaustinio instrumentu niekas nesugeba. Iššūkį priima šeimininkas ar dievas (tarpininkaujant jo šeimininkui). Neįtardamas klastos ir tikėdamasis teigiamo rezultato (pasilinksminimo), vagis įduoda dievui instrumentą. Užgrojęs dievas užmuša vagį, jo šeimyną ir/ar kito pasaulio bendruomenę.

ATU 1148B siužetas daugiausia aptinkamas abiejose Baltijos regiono indoeuropiečių ir finougrų kalbinėse-kultūrinėse grupėse. Šis faktas leidžia manyti, kad viena kultūra siužetą perėmė iš kitos arba jis buvo pasiskolintas iš bendro kultūrinio sluoksnio. Kad ir kaip būtų, ATU 1148B siužetas akivaizdžiai kertasi su kalbinėmis-kultūrinėmis ribomis: tokių pavyzdžių aptinkama individualiose samių (skolto, [galimai] inari), finų (suomių, karelų, estų, setų), baltų (latvių, lietuvių) ir germanų (islandų, fariečių, norvegų, danų, švedų) kalbų šeimų tradicijose. Tačiau ATU 1148B siužeto nerandama slavų grupėse, kurios vis didesnę įtaką bendram Baltijos regionui darė tik pastarąjį tūkstantmetį. Šiaip ATU 1148B siužetas dar aptiktas vienoje ankstyvoje graikų poemoje, kur jis sukomponuotas kartu su pasakojimu apie Dzeuso jėgos pagrobimą. Koptjevskaja-Tamm, Wälchli (2001, p. 622) teigia, kad vienas iš įdomesnių bendrojo Baltijos regiono aspektų yra tas, jog „jis niekada nebuvo suvienytas, bet visada pasižymėjo kaip ypač dinamiška teritorija, nuolat persidalijanti ekonomines, politines, religines ir kultūrines dominavimo sferas“. Pateikiant bendrą įspūdį apie ATU 1148B siužetą, siekiama panagrinėti, kaip ilgalaikiai kultūriniai kontaktai, per kuriuos komunikavimo procesas vyko ir buvo palaikomas, darė tiesioginę įtaką mitologijos, tikėjimų ir pasakojamosios tradicijos mainams.

Publikacija pradedama trumpu įvadu apie Griaustinio dievą bendro Baltijos regiono tradicijose (§1) ir supažindinimu su darbo pobūdžiu (§2). Šis tyrimas suskaidytas pagal kalbines-kultūrines grupes. Anksčiausias tokio pobūdžio pavyzdys yra Edos poemoje Þrymskviða (iš maždaug 1270 m. rankraščio); jis dažniausiai traktuojamas kaip autentiškiausia ar pati patikimiausia mito forma, iš kurios radosi kitos formos. Tačiau germaniški šaltiniai šiame tyrime dėl tam tikrų problemų aptarti paskiausiai. Pirmiausia aptariama samių medžiaga (§3), nagrinėjamos rytinės Baltijos jūros pusės tradicijos, ir iš čia tyrimas pajuda nuo šiaurės į pietus: suomių-karelų (§4), estų ir setų (§5), latvių (§7) ir lietuvių (§8) medžiaga. Lyginimui ir analizei taip pat pasitelkta unikali lyvių pasakojamoji tradicija (§6). Po šios tyrimo dalies eina preliminarus apibendrinimas (§9). Paskui pristatomas graikiškas pavyzdys (§10), kartu gretinant ir atitinkamą germanišką medžiagą (§11). Tyrimas baigiamas ATU 1148B siužeto apžvalga šiose kultūrose (§12), pateikiami baigiamieji svarstymai apie atskiras ATU 1148B siužeto tradicijas ir ryšius tarp jų (§13).

Bendrojo Baltijos regiono kultūrų mitologija apibūdinama per Griaustinio dievo iškėlimą į aukščiausią poziciją indoeuropiečių ir finougrų kultūrose. Tai susiję su tarpkultūriniais ryšiais, suformavusiais stratifikuotas mitologines sąvokas (§1). Šio proceso aspektus atskleidžia Griaustinio etiologijos įvairovė. Ją patvirtina archeologiniai duomenys apie tam tikrus ritualinius veiksmus, atskleisdami, kad įvairiais laikotarpiais besikeičianti etiologija buvo nevienodai reikšminga (§9, §12). ATU 1148B siužetas figūruoja šiose stratifikuotose sampratose. Šio naratyvo pagrindą sudaro užslėpta Griaustinio instrumento samprata: a) objektas, kurį velnias gali gauti, bet b) nesugeba tinkamai panaudoti; objektas, kuris c) gali būti atvaizduotas kaip esantis Griaustinio; d) jo tinkamas panaudojimas pats savaime nėra pavojingas ir netgi gali būti pageidautinas (§9). Griaustinio instrumentas ATU 1148B siužete neatskleidžia dominuojančios Griaustinio etiologijos, išskyrus estų tradiciją (§12). Todėl Griaustinio samprata ir Griaustinio dievo atributai (§1) čia yra traktuojami kaip skirtingų kultūrų ATU 1148B siužeto kultūrinės veiklos veiksnys ir jo istorinė plėtotė (§9, §12). Aptariant istorinės raidos procesus, taikoma informacijos sukaupimo koncepcija – telkiami motyvai, įvaizdžiai ar naratyvinė medžiaga kaip šaltinis, praturtinantis naratyvą (šiuo atveju) ir leidžiantis tirti naratyvo potencialią reikšmę, plitimą bei raidą. Informacijos sukaupimo koncepcija gretinama su informacijos praradimo koncepcija – motyvų, vaizdinių, asmenų ar kitos tradicinės medžiagos praleidimu ar sumažinimu.

Bendrojo Baltijos regiono izoglosos ribose ATU 1148B siužeto transformacijos pasirodo esančios esminės

arba prasidėjusios anksčiau periferinėse kultūrose. Samių tradicija šiaurinėje periferijoje prarado informaciją neįtraukdama „instrumento“ ir vaizduodama tik patį Griaustinio dievą, tuo tarpu pavogtą (pagrobtą) objektą čia atgauna jo kompanionas (§3). Pietinėje periferijoje, lietuvių tradicijoje, taip pat prarasta informacija: Griaustinio dievo dingęs daiktas nustotas tapatinti su griaustinio šaltiniu ar dievo ginklu ir buvo priskirtas kitiems naujiems objektams (§8). Naratyvas pratęsė savo egzistenciją kaip kūrinys, paaiškinantis priešiškumo tarp Griaustinio dievo ir velnių kilmę, tačiau pavogto objekto atgavimas tapo nereikšmingas. Tačiau gali būti, kad kita pasakojamoji tradicija (ATU 1165), atitinkamai sukaupdama informaciją, perėmė šio nutikimo motyvus (§9). Ši plėtotė skirtingose tradicijose tiesiogiai sietina su etiologija ir griaustinio samprata bei Griaustinio dievu, tuo tarpu ženklus lyginamųjų duomenų kiekis leidžia manyti, kad ATU 1148B siužetas rutuliojosi iš griaustinio kaip girnų ar panašaus instrumento kuriamos „muzikos“ sampratos (§12). Samių ir lietuvių variantai patvirtina, kad indeksiškai susijusios motyvų sistemos pasitelkė naujus objektus ir pritaikė juos prie naujų kontekstų.

Ankstyvasis graikų ATU 1148B pavyzdys (§10) suteikia įdomios istorinės informacijos apie galimą šio siužeto datavimą ir paplitimą ankstyvuoju periodu. Jame pasakojama apie: a) vagystę miego metu; b) griaustinį kaip savaime grojantį instrumentą, kuris, nepaisant to, c) reikalauja grojimo įgūdžių; d) turi būti deramai valdomas ir e) juo negali groti velnias; f) instrumento paslėpimą; g) dievą-tarną, kuris h) užsimaskuoja kaip piemuo ir i) meta iššūkį siūlydamasis pagroti, kas baigiasi j) velnio dievui atiduodamo pagrobto galios atributo k) muzikinio instrumento, l) kad palinksmintų grodamas. Uku Masing (1944) pažymėjo, kad atitikimas tarp graikiško pavyzdžio ir estų bei setų medžiagos prieštarauja hipotezei, jog finų ir suomių tradicijos gavo siužetą iš germanų, kurie šį viduramžiais perėmė iš *Þrymskviða* tradicijos. Poema *Þrymskviða* išsiskiria dominuojančiu karikatūrinio aprašymo vaizdiniu, kaip dievas Toras, norėdamas atgauti milžino pavogtą kūjelį, persirengė moterimi ir įgavo milžino nuotakos pavidalą. Šiame tyrime supažindinama su anksčiau nepastebėta aplinkybe, kad germanų tradicija yra artimesnė finų ir graikų medžiagai (§11.3). Publikacijoje Þrymskviða išryškėja kaip unikalus germanų kultūrų kūrinys, kartu pažymima, kad sukarikatūrintas ATU 1148B siužetas adaptuotas ir liaudies dainuojamojoje tradicijoje (§11.1), kur besikeičiančioje (krikščionių) kultūrinėje aplinkoje naratyvas įgavo naują reikšmę ir svarbą (§11.4). Kaip ir samių bei lietuvių ATU 1148B siužetų raidos atveju, panašu, kad *Þrymskviða* susiformavimui įtakos turėjo platesnė tradicijos ekologija ir konceptuali sistema, kurioje ji funkcionavo. Mano nuomone, kultūrinėje aplinkoje yra koreliacija tarp socialinių vartojimo modelių ir platesnių Griaustinio dievo bei griaustinio etiologijos koncepcijų, tarp naratyvo tradicijos evoliucijos ir istorinių procesų (§12).

ATU 1148B siužeto kilmė išlieka neaiški ir negali būti aiškiai priskirta nei indoeuropiečių, nei finougrų kultūriniam paveldui. Taip pat neaišku, ar jis galėjo būti perimtas iš išnykusios kalbinės-kultūrinės grupės, ar galbūt susidarė kaip etiologija, susijusi su rankinių girnelių, kaip naujausios technologijos, įsisavinimu (paraleliai su etiologijomis, kurios kilo iš geležies apdirbimo technologijų). Kad ir kaip būtų, šios tradicijos susiformavimas indoeuropiečių ir finougrų kalbinėse-kultūrinėse grupėse yra aiškiai susijęs su šių populiacijų kontaktais ir tarpusavio sąveika. Mano nuomone, kultūriniai kontaktai ir tradicijų panašumas gretimose kultūrose tiesiogiai nulėmė ATU 1148B siužeto išsilaikymą bendro Baltijos regiono kultūrose (§13). Atrodo, kontaktas paskatino labiau vertinti tradicijas ir jų svarbą, taip pat ir formos, turinio bei pritaikymo pasirinkimą ir alternatyvas. ATU 1148B siužeto duodami stimulai, vis naujos interpretacijos ir transformacijos bendro Baltijos regiono kultūrose yra šio proceso dalis. ATU 1148B siužeto išsilaikymas, gyvavimas ir transformacijos šiose kultūrose yra rezultatas tarpusavio sąveikos, vykstančios tokiu lygmeniu, kad tampa neįmanoma jos istorijos supaprastinti iki linijinės kilmės vienoje kultūroje ar perdavimo vis kitai kultūrai modelių. Graikų pavyzdys leidžia suprasti, kad ATU 1148B siužetas neapsiriboja vien bendru Baltijos regionu, o instrumento sukūrimo koncepcijos gali būti ypač senos. Bendrame Baltijos regione ATU 1148B siužetas plėtojosi dėl kultūrinių kontaktų, įskaitant stimulus, reakciją ir mainus tokiu lygmeniu ir tokiomis istorinės raidos aplinkybėmis, kad ši tradicija įtikinamai atrodo ne kaip esanti kokios nors kultūros izoliuota mitologija, o kaip bendro Baltijos regiono mitologinis paveldas.

Vertė Jūratė Šlekonytė

THE SUPERNATURAL MILK-STEALER IN LITHUANIAN FOLKLORE AND ITS COUNTERPARTS IN OTHER NATIONAL TRADITIONS OF THE BALTIC SEA REGION

LINA BŪGIENĖ

Abstract

The article deals with a popular image in traditional peasant culture, that of a supernatural being that is believed to be stealing milk and dairy products, and bringing them to its (usually female) owner, thus enhancing her wealth. In Lithuania, this milk stealer figure is called *aitvaras/kaukas*, in Latvia *pūkis*, in Finland *para*, and in Sweden *bjära.* Despite the different names and some other discrepancies in origin and nature, all these images are shown to be essentially similar. The author considers all of them to be rooted in the traditional peasant culture and mentality, which can be characterised to a considerable degree by the concept of 'limited good' (Foster 1965).

Key words: folk belief, traditional culture, popular magic, 'limited good', milk stealer, *aitvaras*, *para*, *bjära*, *pūkis*.

Dairy magic in traditional peasant culture: the realm of witchcraft

Traditionally forming an important part of the household economy, milk and dairy products tend to play a significant role in the traditional culture and the folk belief system of peasant communities as well. Moreover, milk production, unlike many other traditional household tasks that used to be mainly dominated by men, was essentially managed by women, and thus acquired numerous symbolic connotations typical of the female culture and mentality. Hence the proximity of various milk production techniques to magic, sorcery and the supernatural sphere in general. In Lithuania, as in many other European countries, it was widely believed to be possible to enhance the amount of milk that cows would produce by employing certain magical means at a particular time and place. Usually, it was believed that this could be accomplished only by harming others. Various social tensions and simple envy between neighbours would, of course, come into play here.

A significant part of the whole layer of popular beliefs and folk narratives associated with magic and the activity of witches, and also with the evil eye and evil wishes, with harming or sabotaging someone else's property or work, is indeed related to various aspects of dairy production. To mention just one of them, although perhaps the most popular one, involves addressing the whole body of beliefs and folk legends describing the activity of witches at Midsummer's Eve/St John's night. Until nowadays in the Lithuanian countryside, whenever asked about the festivities of St John's night and what was particular about it, people tend to mention the exceptional activity of witches, and the necessity of protecting cattle against the harm that witches might cause. A belief in witches employing various magic means in order to steal milk from other people's cows used to be so strong across all of Lithuania that in many places it has survived in various forms until today. Although people may have discarded all other popular folk beliefs as foolish superstitions, they still try to be cautious driving their livestock out to pasture early on St John's morning, in case witches try to harm them. So, as recently as in the summer of 2009, during a folklore field trip to the Švenčionys district, a female informant who was born in 1939 told the author about her neighbour who would always wait for the informant to drive her own cows out to the pasture first, so that whatever harm there was would be inflicted on them, and not on the neighbour's livestock (LTRF cd 333/03).

Certain popular types of story tend to survive in their entirety, as well. Among the most popular, there is the story of a farmhand accidentally coming to grips with the harmful activity of witches.

Milk from a Halter

A farmhand was walking along the road once, having driven the horses out to pasture. He saw a woman dragging a shawl across the ground, saying: 'One half for me, one half for me!'

The young man took out his halter and said: 'All of it for me, all of it for me.'

And he dragged his halter over the ground.

He went home. Houses used to have porches then, so he hung up the halter on the porch. He hung it, and the farmer's wife came in. 'Why,' she said, 'who has spilled this milk over here?' Nobody admitted to it. They took a closer look, and saw milk dripping from the halter. 'Well,' she said, 'it's a miracle!' The farmer and his wife then asked the farmhand: 'What does it mean?'

The farmhand said: 'I saw a woman dragging a shawl, shouting: "One half for me, one half for me!" So then I dragged my halter, and shouted that I wanted all of it. I was just shouting, it didn't mean anything.'

Soon the woman came over to borrow some milk. It was the same woman who had been dragging the shawl. She had not got a drop of milk from her cows. So then she came over to borrow some. 'Please, lend me a little milk,' she asked.

The farmhand said: 'I see you can take milk from others, but I took all the milk from you!'

And the woman cried and begged on her knees for just a drop of milk. She wasn't given a single drop, so she spent that year without any milk.

'Will you do it again?' he asked. 'As you do to other people, so I did to you!' (VLD p.213-214)

As we can see, St John's night was believed to be so heavily charged with magic that even the practice of it for fun was believed to be possible at that time. This particular account was recorded in 1969 in Samogitia (Seda, in the Mažeikiai district); but the type of story is widespread across all of Lithuania: there are over 100 versions of this legend-type stored in the Lithuanian Folklore Archives (Kerbelytė 2002, p.217), and new versions keep being recalled and told by informants even today.

Generally, in Lithuanian folklore, milk stealing is associated mostly with witches. They can employ various means for it. There are some legend types describing a toad or another animal that sucks out a cow's milk: usually the reptile is believed to be a witch or her helper.

Witch and Her Toad

Whenever a toad sucks at a cow, the toad should be caught and hung in the chimney in the smoke. Then the witch who owns the toad will come running up.

Thus once, when my mother's cow was sucked by a toad, my mother caught the toad and hung it in the smoke. Then our neighbour Lachmantavičienė came running up, and said to my mother: 'Why are you torturing that little bird over there?'

My mother and her neighbour used to live here, in Raitininkai village. Lachmantavičienė was a witch.

(Recorded in 1938 in Dzūkija, in the parish of Merkinė in the Alytus district; LTR 1434/125)

Toads are quite frequently associated with various magic activities; they are believed to be able to harm people in general, to inflict illness, or to take away a person's fortune (Kerbelytė 2002, pp.193, 195). Thus, they are an almost perfect animal-helper, or an embodiment for a witch whenever she sets out to carry out some evil deed.

The milk-stealing *aitvaras* and the concept of 'limited good'

Another concept that should be mentioned in connection with this dairy magic is that of 'limited good', meaning that unnaturally enhancing one's own wealth could only be achieved by reducing the wealth of others. This concept was used by George M. Foster to analyse the traditional peasant mentality and worldview, and, according to him, it characterises 'in considerable degree classic peasant societies', which can to some extent be viewed as closed systems. As Foster puts it, essentially 'broad areas of peasant behaviour are patterned in such a fashion as to suggest that peasants view their social, economic, and natural universes – their total environment – as one in which all of the desired things in life […] *exist in finite quantity* and *are always in short supply*, as far as the peasant is concerned.' Moreover, 'it follows that *an individual or a family can improve a position only at the expense of others*' (Foster 1965, pp.296-297, Foster's italics). Thus, 'the individual or family that acquires more than its share of a "good", and particularly an economic "good", is […] viewed as a threat to the community at large' (Foster 1965, p.302). Hence the 'mentality of mutual distrust' (Friedman 1958, p.24) that is so widespread in peasant societies.

This concept forms the basis of one of the most popular images in Lithuanian folklore, namely that of *aitvaras/kaukas*, which is essentially a privately owned spirit (supernatural creature) that carries various kinds of 'good' (grain, money or food) to its owner. According to Lithuanian folklore, there are several kinds of these beings, and different activities may be associated with them. Certain regional differences in name, prevailing type of activity and mode of acquisition of such being can also be discerned: for example, in western Lithu-

ania, or Samogitia, it is most frequently called *kaukas*, and is said mostly to bring grain, hay or food to its owner, while in eastern Lithuania it bears numerous fiery traits, is often seen airborne, and preferably carries money or grain (Vėlius 1977, pp.144-198). Still, according to folk beliefs, one variety of such beings used to specialise in bringing milk and various dairy products to their (usually female) owners, who can then enjoy making rich meals for their family, farm labourers, or just occasional guests and visitors.

The Milk-Bringing Aitvaras

Two of my cousins once went on a pilgrimage to Kalvarija. They asked to be put up for the night. The housewife put them to sleep in the barn. She bade them goodnight and promised to wake them up in the morning.

But in the night they heard somebody vomiting violently: 'Flop-splash, splash, splash! Flop-splash, splash, splash!'

One of the cousins woke up and asked the other: 'Do you hear what's going on up there?'

The other one said she could indeed hear.

Both of them started to feel scared of what was going on under this strange roof. But later, the sound stopped, and both of them finally fell asleep.

The housewife came in the morning, and said: 'Wake up, guests, breakfast is ready. Please come to the table!'

Both of them came out on to the porch and saw a big tub heaped with curd! There was so much curd in it! The guests kicked themselves on seeing it, but said nothing. They stepped into the living room, and saw delicious curd cakes and cream waiting for them on the table.

But they could not so much as take one bite of the food, they were so sick!

Afterwards, they told this to other people in the neighbourhood; but the neighbours were not surprised, saying that the family prospered on such things.

(Recorded in 1962 in Samogitia, at Vašilėnai in the Kelmė district; VLD p.42-43)

This story is one of the most popular ones in the stock of Lithuanian folk narratives, and it ties in well with other storylines belonging to this socially engaged side of Lithuanian folklore. It goes almost without saying that dairy products procured by *aitvaras* had to be stolen from someone else; therefore, the disgust experienced by the people witnessing such prosperity at other people's expense can be interpreted as being caused by the peasant mentality based on the 'limited good' concept. Also, traces of the righteous indignation of good Christians can be discerned here, as *aitvaras* was believed to have been acquired by signing a pact with the devil, and thus damning one's soul; it could occasionally even be identified with the devil (Vėlius 1977, pp.156-157). Anyway, this being was considered as unholy and dangerous, and owning it was regarded as a threat to the community and sinful by its owner.

It is quite curious that this food-enhancing activity of *aitvaras* is again linked with toads. Although generally the Lithuanian *aitvaras* is a fiery being, associated with fire or light (especially when carrying money), as a rule visualised in the form of a black or red cock, a black cat, or simply (when flying across the sky) seen as a burning stick, fiery band, and so on. But, when stealing dairy products or enhancing the quantity of food for its owner, it may appear in the shape of a toad. Bearing in mind that people owning *aitvaras* frequently used to be accused by the rural community of being sorcerers or witches, here we perhaps have a combination of the belief in witches and of the *aitvaras*-related mythology, which is able to produce such narratives as the following example.

Rapu Rapu

A boy once worked for a farmer in Latvia. The farmer fed his household very well. He gave them lots of butter.

One evening, the boy was sleeping in his room while the door to the adjacent kitchen was slightly ajar. Waking up, he saw the housewife's mother stirring butter in a bowl. The old woman put the bowl on the floor and said, still stirring: '*Rapu rapu, lielais!*' ['Crawl out, big one!' in Latvian]

At that moment, a huge toad climbed into the bowl. And the old woman, still stirring the butter with the toad in it, said: '*Rapu rapu, vidijais!*' ['Crawl out, middle one!']

At that moment, a medium-sized toad climbed into the bowl. The old woman stirred it more, and said: '*Rapu rapu, pats mazais!*' ['Crawl out, smallest one!']

At that moment, a small toad tumbled into the bowl.

The old woman kept stirring, and the butter kept growing and growing, until the bowl was full.

The farm boy watched the old woman several times, and the same thing happened each time.

Those were *aitvarai* [plural] turned into toads.

From that time on, the boy never so much as tasted the butter again.

(Recorded in 1970 in northern Lithuania, in the village of Geručiai in the Pakruojis district; VLD p.44)

Still, according to some versions of legends, *aitvaras* can also bring butter while it is in its fiery form as well. It is interesting to compare two stories describing the allegedly supernatural origins of butter, which reflect fairly well the attitude of the peasant community towards unnatural means of self-enrichment.

The Aitvaras' Butter

There was once a huge wedding party, and a servant girl started complaining about running out of butter. The housewife said: 'There will be some soon!'

There was a sudden flash of light. The housewife quickly ran out to a small hut in the yard. In her hurry, she forgot to close the door properly, leaving it open just a crack. The servant girl looked in through it, and saw a strange beast vomiting butter into a bowl.

(Recorded in 1964 in eastern Lithuania, in the village of Ginučiai in the Ignalina district; VLD p.45)

The Bloodstained Butter

My father once went to Vydžiai to the market. A man there had some butter for sale. Another man approached him, apparently wishing to buy the butter, and said: 'This butter you're selling, it's not yours!'

'What do you mean?' asked the seller.

'Well, half of it is yours, but the other half is not!' insisted the other man.

So they started quarrelling. A crowd of people gathered round them, listening. Then the man who seemingly wanted to buy addressed them all, asking: 'Does anybody have a knife?'

He was given a knife. He cut the lump of butter in half, saying to the seller: 'Look, this part is yours: it's nice and clean. But the other part is not yours, it's bloodstained.'

And everyone saw that the butter really was bloodstained.

(Recorded in 1959 in eastern Lithuania, in the village of Jakiškiai in the Zarasai district; VLD p.221)

Milk-stealing beings in other national traditions of the Baltic Sea region

The Lithuanian *aitvaras* is not the only one of its kind in different folk belief traditions prospering around the Baltic Sea. For example, this supernatural milk-stealer of Lithuanian folklore has an especially close counterpart in the Finnish *para*, of which similar stories have been recorded. As far as can be gathered from *The Type and Motif Index of Finnish Belief Legends and Memorates*, the supernatural milk-stealer (*para*) has developed into a separate supernatural being of Finnish folk narratives and popular beliefs, and judging from the number of recorded versions, even became more popular than other supernatural beings increasing human wealth in Finnish folklore, such as the gnome, the house spirit and the devil, and also the money demon *piritys*, about which there are much fewer legend types and versions recorded than about *para* (Jauhiainen 1998, pp.245-248). While in Lithuanian and Latvian folklore traditions both *aitvaras* and *pūkis* mostly engage in bringing money and grain to their owners, expecting food and good treatment in return for their services, and only occasionally involving carrying milk and other dairy products (Adamovičs 1940; Greimas 1990, pp.72-109; Vėlius 1977, pp.160-165), the Finnish *para* is a real 'full-time' milk stealer. Nevertheless, its origins and nature have numerous similarities with the Lithuanian *aitvaras*. Thus, *para* and *aitvaras* both are/can be man-made, created artificially, and both can be seen as birds, cats, strange beings, or in a fiery form; *para* also carries milk or cream, and vomits it into a churn, being observed doing so by an outsider, such as a serving maid. Just like the Lithuanian *aitvaras* (particularly in its animal form), *para* is closely related to its owner: whatever happens to the *para*, the same happens to its maker, for example, if *para* is beaten, the farm mistress also suffers. Also, just like the Lithuanian *aitvaras*, *para* can bring grain, beer, money and other goods; only in the case of *para* these are just minor activities, and there are comparatively few accounts of them. A curious group of Finnish legend texts (40 versions have been recorded), belonging to the H 161 type, tell about the way of defining whether the butter in question was procured through *para*: if one makes a cross on the butter, blood appears (Jauhiainen 1998, p.246). *Para* and *aitvaras* both have to be fed in return for their services, and if the feeding stops or the being is in some way insulted, it takes its revenge: it burns down the farm, kills its master, or at least disappears, leaving the farm to suffer from poverty. The means of protection against *para* and *aitvaras* are also the same: the most popular is making the sign of the cross over the goods, so that these beings cannot touch

them. *Para* in the form of a frog, a rat or some other animal can also suckle or milk cows.

The functional counterpart of these supernatural beings (and in the case of *para*, perhaps also an etymologically related one) in Swedish folk belief tradition is a milk-stealing creature called *bjära* (or *bära, bara, bärare*, 'bearer'). Curiously enough, this being is chiefly regarded as being artificially made and brought to life by means of magic: according to Bengt af Klintberg, the author of *The Types of the Swedish Folk Legend*, 'witches could manufacture and give life to a milk-stealing creature' (Klintberg 2010, p.289). Therefore, in the index, narratives about *bjära* are classified in the chapter entitled 'Tools of Witches and Sorcerers' along with the Black Book and other magic devices (Klintberg 2010, pp.289-298). This milk-stealer of Swedish folklore could appear in a different form: for example, in northern Sweden it could be seen as a ball of yarn, while in southern and western provinces of the country it was perceived as having the shape of a hare, and occasionally a cat. The ball of yarn was 'said to be made from threads in nine different colours. It comes to life when the witch drips her blood on to it and reads the formula: 'I give you blood, the Devil gives you courage. You shall run for me on earth, I shall burn for you in hell' (Klintberg 2010, p.289). It should be noted that the Lithuanian *aitvaras* is also said to be procured by pronouncing a very similar formula, such as: 'As long as I live, you serve me. When I die, you take me' (LTR 782/4, 2277/66). The Swedish milk-stealing creature is believed to be sent by the witch to suckle the cows of her neighbours, just like the animal helper in the form of the toad in Lithuanian folklore (see the example above). There are numerous other similarities in narratives about these beings in different national traditions, including various misunderstandings or humorous occurrences in trying to own and master them (for example, when the creature is ordered by mistake to carry manure instead of goods, it fills all the available space with the smelly substance [Klintberg 2010, p.291; Vėlius 1977, p.164]). Usually, in Swedish legends, the true origins of the household's wealth are revealed by an outsider, a serving maid, a hired farm boy, or some occasional visitor, and so on, exactly as in the Lithuanian example cited above. The closeness of these beings in different national traditions is also illustrated by the fact that in the Swedish provinces of Jämtland and Härjedalen, the creature is called *puke* (Klintberg 2010, p.289), while in Latvia and northern Lithuania its name is *pūkis*, interpreted by Jonas Balys as being related to the German *Puck* (Balys 1934; Vėlius 1977, p.140).

These striking parallels and similarities between Lithuanian, Latvian, Finnish and Swedish supernatural milk-stealer figures, corresponding in even their small details and secondary motifs, lead us to conclude that, although they reflect a sufficiently late stage of development, the image embodies a rather important aspect of popular belief and mentality. Evidently, sorcery and magic harm practised by individuals and households on each other can be understood in part as a response to the scarcity of resources, and thus as being based on the concept of 'limited good'. Still, the similarities in beliefs in sorcery and magic 'stealing' of luck and wealth have a deeper origin. According to the Finnish scholar Laura Stark, the author of a book entitled *The Magical Self: Body, Society and the Supernatural in Early Modern Rural Finland*, 'there is also evidence that certain types of magic narrated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were already practised three to four centuries before this. Some elements of Finnish-Karelian magic beliefs and practices were pre-Christian in origin and the legacy of a shamanistic past' (Stark 2006, p.46). Indeed, as has already been noted by a number of scholars, the Lithuanian *aitvaras* also bears traits of the pre-Christian Baltic or even Indo-European past. For example, there have been attempts to derive it from the image of the Indo-European heavenly twins (Vėlius 1977, pp.178-182). Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to conclude that in the case of the folklore and belief traditions of rural communities of the late 19th and the early 20th centuries when these legends circulated, there is more sense in stressing certain 'pan-agricultural' notions and concepts of peasant societies, rather than pre-Christian relics, be they of Baltic, German or Finno-Ugric origin.

Abbreviations

LTR – Lithuanian Folklore Archives of the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore

LTRF – Sound Recordings of the Lithuanian Folklore Archives of the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore

VLD – N. VĖLIUS, ed. *Laumių dovanos*: Lietuvių mitologinės sakmės. Vilnius: Vaga, 1979.

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Received: 10 December 2010; Revised: 20 April 2011;
Accepted: 16 May 2011.

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ANTGAMTINIS PIENO VAGIS LIETUVIŲ FOLKLORE IR JO ATITIKMENYS KITŲ BALTIJOS JŪROS REGIONO TAUTŲ TRADICIJOSE

Lina Būgienė

Santrauka

Pieno ir jo produktų gamyba nuo seno buvo svarbi namų ūkio dalis, tad ir tradicinėje kultūroje bei valstietiškuose liaudies tikėjimuose jai linkstama suteikti reikšmingą vaidmenį. Negana to, pieno gamyba, skirtingai nei daugelis kitų tradicinio valstietiško ūkio sričių, kuriose dažniausiai dominuodavo vyrai, iš esmės buvo moterų žinioje, todėl įgijo nemažai simbolinių konotacijų, būdingų moteriškajai kultūrai ir pasaulėvokai. Užtat įvairūs pieno gausos užtikrinimo ir jo apdorojimo būdai tradicinėje kultūroje yra glaudžiai susiję su magija, kerėjimais ir apskritai su antgamtine sfera. Lietuvoje, kaip ir daugelyje kitų Europos šalių, buvo plačiai paplitęs tikėjimas, kad savų karvių duodamą pieną esą galima pagausinti, tam tikru laiku ir tam tikrose vietose griebiantis specialių maginių priemonių – ir dažniausiai šitaip kenkiant kitam. Žinoma, čia nesunku įžiūrėti visokių įtampų bendruomenės viduje ir paprasčiausio kaimynų tarpusavio pavydo atspindžių. Dar vienas dalykas, kurį būtina paminėti, yra vadinamoji „riboto gėrio“ samprata, besiremianti įsitikinimu, kad neįprastas vieno asmens turtėjimas tegali būti kito žmogaus nuskurdimo pasekmė. Ši koncepcija, paaiškinanti daugelį valstietiško mentaliteto ir valstiečių kultūros bruožų apskritai, dar 1965 m. buvo pasiūlyta George'o M. Fosterio. „Riboto gėrio“ samprata laikytina ir vieno iš populiariausių lietuvių folkloro personažų – aitvaro / kauko vaizdinio pamatu. Iš esmės tai yra privačiam savininkui tarnaujanti antgamtinės prigimties būtybė, nešanti jam turtus: javus, pinigus, maistą. Kaip liudija lietuvių sakmės, viena šių būtybių rūšis nešdavo pieną ir įvairius jo produktus savo šeimininkėms (dažniausiai moterims), kad šios galėtų skaniais patiekalais lepinti savo šeimą, samdinius ar užsukusius svečius. Vienoje iš tokių sakmių pasakojama, kaip atsitiktinis liudininkas (paprastai – vėlyvas nakvynės pasiprašęs pakeleivis) vidurnaktį išgirsta neįprastus, žiaukčiojimą primenančius garsus. Atsikėlęs jis / ji pamato, kaip kažkokia keista būtybė (kartais – net keletas jų) vemia sviestą, grietinę ar varškę į specialiai tuo tikslu šeimininkės paliktą indą. Kitą rytą pakeleiviui patiekiami gausūs pusryčiai iš pieno produktų, tačiau šis bjaurėdamasis atsisako jų ragauti. Toks siužetas yra vienas iš populiaresnių lietuvių pasakojamojoje tautosakoje; jis glaudžiai susijęs su kitais panašiai socialiai angažuotais folkloro pasakojimais. Galima neabejoti, kad tie aitvaro atnešti pieno produktai neišvengiamai įsivaizduojami esą pavogti iš kažkieno kito, todėl ir netyčia jų atsiradimą mačiusio liudininko reakcija sakmėse rodo ne vien pasišlykštėjimą jų atsiradimo aplinkybėmis ar teisėtą doro krikščionio pasipiktinimą tuo, kad aitvaro savininkas susidėjęs su „nedora dvasia“, bet ir apskritai tokiais grėsmę bendruomenės stabilumui keliančiais turtėjimo svetima sąskaita būdais.

Šis antgamtinis pieno vagis lietuvių tautosakoje turi gana tikslių atitikmenų kitų tautų tradicijose: tai – suomių *para*, švedų *bjära*, estų *puuk*, latvių *pūkis* ir kitų tautų folkloro personažai. Sutampa netgi daugelis apie šias antgamtines būtybes pasakojamų naratyvų siužetų, taip pat – nemažai jų įvaizdžio, kilmės, elgesio su jais ir kt. detalių. Todėl galima manyti, kad nors savo galutiniu folkloriniu pavidalu ir būdamas gana vėlyvo pobūdžio, šis vaizdinys atskleidžia gana reikšmingą populiariųjų tikėjimų bei pasaulėjautos dalį ir ne tiktai turi sąsajų su senaisiais ikikrikščioniškaisiais įvairių tautų tikėjimais, bet – ir kur kas labiau – yra įsišaknijęs bendroje valstietiškoje agrarinės visuomenės kultūroje bei mąstysenoje.

LIBATION IN BALTIC RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

DAIVA VAITKEVIČIENĖ

Abstract

It is mentioned in 15th to 18th-century written sources that in Lithuania, Prussia and Latvia pagan rituals, during which a certain amount of drink would be poured out for the gods and the dead, were practised. Lithuanian and Latvian ethnographic material from the 19th and 20th centuries supports the continuity of this tradition at community and family feasts.

In sources on Baltic religion it is usually emphasised that the drink would be poured out on to the ground. This can be interpreted as a triple offering: to the goddess of the Earth, to the domestic deities, and to the souls of the dead.

However, the Balts not only practised pouring drink on the ground, but other libation practices too. In terms of the place on to which the drink would be poured, the following practices can be singled out: pouring on the ground, into fire, into water, and into the air (sprinkling the drink upwards). Pouring on to stones and trees, which is related to elements of sacred places, also deserves special attention.

Key words: libation, Baltic religion, earth, fire, air, water, dead, sacred place.

Introduction

Libation, or the act of pouring out liquid as an offering, is a fundamental ritual that was and still is practised in most religions. It is known in nearly all cultural and geographical regions of the world (Betz 2005; Davis 2008; Poo 1995; Shelton 2008). The ritual was practised as early as Prehistoric times, and flourished in the civilisations of the Bronze Age (Burkert 2000, p.70). Although the purpose of this article is not related to Indo-European studies and its intention is to highlight the Baltic religion from a typological rather than an ethno-genetic point of view, it should be pointed out that in cultures speaking Indo-European languages, the forms of libation were highly developed. The Baltic word *lieti* 'to pour', which describes the act of libation, is related to the Latin word *lībō* (*-āre*) 'to pour, provide an offering, to make a libation', and the Greek word *λείβω* 'I am pouring, dripping'. Cf.: Lithuanian *lieti* 'to pour', Prussian *pralieiton* 'poured', Latvian *lît, lîstu* 'to spill over, overflow', Ukrainian *liti*, Bulgarian *lits'*, Slovenian *líti, líjem*, Czech *líti, leji* and others (Fasmer 1986). Since ancient times, libation was an important religious practice in Greece (Davis 2008; Elderkin 1945). It was practised intensively during the Roman Period of Greek culture, too. Greek and Roman libation is described in numerous written sources, scenes of offering drink are portrayed in pictures, whereas the ritual inventory (altars, vessels, and so on) that has survived to this day makes it possible to study libation. In ancient India, the pouring out of soma as described in the Indian Vedas was widely practised. Even today, libation in India remains a vital form of religious offering.

The historical sources that mention libation in Baltic cultures date from rather later times, and the earliest of these sources give an account of the situation that existed at least a century after the introduction of Christianity. Attention was paid to libation in writing about heathen ritual feasts, offerings and rituals devoted to the dead that survived. In most instances, the accounts refer to the libation of an alcoholic drink, beer or mead, because the very ritual of drinking was a highly important Baltic religious practice that usually accompanied other religious practices. Matthaeus Praetorius, who described the rites of Prussian Lithuanians in the 17th century in minute detail, wrote that: 'Every ceremony or feast starts with drinking [...] Before they start drinking, they pour out some drink on to the ground for Zemynele, the goddess of the Earth' (Pretorijus 2006, pp.480, 482). The rite of drinking was seen as an essential element of the ritual practice, a sacral connection between humans and deities. Also in the 17th century, Joannes Stribingius, a Jesuit, emphasised that the Latvians, who used beer in their rites and offerings, believed that their gods would not listen to them without beer: '*nunquam deos exaudituros illos sine Cereuisia*' (BRMŠ 2003, p.551). The Prussians, even when baptised as Christians, would continue relating sacrality to beer. Having confessed their sins in church, they would, as a mandatory part of the rite, complement the church rite with washing away their sins with beer in an inn.

In the 15th century, Bishop Michael Junge had to issue a special decree forbidding Prussians to go to an inn after a church service:

... et post confessionem non visitet tabernam, nec aliis quouis modo per se uel alias personas cereuisiam procurent de tabernis sibi apportari ad peccata eorum propotandum sub pena trium marcarum melioris monete (BRMŠ 1996, p.481).

'... after confession, you must not go to an inn or wash down your sins with beer brought from an inn by yourself or someone else [...] Likewise, inn-keepers must not sell beer to anyone or drink it.'

Although the Baltic rite of drinking was a very important religious practice, it has not yet been studied thoroughly. A brief article on the subject has been published by the Lithuanian ethnologist Angelė Vyšniauskaitė (1989). Some research into the ritual aspects of beer in Latvia has been conducted by Linda Dumpe (2001, p.113ff). Elvyra Usačiovaitė has made a comparison between the Baltic and the Slavonic libation of drink (1999, 2009). The authoress of the present article has studied the way the pouring out of a drink fits into the general structure of the rite of drinking (Vaitkevičienė 2003), and in which instances the subject of libation is the goddess of the Earth (Vaitkevičienė 2004).

The purpose of this article is to highlight types of libation in the Baltic religion, in terms of the place of the performance of the ritual and the contact zone of libation. The place of the offering, just like the nature of the liquid, is a most important criterion that makes it possible to find out its meaning and purpose. In this article, libation is understood more widely compared to earlier studies of the Baltic rite of drinking: we intend to research the libation not only of a ritual alcoholic drink (beer, mead, and whisky, in the case of ethnographic sources dating from later times), but also other ritual liquids (milk, thin soup, water), as well as blood, if and when a live creature was sacrificed. Due to the limited space, the article will not discuss issues related to the nature of liquids and the diversity of libation gestures, or semantic differences arising from the forms of the performance of the rite: libation while the person making the offering is standing, jumping up, pouring out over his head or his shoulder, and so on.

Earth

Both historical sources and Lithuanian and Latvian ethnographic material contain numerous references to libation on to the ground as a Baltic religious practice. Liquids would be poured out on a variety of occasions: during agricultural and domestic rites, at weddings, christening parties, funerals, days of remembrance of the deceased, and so on. Pouring a liquid downwards was a very significant cultural gesture that drew the attention of casual observers. For instance, Balthasar Russow, a 16th-century Livonian historian, in his description of a wedding celebrated in the house of the guild in Riga, showed that drinking beer went hand in hand with pouring it on to the floor. The floor became so wet during the feast that they even had to cover it with hay, so that people could walk and dance on it (Rusovs 1926, p.55).

Pouring downwards reflects the tendency to offer a drink to deities of a chthonic nature. On numerous occasions, sources point to the fact that such an offering was intended for the goddess of the Earth, the gods of the Earth, and the dead (Vaitkevičienė 2004). In Baltic languages, even the words *žemyn* 'downwards' and *žemė* 'earth' have the same root: in Lithuanian *žemė*, in Latvian *zeme*, 'earth, ground'; in Lithuanian *žemyn* 'downwards', in Latvian *zemē*, 'on the ground, downwards'.

Pouring on to the ground for chthonic deities and the dead covers a very wide comparative context. This libation technique was practised quite widely. It was recorded both in ancient civilisations and in ethnographic cultures: in the Mediterranean region, Mesopotamia, ancient India, Iran, China, in the cultures of the American Indians, and other locations (Davis 2008, pp.48, 52; Schröder 1952, pp.76-77). In Mexico, pouring on to the ground maintained its continuity from the civilisation of the Aztecs to the rites of the Zapoteca Pueblo Indians (Parsons 1970, p.537, footnote 114). In the middle of the 20th century in Peru, pouring on to the ground was still practised by Aymara Indians (Hickman 1964, pp.110, 275a). As religions changed, in some cultures the offering of a drink on to the ground was supplanted and replaced with another libation technique. For example, in Greece in the most ancient times, libations were poured directly on the ground (drink was offered to the dead, demons, subterranean powers, or chthonic deities on the Earth). Later, as concepts changed, it became more common to pour libations on the altar of the god, where the fires indicated that the god had consumed the offerings, or to place them in bowls on or beside the altar (Burkert 2000, pp.71-72). A similar change is observed in the religion of the Israelites, where libation on to the ground due to chthonic connotation came into conflict with the concept of a purely heavenly god. For this reason, libation on to the ground was prohibited (Rubenstein 1994, pp.435-438; Davis 2008, pp.48-50).

In Baltic religion, pouring on to the ground was the most common and best-documented libation technique. Three aspects of chthonicity can be distinguished,

which correspond to the three groups of the subject of libation: (1) the goddess of the Earth (in Lithuanian Žemynėlė, in Latvian Zemes māte 'The Mother of the Earth'); (2) chthonic domestic deities; and (3) the souls of the dead. We will discuss each one of them in turn.

According to East Prussian sources, pouring for the goddess of the Earth was performed during every single rite, irrespective of the religious intention of the rite. Matthaeus Praetorius, the 17th-century Prussian historian, wrote in *Deliciae Prussicae oder Preussische Schaubühne* the following:

Jeder Feyer oder Fest Tag wird angefangen mit em Saufen. <...> Nehmlich sie gießen || zu allererst, ehe sie noch trinken, etwas auf die Erde der Zemynelen, || i. e. der Göttin der Erden, denn Zeme heißet auf Preußisch u Littauisch || die Erde, Zemyne, Zemynele, die Erd Göttin, so der Erden zu gebieten || hat. Zemynelauti heißet, dieselbe Göttin bedienen, oder derselben ihr || devoir thun. Diese Göttin wird bey allen Sollennitaeten zuerst u am || allermeisten bedienet, auch so gar, daß ohne Sie nichts verrichtet, ja || nichts angefangen wird <...> die Zemynele || giebt u erhält, ihrer Meinung nach so Menschen Denn Vieh, u allen Dingen || das Leben, drum sie auch bey allen ihren Sollennitaeten sie alle Zeit zu || allererst verehren, Wird jemand gebohren, komt jemand zu einem || Stande, wird einem Hauß Wirth ein Pferd oder ander Vieh gebohren, für || allen Dingen muß die Zemynele verehret werden, daß sie allen das || Leben giebt und erhält. Stirbt jemand, wird die Zemynele bedienet, || ja ihr vertrauet, das, was sie der verstorbenen Seelen wünschen u gönnen (BRMŠ 2003, pp.177-178, 197).

'Every ceremony and feast starts with drinking [...] Before drinking, they pour some drink on to the ground for Zemynele first, that is, for the goddess of the Earth, because both in Prussian and in Lithuanian the goddess of the Earth is called Zeme, Zemyne, Zemynele, she is the goddess of the Earth, who rules the Earth. *Zemynelauti* means serving this goddess, doing one's duty to her. During all and any ceremonies, she is the goddess to whom offerings are made first; without her, they dare not do anything or start anything [...] This is because, as they believe, Zemynele gives and maintains the life of man and animal, and all living creatures; this is why they pay their respects to her first during all their rites. When a baby is born or someone enters a new class in society, or a farmer's mare gives birth to a colt, everywhere and always, Zemynele must be worshipped first, because it is she that gives and maintains everyone's life. Again, if someone dies, they pay their respects to Zemynele, too, because everything they wish for the soul of the deceased is entrusted to her.'

Friedrich Blaufuss, a Latvian Lutheran priest in the 18th century, reveals a similar notion of making offerings to the goddess of the Earth. He claims that 'since those people survive on the fruits of the Earth, some of the people of Vidzeme worship the earth as the provider of their bread and living, and call it the Mother of the Earth (Zemes māte); they make offerings to her' (Blaufuss 1938, p.691). According to Blaufuss, the Mother of the Earth would be made offerings of the first drop of freshly brewed beer, the first bite of a meal and the first gulp of a drink (*ibid.*).[1] In his *Livonian History* (1595), Christian Kelch draws attention to offerings to the Earth made in certain parts of a farmstead. He writes: 'I still know some people who had a certain place in their homes where *they would pour some beer or milk* and throw a piece of any other food being cooked; that is, they would say, an offering to the Earth' (BRMŠ 2003, p.714). The practice of offering a drink to the Mother of the Earth is confirmed by ethnographic sources, too. For example, in Latvia, when they had finished pulling flax, the flax pullers would pour some vodka on to the ground at the place of the last bunch of flax and drink a glass of vodka 'They saw it as an offering to the Mother of the Earth who had helped the flax grow' (LFK 929/1936).

We can see libations intended for the goddess of the Earth in Greece during Ancient times. In the Historical Period, this libation is reduced to an offering for the dead: the Earth becomes solely a mediator between the people making the offerings and the ancestors (Davis 2008, p.47). However, a Pindaric scholiast points out that during ritual feasts a libation would be performed for Ge, the goddess of the Earth, and for the souls of heroes (Elderkin 1945, p.429). An offering of a drink used to be made to other deities of the Earth too. For example, Oedipus appeases chthonic deities in a sacred forest by pouring out some honeyed water for them (Davis 2008, p.47, footnote 14). An offering poured for chthonic deities was called *chthonioi*, to distinguish it from the common Greek term describing libation *spondai* (Burkert 2000, p.70).

In the Baltic lands, pouring a drink on to the ground was intended for more than one chthonic deity. At first glance, the cases recorded in written sources look complicated. The drink poured out on to the ground could be intended for different gods: for Cerroklis, the god of the corn and the fields (BRMŠ 2003, p.550); for Waiz-

[1] F.B. Blaufuss is talking about pouring beer intended for the Mother of the Earth into fire; nevertheless, it should be treated as a result of the disappearance of differences in libation.

ganthos, the god promoting the growth of flax (BRMŠ 2001, p.596)[2]; for an unidentified deity that the Jesuits called a demon (*daemonem*) and related to the grass-snakes worshipped in the past. According to the Jesuits of Vilnius, pagan Lithuanians saw demons in grass-snakes (BRMŠ 2005, p.115). These deities are undoubtedly chthonic; they are related to definite aspects of farming, or the earth, as their domicile. Furthermore, domestic demons, or grass-snakes, clearly express the territorial sacrality of the home: a land property in which a sacred grass-snaked lived was called in Lithuanian *žemė meldžiama* (literally 'the ground to which prayers are devoted', that is, consecrated land). A miniature shrine intended for grass-snakes would be set up in a corner of the house under millstones. Grass-snakes were seen as the guardians of the home (Greimas 1990, p.427ff). The presumption can be made that libation on to the ground, depending on the situation, was intended for the entire group of chthonic gods, or for some of them.

Offering some drink to chthonic domestic deities is not an exceptional feature of Baltic religion. For instance, the Lapps made offerings to domestic deities called *akkas* by pouring out a little brandy for each of them at particular places where they were supposed to dwell (Karsten 1955, p.103).

The souls of the dead make up the third group of recipients of chthonic libation. Libation for the souls is a very distinct practice recorded on numerous occasions. Four moments are very important for this practice. In terms of the number of testifications, their order seems to be as follows: memorial ceremonies for the dead, funeral repasts, rites on graves (during funerals or memorial ceremonies) and the preparation of the grave and the shroud.

Libation on to the ground during memorial ceremonies for the dead, mentioned from the 16th century, was so common that it nearly became a distinctive feature of offerings to the dead. The fact that during annual memorial ceremonies for the dead a community would start the ceremonial feast by throwing some food and pouring some beer on to the ground is described in an anonymous treatise *Sudauer Büchlein* (The Booklet of Sudovians) written between 1520 and 1530. In 1585, offering food and the libation of drinks were described by the historian Maciej Stryjkowski (BRMŠ 2001, p.518). Similar Lithuanian practices were recorded on numerous occasions by Jesuits (BRMŠ 2001, pp.606, 621; Ališauskas 2003, pp.11-12). Historical descriptions emphasise the complexity of the ceremonies: the rite includes the invitation of the souls, the preparation of the table with special dishes, the address to the souls with a special prayer, the offering of drinks and food, and finally seeing the souls off. Some authors stress the offering of animals to the dead. The libation of a drink as a characteristic element of such festive ceremonies was practised in Lithuania until the 20th century. For example, as late as 1996 in eastern Lithuania, feasts devoted to the dead still existed in living memory:

Per Visšventį jau an pietų kap sėdasi visi, tai jau dūšios atajį, tai, kap paima pirmucinį šaukštų, po stalu išlėj – itai dūšiom, ot! Ir tie visi, kiek yra, tai po stalu išlėj – tai dūšiom jau anų. Ir tadu jau visi poterius sukałbėj ir valgo, žodžiu, dūšiom atidavė, kas reikia (Vaitkevičienė, Vaitkevičius 1996, p.255).

'On All Saints' Day, when everybody is sitting at the dinner table, the souls of the dead come. When the people take the first spoonful, they pour it under the table, for the souls, really! And everybody present pours out under the table, for the souls of their dead. Then everybody says a prayer and starts eating, that is to say, they have paid their dues to the souls.'

At wakes, just as at memorial ceremonies, a custom of pouring the first drop of a drink on to the ground for the dead was also observed. In Latvia, no one dared to drink beer or vodka at a wake without first pouring some of it on to the ground (LTT I, pp.121, 146). The first glass of beer would be poured on the ground for the deceased person (LTT I, p.145). It was believed that anybody who drank the first glass at a wake without pouring some out first would be the next member of the community to die (LTT I, p.122). Matthaeus Praetorius, who described a wake in East Prussia in the 17th century, emphasises the difference between the wake and other ceremonies. According to him, during all and any celebrations and ceremonies, drink was poured on the ground only when taking the first sip of the celebration (Pretorijus 2006, pp.488-489). However, wakes and memorial ceremonies are an exception: in these cases, some drink must be poured out every single time before drinking, no matter how many times the drink is passed around the table. 'They believe that the soul of the deceased person experiences a special sense of relief, when everyone offers something to Zemynele first and entrusts the soul of the dead person to her. Furthermore, people utter words of good fortune to the deceased' (Pretorijus 2006, p.688ff).

[2] It is possible that the Samogitian Waizganthos and the Latvian Cerroklis are the same deity, from the functional point of view. The word Vaišgantas can be etymologically related to the Lithuanian *vaišės* 'festive food, a feast, a banquet', *vaišinti* 'to treat somebody to something', whereas Cerroklis is described by the Jesuit Stanisław Rostowski as 'the god of hospitality' (BRMŠ 2005, p.142). It is highly likely that it was a deity of agriculture, to which *primitiae* (the first sips of drink and pieces of food) were given at every feast.

In Baltic religion, as in the Greek religion, the Earth acts a mediator between the living and the dead. This is attested to not only by libation, but by burying food in the ground for the dead too. The Jesuits of Vilnius noted in 1600 and 1634 that people who observed pagan rites 'bury food in the ground so that the appeased earth should shelter the souls more safely' (BRMŠ 2001, p.620). 'They bury food deep in the ground to please the goddess, or, as they call her, the goddess of the Earth [Tellurem], so that she does not let out the souls entrusted to her' (Ališauskas 2003, p.613ff). A similar libation of beer or another alcoholic beverage on the ground for the dead in the belief that it has an influence on the fate of the deceased person also extends across the eastern border of Lithuania into Belarus. There, the spring feast devoted to the dead finishes with a wish that the earth should not weigh down on the chest of the deceased (Shein 1890, p.622), whereas the wake is interpreted as a rite intended for opening the door for the deceased person into the next world (Shein 1890, p.531).

Offering a drink in a cemetery into an open grave and on to a grave should be discussed separately. When writing about Prussian and Livonian customs in around 1546, Joannes Maletius, an evangelist in the Duchy of East Prussia, claimed that during funerals they 'put some bread and a jar full of beer into the grave at the head of the deceased person, so that the soul does not experience thirst or hunger' (BRMŠ 2001, p.206). In 1599, the custom of placing beer and bread in the grave of a deceased person was recorded in Latvia in the area of Rēzekne (Dumpe 2001, p.142). Catholic priests claimed that in 1664 in Alūksne, and in 1671 in Rujiena, a jar full of beer was poured into the grave during funerals (*ibid.*). There is some data attesting to the fact that libation was intended for the body of the deceased person too. Johann David Wunderer, who travelled around Latvia and Samogitia in the 16th century, wrote that during funerals beer used to be poured over the body of the deceased (BRMŠ 2001, p.639). Another source from the 16th century interprets it as the share of the deceased that is poured over the body (Spekke 1995, p.196). It is also worth mentioning that it was a custom in Lithuania to pour some beer, vodka or water on the place in the house where the coffin had been (Schleicher, p.217; cf. a similar Belarusian custom, Sysou 2001, p.340).

Libation on to a grave was a typical religious reality recorded in historical sources. When writing about Samogitians in his 15th-century *Historia Polonica*, Jan Długosz claimed that they had fireplaces intended for burning the bodies of the deceased, next to which they would put some food and pour some mead into the fireplace, in the belief that the souls of the dead come at night, and eat the food and quench their thirst with the mead absorbed by the ash of the fireplace (BRMŠ 1996, p.560). Alexander Guagnini wrote in the 16th century that people in Lithuania would place some beer, mead and milk on the grave of a dead person (BRMŠ II, p.469). Jan Łasicki claimed at the same time that people would put a jar of beer and some bread at the head of the dead person (BRMŠ 2001, pp.602-603). Accounts of church visitations in the 17th century mention that the Latvians would offer bread and beer to the souls of the dead on graves, asking the dead to help the barley and rye spout, and their horses and cattle to be healthy (LTT IV, p.1955).

Libation into or on a grave is not a uniquely Baltic custom. In Ancient Greece, libations were poured into a grave where a body or ashes had been buried, and such libations were repeated periodically, usually for at least a year (Sarah 2005, p.164). In some cultures, even today, some drink is poured on a grave. Examples can be found among both close neighbours (Belarusians, Estonians, Russians) and remote lands, such as cultures of the African subcontinent (Cox 1998, p.199ff).

An exceptional offering for the dead was the libation of blood. This is a characteristic funeral offering that has survived in Lithuania in an ethnographic form as the custom of slaughtering an animal when a person has died. It was believed that 'during a funeral one must slaughter at least a chicken. It is necessary to shed some blood. They pour the blood on the ground.'[3] There is a well-known and widespread belief that 'a dead person needs fresh blood, and if he is not given some, he takes an animal with his own hand' (LTT IV, p.126; Balys 1981, p.65).

The libation of blood on to the ground is a typical offering to the dead and to chthonic deities. According to B. Davis, examples from different cultures (the Mediterranean region, India, China, Bolivia, West Africa) show a tendency that the blood being offered must flow downwards and must be absorbed by the ground. Even if the blood is being offered on a stone or an altar, they take care that it flows down from the stone or the altar on to the ground (Davis 2008, p.53). This tendency is also reflected by the Greek *bothros*, holes in the ground through which the blood of offerings was poured directly into the ground to satiate the dead with blood (Burkert 2000, pp.60, 200).

Aspects of libation on to the ground discussed earlier (offering to the goddess of the Earth, chthonic domestic deities and the dead) when applied during the same rite

[3] According to Helena Mockienė-Remytė, who was born in 1938 in the village of Mockos, near Gervėčiai in the Astrav district. Recorded by D. Vaitkevičienė and S. Matulevičienė in 2010.

look like a complicated procedure. However, it is exactly the composite procedures of the drinking rite that are emphasised in written sources, which mention all three components, albeit not going into great detail. In 1718–1719 the Jesuits of Vilnius wrote in an account: 'Pagan offerings are still used to worship the *earth* and, similarly, *domestic gods*. The *souls of the dead* are usually invited to feasts and treated abundantly' (BRMŠ 2005, p.116). The same three aspects were emphasised in an earlier account dating from 1593, in which the Jesuits expressed their indignation at the widespread custom of feeding the souls of the dead by holding feasts for them. During such feasts, 'whatever food the living humans take and taste, they throw a piece of it under the table, that is, they send food from the table to the *dead*. Villagers are closely watched so that they do not (as they are used to) make offerings to the *earth* or worship *domestic deities*' (BRMŠ 2001, p.619).

According to detailed sources dating from slightly later times, such as *Deliciae Prussicae* by Matthaeus Praetorius, it is clear that the drinking rite lasted for a long period of time, and that the drink would be sent around the table several times. Ceremonial feasts devoted to a number of gods are described in earlier sources. For example, *Sudauer Büchlein* describes the spring rites dedicated to the start of the ploughing work (going out to work in the fields) during which four gods were addressed in turn, each prayer finishing with drinking and throwing the vessel over the head (BRMŠ 2001, pp.129-131). During the ceremony of offering a goat, in which four or six villages took part, as many as 12 gods in turn were addressed (BRMŠ 2001, pp.129, 132). By their complexity, the drinking rites of the Balts are similar to the Greek drinking rites of the fifth and sixth centuries, during which three banquet-libations and four sacred drinks were performed: 'The first banquet-libation was for Zeus and the Olympians, the second for the heroes, the third for Zeus Soter. Sacred drinks supplementary to the libations were dedicated to four deities, Hygieia, Hermes as the guardian of the house, Zeus Soter as its protector, and Agathos Daimon as a divine agent of good fortune' (Elderkin 1945, p.425).

Fire

Libation on to the ground, albeit well documented, is only one of the libation techniques practised by the Balts. We will begin an analysis of other forms of libation with libation into fire, because fire is considered to be a basic element of the Baltic religion (burning offerings in fire is one of the most distinct stereotypes for portraying the Baltic religion in historical sources and folkloric tradition).

Libation into fire is one aspect of the cult of sacred fire. Most information concerning this libation practice can be found in Latvian sources, as well as in the writings of Matthaeus Praetorius, where he wrote about the Prussian Scalvians. According to Praetorius, the Scalvians would offer food and drink to fire by putting them on a carved-out board and pouring mead, milk or beer on to them (Pretorijus 2006, p.258). Honey would be offered to fire too. The honey would first be melted by heating it in a pot (*ibid.*). Joannes Stribingius, a Jesuit from Riga, writes in his visitation account of 1606 that the Latvians 'pour beer into fire as if for a god. They do not eat the first bit of bread baked from the corn they have ground, but throw it into a fire. They also pour beer on to the walls of the stove, asking the fire not to bring them harm, or they pour it outside or into the stove' (BRMŠ 2003, p.551).

Stribingius also mentions offerings of beer and bread into fire during feasts devoted to the souls of the dead: 'They put a loaf of bread on the table and then throw the bread into the fire. At the same time, they put beer on the table and then also pour it on to the ground or into the fire. Finally, they clean the stove and drive the souls out of it' (BRMŠ 2003, p.552).

The religious facts given by Stribingius recall the offering of the first loaf of bread to Gabija, the goddess of the home fire, in Samogitia, as described by Jan Łasicki in 1585 (BRMŠ 2001, p.582). However, in historical sources, libation into fire is related not only to the domestic goddess of fire but also to Perkūnas, the god of Thunder. It is exactly for this god, who is very important in Baltic religion, that beer is poured during the offering ceremony. It is described in Dionysius Fabricius' *Livonicae Historicae* (written between 1611 and 1620):

Observant quoqve hanc consvetudinem in hodiernum vsque diem, quando magna est siccitas terrae, in defectu pluviae, solent in collibus inter densissimas sylvas tonitrua adorare, eique immolare juvencam nigram, hircum nigrum et gallum nigrum; quibus mactatis ritu suo conveniunt plurimi ex vicinia, ibidem convivantes et potitantes, invocando Percunum, i.e. deum tonitru, omnium primo infundentes craterem cerevisiae, quem ter circumferentes circa ignem ibidem excitatum, postremo effundunt in ignem orantes Percunum, vt pluvias fundat et imbres (BRMŠ 2003, p.570).

'Even today [the people of Livonia] keep to this custom. When the ground is very dry due to a lack of rain, they worship thunder on hills in the thick of the forest and offer a black heifer, a black goat and a black cock to it. According to the custom, when the animals have been slaughtered, all the neighbours get together, eat and drink, and address Percunum, that is, the god

of Thunder. They first take a helping of beer, which they pass three times around the fire, and then put some more firewood on to the fire, and finally pour out the beer into the fire, begging Percunum to send them rain and water.'

The Baltic god of Thunder (in Latvian Perkons, in Lithuanian and Prussian Perkūnas) is closely related to fire. It is highly likely that libation into fire is intended for the deities of fire (the god of Thunder and the deity of the Hearth). The Latvian folkloric tradition has preserved stories of libations intended for the domestic deity (Mājas kungs) performed in the hearth. They would pour some soup, break up some meat and bread, and pour beer for the gods (Šmits 1936, p.254). Although Latvian domestic deities in the 19th-century folkloric tradition are often referred to under the general name of gods of the Earth, it seems that this is a result of the disappearance of differences. Cristian priests and chroniclers did not differentiate clearly between domestic deities of different origins (the master of the home Mājas kungs, the Latvian goddess of the Hearth Uguns Māte 'the Mother of Fire', the goddess of Fortune Laima, the deity of Horses Ūsiņš). This is shown by the fact that the names are often mixed up. The term *zemes dievi* (gods of the Earth) might have been formed in opposition to the Christian heavenly god with the aim of emphasising pagan fallacy. F.B. Blaufuss' statement, too, that Latvians not only poured on to the ground for the Mother of the Earth, but also poured beer into fire, should be seen as a result of the observers' inaccuracy, or maybe even the degradation of the very rite: 'When they brewed beer and poured it into casks, they would pour a large portion into the fire for the Mother of the Earth, and if someone drank beer, he would pour out a few drops for the Mother of the Earth' (Blaufuss 1938, p.491).

Libation of animal blood into fire deserves special attention. We have information about it solely from ethnographic sources. Having slaughtered a pig, the Latvians would not eat the meat until they had poured three drops of pig's blood into a fire (LTT I, p.310). At the end of the 19th century, Eduard Wolter described the ritual of the offering of a cock on St George's Day, during which Latvians would pour the cock's blood into the fire (Volter 1890, p.24). The libation of animal blood into fire corresponds typologically to the classic process of an animal offering in Greece, when an animal's blood was poured on to an altar on which the sacred fire was burning (Burkert 2000, p.56).

There is plenty of ethnographic information concerning the fact that the Latvians would pour on to a furnace or behind a furnace and over the pole that held a copper over the open fireplace (LTT IV, p.1857; Šmits 1936, p.254-257; LFK 55/431, 72/7128). Libation next to fire or the fireplace was not necessarily directly related to the deity of Fire. In some cases, a place next to a fire might be selected for the purpose of the evaporation of the liquid (cf. libation on to heated altars positioned next to fireplaces as practised in cultures of the Mediterranean region, see Davis 2008, p.54). The Latvian rite called *pertiškis*, which is performed when a baby is no longer fed its mother's milk, might serve as an example of libation for the purpose of evaporation. Some beer would be poured into a small pit on the top of the stove, so that hot vapour rises directly into the baby's face (Volter 1890, p.136ff).

Air

Spreading a liquid in the air is recorded not only in the form of evaporation, but by sprinkling a liquid upwards too. It is perhaps the libation practice that survived the longest, as it is still remembered by people in Lithuania. Libation upward was especially typical of Lithuanian wedding and baptism customs, although it is known from other instances, such as during supper on Christmas Eve (Kudirka 1993, pp.116, 167). Libation upward was also performed when selling or buying something, when '*magaryčios*' was drunk for the occasion (Mačiekus 1997, p.17), or, to put it in other words, 'to wet the bargain' (even today in Lithuania the word *aplaistyti*, 'to water', is used to mean drinking alcohol after making a deal). The gesture of sprinkling upwards is also well-known in Belarus (Shein 1890).

Contrary to libation on to the ground or into fire, the remains of the drink, and not the first drops, were sprinkled upwards. This is how Antanas Juška, a collector of Lithuanian songs in the mid-19th century, describes upward libation during a wedding:

Po marčpiečio jaunoji išeina iš užstalės ant vidurio aslos. Į ratą išėjusi, geria midų arba vyną ir lieja į aukštą, į lubas, o paskui eina šokti su jaunuoju. Pašokę triskart aplinkinį, pasibučiuoja su jaunuoju ir sėdasi apent į stalą (Juška 1955, p.343).

'After the dinner served by the bride, she leaves the table and comes out to the middle of the floor. Standing in the middle of a circle, she drinks mead or wine and sprinkles it upwards, on to the ceiling, and then starts dancing with the groom. After three rounds, she and the groom kiss each other, and then sit down again at the table.'

Quite often, the person sprinkling the ritual drink would jump up slightly. In 1888 the collector of folklore Mečislovas Davainis-Silvestraitis wrote that during a feast to celebrate a baby's baptism in Samogitia, every

guest, when drinking his portion, must leave a drop of vodka, jump up and throw it at the ceiling (Davainis-Silvestraitis 1973, p.210). The jumping movement is also mentioned in characteristic forms of congratulation that accompany libation upward. They contain the wish that God should allow the most important people at the ceremony (the newborn baby and the mother) to be merry and jump (in Lithuanian *šokinėti*) (LTR 2123, pp.41ff, 34ff).

We find the same word *šokinėti* in other libation formulas, too. When throwing drink at the ceiling, they say, 'So that the bees jump' (Buračas 1935, p.206). A rudimentary form of this intention is the belief that when you drink, you should not drink everything down to the last drop, but 'leave a few drops for the bees' (Aleksynas, Sauka 2004, p.379). According to A.J. Greimas, who tried to reconstruct the mythical functions of Austėja, the Lithuanian goddess of Bees, libation upward is devoted to Austėja as an aerial deity. He argues that the upward direction differentiates this manner of libation from libation downward, which is addressed to the goddess of the Earth Žemyna (Greimas 1990, p.279).

Austėja, who according to Greimas' description is charged with a very wide spectrum of women's matrimonial and sexual matters (Greimas 1990, pp.274-286), nevertheless does not exhaust all the possibilities of interpretation of libation upward. Of no less significance is the fact that wishes for happiness are uttered during libation. The wish can be very universal: 'Let him be happy' (LTR 6447, no. 1207/27), 'To good fortune, to happiness' (Mačiekus 1997, p.17), and so on. It is a standard wish during family parties and 'wetting of bargains'.

In ancient thinking, man's good fortune is not an abstraction, but a special mythical principle, the successful act of which is ensured by Laima, the Baltic goddess of Destiny (Vaitkevičienė 2002, p.9). Laima is a manifold deity related to both man's personal happiness and the happiness of the home and the homestead (Biezājs 1955; Kursīte 1996, pp.190-257; Greimas 1990, pp.185-253; Vėlius 1977, pp.56-82). We cannot relate Laima to a single space or substance, because she is localised in various places and manifests herself in complex ways: through water, earth or fire (Vaitkevičienė 2002, pp.124-127, Kursīte 1996). The aerial dimension is expressed by the shape of Laima as a bird (a cuckoo, or a swan) (Greimas pp.190ff, 211). In view of the fact that in Lithuanian and Latvian ethnographic sources gestures directed upwards (such as ritual lifting up) are generally related to good fortune (Vaitkevičienė 2009), it can be seen that libation upward is a gesture-based form of offering that is suitable for Laima. It should be mentioned that libation upward, as an offering to the deities of good fortune, can be found in other cultures too. For example, in Tibet, when the bride travels to the groom's house during the wedding, the cavalcade is stopped by women, who offer her bowls of *chang*. She dips her fingers into the liquid, and flicks some drops into the air as a libation to the gods who will bring her good fortune (Peter 1963, p.424).

Water

There is not much information about libation into water, although, in general, offering to water is a characteristic form of religious practice that reflects the attitude of the Balts towards water as a divine or demonic being, or as a place where mythical beings dwell (aquatic maids, souls, and so on). As late as the first half of the 20th century, it was believed that water must receive its *donis* (offering). That is to say, before going swimming or when crossing a bridge, a person must throw something into the water, such as bread, cheese or money, and if he has nothing, he must throw at least a crumb or a piece of straw from his pocket. Otherwise, the water will drown the person (Balys 1966, p.33). In Lithuania, legends about lakes which demand offerings ('a live head') every year are quite common. An animal (a cock, a cat or something similar) is drowned, so that no human drowns there (Vaitkevičienė 1996, p.58).

The material that is available, although it is quite fragmentary, allows me to speak of the libation of beer, milk and blood into water. In the early 20th century, in the Anykščiai area (eastern Lithuania), people would go to Karalienės liūnas ('Queen's quag', a springy old riverbed of the River Šventoji) and offer grain, and butter, cheese, pork fat or heifer's milk in the spring. 'The first milk of every heifer must be poured into "Karalienė", so that the housewives' dairy farming goes well' (Žukauskas 1907, p.141ff; Vaitkevičius 2006, p.474ff). Latvian folklore stories mention retting ponds, in which the masters of homesteads would make offerings so that all went well on their farms (Šmits 1936, p.280). In 1926, the Lithuanian writer Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius published a few stories about Lake Pilvingiai in southern Lithuania, in which, as the stories go, there is a church sunken together with 'pagan priests'. Therefore, people 'would take and throw into the lake food and drinks for these pagan priests'. The stories say that when Catholic priests prohibited making these offerings, one or two people would drown in the lake every year (Krėvė-Mickevičius 1926, p.449).

From older sources, a visitation report from southeast Latvia written by the Jesuit Joannes Stribingius in

1606 should be mentioned. He tells about fishermen who sought a pagan priest's advice when they could not catch any fish, and were instructed to offer three casks of beer to the god of water. When they completed the ceremony and drank some beer, the fishermen went back to the lake to fish, and they caught lots (BRMŠ 2003, p.551). The report does not describe in detail the way the beer was sacrificed. Nevertheless, it is highly probable that some of the beer was poured into the water.

A couple of sources contain information about the libation of the blood of a sacrificed animal into water. In 1605, the Jesuits of Vilnius wrote about 'ignorant and superstitious people' who worshipped various gods and made offerings to them, and whom the Jesuits visited during their visitation. 'They offer a goat to a god named Nosolum, and pour its blood into the river, so that the god procures abundant harvests' (BRMŠ 2001, p.624). In 1797, the Latvian *Gada gramata* wrote about the libation of the blood of a sacrificed animal into water for a different purpose, so that no one would drown in the water:

Veci ļaudis teic, kad bērns akā jeb citur ūdeni iekritis, tad tā aka jeb upe kādu dvēseli griboti, un ka tad gailis jeb cits kāds lopiņš tanī pašā vietā jākauj un tās asinis tur jālej iekšā, tad tur vairs cilvēks nekritīs nedz slīkts (LTT III, p.1700).

'Old people say that if a child falls into a well, or into any kind of water, it means that the well or the river wants a soul, and a cock or some other animal must be slaughtered in that place, and then the blood poured into the water, and after that no one will fall or drown in the water.'

There is no doubt that the libation of blood, milk or beer into water, although not recorded in great detail, was nevertheless practised in the Baltic lands.

Ritual stones

Up till now, we have not related the libation practices discussed to definite places, although it is evident that offerings to fire, water or earth were made mostly in sacred places, that is, sacred groves, or in the domestic environment. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss, at least briefly, two elements of sacred places related to libation: sacred stones and trees. Although this is a wide subject which requires an analysis of historical, folkloric and especially archaeological data, I will attempt to explain at least the fact of libation related to sacred stones and trees.

The information available allows me to speak of pouring beer, milk, thin soup and blood over stones. The stones on to which the liquids were poured can be divided into two different categories: parts of complexes of ancient sacred places, and stones intended for the cult of domestic deities.

Stones related to communal religious practices were normally visited on religious holidays. Sometimes communal feasts were held next to such stones. For example, in the 1840s in Latvia, people used to offer grain from the first threshing, and beer, butter and ears of corn on the Muļķīstāru stone, which has a trough-shaped hollow. The stone would often have milk poured over it (Urtans 1990, p.57). In eastern Lithuania, as late as the early 20th century, women who respected old traditions would still put flax, corn, milk and other offerings on the Antakmenė stone (near Kazitiškis in the Ignalina district, see Plate VIII, Fig. 1), which also has a trough-shaped hollow on the top (Vaitkevičius 2006, p.341). On Whit Sunday, people would hold a feast next to the Paindrė stone (near Dusetos in the Zarasai district), which is called Laumių stalas (Fairies' Table), and put offerings (loaves of bread, and meat) and pour beer or mead on to the stone, 'so that the fairies protect the fields'. They say that someone once upset a cask of beer on the stone, and the older participants in the ceremony would not allow anybody put the cask straight, saying that the spilling beer was 'the fairies' share' (Vaitkevičius 2006, p.637).

Sacred stones situated in a domestic environment should be related to the deities of the family and the homestead. There is much information about domestic offerings practised in Latvia. Beer, milk, soup and the blood of a sacrificed animal (normally a cock) were offered to the domestic gods. The sources available show that sometimes, although not always, this was done on a stone, a pile of stones or a small area of ground covered with stones. The place for the offering can be in different parts of the homestead: on the threshold, by the gate, in the bath-house, in the cattle-shed, next to a fence, or under the sacred tree of the homestead (LTT I, pp.1178-1182; Šmits 1936, pp.248-282). A church visitation report from 1739 from Latvia mentions Bērtulis Pīlats, who every year on St Michael's Day would pour some beer and three spoonfuls of soup, put three pieces of bread and slaughter a cock as an offering on a stone next to the gate of his house (LTT IV, p.1180). A report dating from 1740 reveals that 'There was a tree in Drustenhof, with thirteen idols under it. Some of them were made of stones arranged one on top of another, and one of them had a nickname, Spitzkopff (Sharp-Headed). Vihlum Jahnis, the master of the house, would first make offerings of every dish and drink there, and only then would he partake of them' (BRMŠ 2005, p.154). The Jesuits of Vilnius also described offerings on a stone: 'They roll a stone over a

pit-hole and offer it some of the food and drink they are having' (BRMŠ 2001, p.624). Latvian narratives that tell about the remains of the ancient religious tradition also contain information on ceremonial libation on a stone. For example, on St Michael's Day the master of the house poured the first helping of cabbage soup on to the stones of the bath-house stove, saying: 'Here is your share, God, for you; give me a full cattle-shed and a garner, so that I can cook a full copper [of food]' (Šmits 1936, p.282). There is another story that tells how if you pour some beer on to a sacred stone once, you have to keep doing it later; otherwise you may fall ill (Šmits 1936, p.261ff).

Sacred stones with bowl-shaped hollows that are found in large numbers and in various shapes in Lithuania and Latvia are also related to libation. The very act of pouring a liquid into the bowl of a stone can be interpreted as a way of offering a liquid to the gods. This interpretation is supported by common Lithuanian folklore stories about grass-snakes which were given milk from stones with bowls (Vaitkevičius 2006, p.223). Researchers of Baltic religion generally agree that grass-snakes represented domestic deities (Greimas 1990, pp.425-433).

A stone can also serve as a ritual instrument when pouring on the ground or into fire. Special attention should be drawn to two instances of chutes carved in ritual stones and leading to fireplaces. The stone of Katinai (in the Anykščiai district), with a flat-bottomed bowl carved on its top, has a chute directed to a former fireplace (Vaitkevičius 1999, p.237). The stone at Laukagalis (in the Kaišiadorys district, Plate VIII, Figs. 2-3) is even more interesting. There is a trough carved on the top of the stone, from which two chutes run in the direction of two separate fireplaces (*ibid.*).

The issue of offering blood on sacred stones should be treated separately. This is what the Jesuits of Venden wrote about the Latvian domestic cult in 1618: 'They worship certain stones as if they were sacred; they keep them in the kitchen, granaries or storehouses, and call them "the place of throwing down" (*Atmeschene Wête*) in their language [...] On these stones they pour the blood of slaughtered animals and put pieces of food' (BRMŠ 2003, p.565). It is likely that some folkloric data recalls offerings too. For example, in the case of the Darželiai stone with a footprint (near Linkmenys in the Ignalina district), people used to call the water accumulated in the footprint-shaped hollow 'blood'. The water was used for healing (Vaitkevičius 2006, p.329).

The libation of the blood of a sacrificed animal on to a ritual stone or an altar belongs to a very wide paradigm of religious behaviour that covers not only Baltic and Indo-European contexts, but also the religious practices of very different cultures. Of closer examples, the Scandinavians should be mentioned. The poem *Edda Hyndluljóð* tells how Ottar Innsteinsson worshipped the goddess Freya by pouring the blood of a sacrificed animal on a stone (Kaliff 2007, p.112). The libation of blood on an altar is known from Ancient Greece. It should be pointed out that a rough version of the Greek offering table was simply a natural stone or a small pile of stones (Burkert 2000, pp.56, 87). Of examples that are culturally more remote, the offering rite practised in Igbo culture in Nigeria can serve as an example of a similar rite. It is performed in a sacred grove, where the blood of a sacrificed goat is poured on a sacred stone. The Igbos make offerings to the domestic deity in the same way, the only difference being that the rite is performed in the home shrine, consisting of an obo tree surrounded by a pile of stones, with one flat stone in the centre. The master of the house kills a goat and pours the blood over the central stone, and then on the other stones. He also smears some on the obo branch, and sticks feathers in the congealed blood (Meek 1970, pp.59-60).

Sacred trees

Although there is not much information about Baltic offerings to sacred trees, it is important to take note of this fact, for the reason that stones and trees made up an indivisible complex of sacred places when talking of both public and private (family) cults. Information related to libation represents mostly domestic deities and the rites devoted to them.

Latvian folklore stories provide information about offerings made next to trees. For example, there was a large alder next to the Boksts homestead, under which elderly people would feed the gods. They would bring some of all the dishes cooked for the first time to the alder, and on holidays they would bring beer and pies for the god (Dieviņam) (Šmits 1936, p.278). In another homestead, the lady of the house would put a helping of all the dishes cooked for the first time under the two birches that grew in the yard (Šmits 1936, p.276). In the Katriņas Danderi homestead, they would take food and drink for the gods to an old oak-tree on the eve of every holiday (Šmits 1936, p.264). Sometimes, food and drink were put in a hollow in a tree. For instance, a farmer would put a bottle of vodka and some food in a hollow in a tree (Šmits 1936, p.279). Stories about people living in old Latvian homesteads making offerings to old trees, especially oaks, by putting offerings in hollows or next to them, have been recorded on numerous occasions (Šmits 1936, pp.264-282). Some trees growing on homesteads had sacred names. For example, a pine tree growing in the Antuža home-

stead was called Dieva priede (God's pine). Offerings of food, drink, clothes and flax were made next to it (Šmits 1936, p.275).

Information about offerings to trees is supported by historical sources. This is what Joannes Stribingius wrote in 1606:

Quercum vocant Masculum, cui duo oua certis temporibus supponunt. Tiliam vocant Femellam, cui offerunt Butyrum, Lac, caseos et pinguedinem pro salute et incolumitate suorum liberorumque. Et si qui infirmantur, statim mittunt ad Arbores Popum, qui expostulat cum arboribus, quare illos permittant infirmare, quandoquidem illis debitum suum obtulerint. Quod si non statim conualescunt, adducit arboribus duplum praedictarum rerum, et ita liberantur. BRMŠ 2003, p.554

'They call the oak tree a man, and bring him two eggs at a set time. They call the lime tree a woman, and make offerings of butter, milk, cheese and fat to her, for the sake of their own and their children's health and welfare. When someone falls ill, they immediately send a pagan priest to the trees, who asks the trees why they allow them [the people] to fall ill if they have paid their dues. If they do not get well quickly, they bring double the amount of things mentioned earlier, and this way they expel the sickness.'

Stribingius mentions offerings to trees on another occasion too, when writing about Moschel, the god of cows (the Latvian goddess Marša), to whom they make offerings of butter, milk, cheese, and so on, 'and if a cow falls ill, they immediately go to the trees and make offerings to them, and then the cow gets better' (BRMŠ 2003, p.550).

In ethnographic data, the fact about offering blood deserves some attention. The Latvians would 'pour blood on a rowan when they have slaughtered a pig, so that the pigs get strong' (LTT I, p.309). We should note the belief that domestic trees and other plants (especially flowers) need animal blood. For example, if you want 'a planted seedling to take root and grow, you have to pour warm poultry or animal blood on to it right after the planting' (Balys 1986, p.117). 'If an apple tree does not bear fruit, then they bury an animal under the tree' (Slaviūnas 1947, p.182). As some beliefs show, an animal offering guarantees religious protection of the farm. For instance: 'When you plant a peony, you have to bury an animal's head under its roots; then the animals will not die' (Balys 1986, p.117).

It is very likely that the libation of blood can be interpreted as a method of consecrating a tree. The unique description by Matthaeus Praetorius highlights the way in which trees were consecrated. If the *weidullis* (pagan priest) wanted a deity to settle in a tree, he had to fast for three days and three nights, and invite his god to occupy the selected tree and help people through it. If the god did not settle in the tree within three days, the priest had to scratch his chest until he drew blood. If this did not help either, he had to get some of his child's blood and smear it on the tree so that the god settled in the tree. 'Then, they believe, the god comes to the tree for sure, and then offerings must be made' (Pretorijus 2006, pp.140-143).

Offerings to trees have not yet been studied thoroughly. The libation of a drink or blood is one aspect of this wide and important subject. Nevertheless, it should be noted that libation to trees is not a unique Baltic offering. Typological parallel to offerings to domestic trees can be found in Africa in Uganda domestic deities residing in trees are moved to a new homestead by planting trees from the shoots of the trees of the old homestead. During the consecration ceremony, beer is poured on the roots of the planted trees for the gods Mukasa and Kaumpuli (Roscoe 1911, p.427).

Conclusion

A closer look at Baltic libation practices reveals the diversity of libation techniques, which indicates that there existed a differentiated ritual system. The libation techniques that have been discussed differ from each other in various ways: in terms of the offering site or substance (earth, fire, water, air, stone, tree), the direction (upwards, downwards), the object (gods worshipped generally, domestic gods, the dead), and the level of publicity (communal or private rites). In terms of the material offered, libation involves various liquids: traditional fermented drinks (beer, mead) and other alcoholic drinks (wine, vodka) that later replaced the former, in addition to milk, runny honey, thin soup (it is probable that the soup was broth, made from the meat of a sacrificed animal), and water (in very rare cases). There is no information as yet attesting to the libation of fats (oil, butter, animal fat, tallow).

The libation of blood, which is part of the rite of animal offering, should be put in a separate category. Information concerning blood offerings can be related to all the substances and offering sites (earth, fire, water, stone, tree) with the exception of air. This leads us to the assumption that a blood offering is not a characteristic of aerial deities (this supports A.J. Greimas' idea that aerial deities do not have offering sites intended for them; therefore, he relates the theonym Beaukuris, literally 'the one who has no credence, altar', to the god of Wind (Greimas 1990, pp.434, 489).

When comparing Baltic libation with rites practised in Greek and other cultures, we can see clearly that the

libation techniques used by the Balts have typological parallels in the religious practices of both Indo-European cultures and other cultures that are not related to the former from an ethno-genetic point of view. The comparative context reveals the archaism of the ritual practice of the Balts (for example, the libation technique of libation on the ground as practised until the early 20th century emphasises the religious respect for Earth deities and the dead; no such thing exists in religions in which celestial deities become dominant as compared to earthly deities). The wide spectrum of libation techniques, sites and substances emphasises the balance of the polytheistic system of the religion of the Balts and the systematic character of religious practices.

Abbreviations

BRMŠ – N. VĖLIUS, ed. *Baltų religijos ir mitologijos šaltiniai. Sources of Baltic Religion and Mythology. Quellen der baltischen Religion und Mythologie*, vols. I–IV. Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidykla, 1996–2005.

LFK – Archives of Latvian Folklore (Latviešu folkloras krātuve) of the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art, University of Latvia

LTR – Lithuanian Folklore Archives (Lietuvių tautosakos rankraštynas) of the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore

LTT – P. ŠMITS, ed. *Latviešu tautas ticējumi*. Vols. I–IV. Rīgā: Latviešu folkloras krātuve, 1940–1941.

SCHLEICHER = P. profesoriaus Schleicher'io laiškai sekretoriui apie mokslinės kelionės į Lietuvą rezultatus [Professor Schleicher's letters to his secretary about the results of his scientific journey to Lithuania]. *Tautosakos darbai*, 1997, 6-7, 212-236.

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BRMŠ, *XVII amžius*, t.3. Vilnius, 2003.

BRMŠ, *XVIII amžius*, t.4. Vilnius, 2005.

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Received: 16 January 2011; Revised: 4 May 2011;
Accepted: 16 May 2011.

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APEIGINIS NULIEJIMAS BALTŲ RELIGIJOJE

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Santrauka

Libacija – skysčio nuliejimas aukojant – yra vienas iš fundamentalių ritualų, praktikuotas ir tebepraktikuojamas daugelyje religijų. Libacija žinoma beveik visuose pasaulio kultūriniuose ir geografiniuose regionuose, šis ritualas buvo atliekamas jau priešistoriniais laikais, o ypač suklestėjo bronzos amžiaus civilizacijose. Nuo pat archajiškojo periodo libacija buvo svarbi religinė praktika Graikijoje, taip pat intensyviai praktikuota romėniškuoju graikų kultūros laikotarpiu. Graikų ir romėnų libacija apibūdinta gausiuose rašytiniuose paminkluose, gėrimo aukojimo scenos vaizduojamos ikonografijoje, ją tyrinėti leidžia išlikęs ritualinis inventorius (altoriai, aukojimo indai ir kt.). Senovės Indijoje plačiai praktikuotas somos nuliejimas, aprašytas indų Vedose; ir šiandien Indijoje nuliejimas tebėra gyvastinga religinio aukojimo forma.

Straipsnyje stengiamasi išryškinti libacijos tipus baltų religijoje, atsižvelgiant į ritualo atlikimo vietą ir nulie-

jimo kontaktinę zoną. Aukojimo vieta, kaip ir skysčio pobūdis, yra vienas iš svarbiausių kriterijų, leidžiantis išsiaiškinti nuliejimo prasmę ir paskirtį. Straipsnyje nagrinėjami baltų apeiginio nuliejimo tipai pagal aukojimo vietą: libacija žemei, ugniai, vandeniui, nuliejimas į orą ir gėrimo bei kraujo aukojimas ant akmenų ir medžių.

Nuliejimas ant žemės buvo pats įprasčiausias ir geriausiai dokumentuotas baltų libacijos būdas. Išsiskiria trys chtoniškumo aspektai, kurie atitinka tris nuliejimo adresatų grupes: (a) žemės deivė, (b) chtoniškos namų dievybės ir (3) mirusiųjų vėlės. Šie trys aspektai, jeigu jie taikomi vienoje ir toje pačioje apeigoje, atrodo kaip kompleksinė procedūra. Tačiau būtent sudėtinės gėrimo ritualo procedūros akcentuojamos rašytiniuose šaltiniuose, kurie, nors ir nedetalizuodami, pažymi visus tris dėmenis.

Gėrimo ar kito skysčio liejimas į ugnį irgi ne mažiau svarbus baltų religijoje. Tai vienas šventosios ugnies kulto aspektas. Daugiausia žinių apie šį nuliejimo būdą pateikia latvių šaltiniai, taip pat šiek tiek M. Pretorijus, kalbėdamas apie Prūsijos skalvius. Nuliejimas į ugnį istoriniuose šaltiniuose siejamas ir su Perkūnu; ši apeiga aprašoma Dionisijaus Fabricijaus *Livonijos kronikoje* (1611–1620). Atskira tema yra gyvulio kraujo pylimas į ugnį. Pvz., Latvijoje žinomas tikėjimas, kad paskerdus kiaulę mėsos negalima valgyti tol, kol į ugnį nebus įpilta trijų lašų kiaulės kraujo. E. Volteris XIX a. pabaigoje fiksuoja gaidžio aukojimo ritualą per Jurgines, kurio metu latviai liejo gaidžio kraują į ugnį. Gyvulio kraujo nuliejimas į ugnį tipologiškai atitinka klasikinę gyvulio aukojimo procedūrą Graikijoje, kai gyvulio kraujas buvo nuliejamas ant altoriaus, ant kurio liepsnojo šventoji ugnis.

Skysčio paskleidimas ore fiksuojamas ir kaip garinimas, ir – kur kas dažniau – kaip liejimas viršun. Tai bene ilgiausiai išlikusi nuliejimo praktika, būdinga lietuvių vestuvių ir krikštynų papročiams, nors žinomas ir kitais atvejais, pvz., valgant Kūčių vakarienę. Nuliejama į viršų ir ką nors parduodant ar perkant, kai ta proga geriamos „magaryčios“.

Nėra daug duomenų apie nuliejimą į vandenį, nors apskritai aukojimas vandeniui yra būdinga religinio elgesio forma, atspindinti baltų požiūrį į vandenį kaip į dievišką ar demonišką būtybę arba kaip į vietą, kurioje gyvena mitinės būtybės (nėrovės, vandens mergos, vėlės etc.). Turima medžiaga, nors ir ganėtinai fragmentiška, leidžia kalbėti apie alaus, pieno ir kraujo nuliejimą į vandenį. XX a. pr. Anykščių apylinkėse žmonės lankydavo *Karalienės liūną* (šaltiniuotą Šventosios upės senvagę) ir į vandenį rudenį aukodavo (skandindavo) javų, o pavasarį – sviesto, sūrio, lašinių ir pirmaveršių karvių pieno. 1605 m. Vilniaus jėzuitai rašė apie vizitacijos metu aplankytus „tamsius ir prietaringus žmones“, kurie dievui, vardu *Nosolum,* aukoja ožį ir jo kraują išpila į upę, kad tas dievas duotų gerą javų derlių“.

Libacija taip pat aptartina tiriant šventviečių elementus – šventuosius akmenis ir medžius. Turimi duomenys leidžia kalbėti apie alaus, pieno, skysto viralo (sriubos) ir kraujo nuliejimą ant akmenų. Pavyzdžiui, Latvijoje ant Muļķīstāru akmens su lovio formos išduoba XIX a. 5-ajame dešimtmetyje žmonės aukojo pirmojo kūlimo grūdų, alaus, sviesto, javų varpų. Akmuo daug kartų buvo aplietas pienu.

Namų aplinkoje esantys šventieji akmenys sietini su šeimos, sodybos dievybėmis. Ypač daug duomenų yra apie Latvijoje praktikuotus namų aukojimus; namų dievams buvo nuliejama alaus, pieno, sriubos ir aukojamo gyvūno kraujo (dažniausiai – gaidžio). Su libacija susiję ir šventieji akmenys su dubenimis, kurių Lietuvoje ir Latvijoje žinoma daug ir įvairių formų. Patį skysčio pylimo į akmeninį dubenį veiksmą galima traktuoti kaip skysčio aukojimo dievybėms formą.

Akmuo taip pat gali tarnauti kaip ritualinis instrumentas, kuriuo naudojantis nuliejama ant žemės ar į ugnį. Įsidėmėtini du atvejai, kai ant apeiginių akmenų yra iškalti latakai, vedantys link ugniaviečių.

Nėra daug žinių apie baltų aukojimus, skirtus šventiesiems medžiams, nors į šį faktą svarbu atkreipti dėmesį dėl to, kad akmenys ir medžiai sudarė bendrą šventviečių kompleksą kalbant tiek apie viešus, tiek apie privačius (šeimos) kultus. Apie aukojimus, atliekamus prie medžių, žinių suteikia latvių folkloro pasakojimai ir istoriniai šaltiniai. Pvz., jėzuitas Jonas Stribinis 1606 m. rašė, kad latviai „ąžuolą vadina vyru ir nustatytu laiku jam atneša du kiaušinius; liepą vadina moterimi ir jai aukoja sviesto, pieno, sūrių, riebalų savo pačių ir savo vaikų sveikatos ir gerovės labui“.

Atidesnis įsižiūrėjimas į baltų religines praktikas, susijusias su skysčio nuliejimu, atskleidžia libacijos būdų įvairovę, kuri rodo buvus diferencijuotą ritualinę sistemą. Nagrinėti nuliejimo būdai skiriasi įvairiais parametrais – pagal aukojimo vietą arba substanciją (žemė, ugnis, vanduo, oras, akmuo, medis), kryptį (aukštyn – žemyn), adresatą (visuotinai garbinti dievai, namų dievai, mirusieji), viešumo lygį (bendruomeniniai ir privatūs ritualai). Aukojamos medžiagos požiūriu libacija aprėpia įvairius skysčius: tradicinius raugintus gėrimus (alus, midus) ir vėlyvesniu laikotarpiu juos pakeitusius kitus alkoholinius gėrimus (vynas, degtinė), taip pat pieną, skystą medų, skystą viralą (sriubą; galbūt tai kadaise buvo būtent paaukoto gyvulio mėsos nuoviras, – deja, šaltiniai nėra šiuo požiūriu informatyvūs) ir vandenį (labai retais atvejais). Neatsirado

duomenų (bent kol kas), liudijančių riebalų (aliejaus, sviesto, taukų, lajaus) nuliejimą.

Atskirai kategorijai priskirtinas kraujo nuliejimas, kuris yra gyvulio aukojimo ritualo dalis; duomenys apie kraujo aukojimą sietini su visomis substancijomis ir aukojimo vietomis (žemė, ugnis, vanduo, akmuo, medis), išskyrus orą. Galbūt tai leistų spėti, kad orinėms dievybėms kraujo auka nėra būdinga (tai paremia A. J. Greimo mintį, kad oro dievybės neturi joms skirtų aukojimo vietų, todėl teonimą *Beaukuris*, pažodžiui „tas, kuris neturi aukuro, altoriaus“, jis sieja su vėjo dievu).

Lyginant baltų nuliejimus su graikų ir kitose kultūrose praktikuotais ritualais, galima įsitikinti, kad baltų naudoti libacijos būdai turi tipologinių paralelių ir indoeuropiečių, ir etniniu bei arealiniu požiūriu negiminingų kultūrų religinėse praktikose. Lyginamasis kontekstas atskleidžia baltų ritualinės praktikos archajiškumą (pvz., iki XX a. pradžios praktikuotas nuliejimo ant žemės būdas pabrėžia rodomą religinę pagarbą žemės dievybėms ir mirusiesiems; tokio dėmesio nėra religijose, kuriose dangaus dievybės ima dominuoti žemės dievybių atžvilgiu). Platus nuliejimo būdų ir vietų bei substancijų spektras pabrėžia baltų religijos politeistinės sistemos pusiausvyrą ir religinių praktikų sistemiškumą.

HEALER, WELFARE AND 'LIMITED GOOD' IN ORTHODOX FINNISH BORDER KARELIA IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY

TEUVO LAITILA

Abstract

The article introduces to readers the activities of healers among the Finnish Orthodox people of Border Karelia (located on the northern shores of Lake Ladoga). The period discussed here focuses on the two decades between the First and the Second World War.

The activities of healers consisted of finding and explaining a problem (usually the cause of an illness), and finding a solution.

In Border Karelia, the most common explanations for an illness were that it had come from water, a forest or a graveyard. It was believed that all three were controlled by spirits, which the ill person had somehow offended, or, occasionally, which had been set on the ill person by somebody malicious. In both cases, the ill person's share of limited good had diminished, and had to be enhanced. In the first case, the spirit(s) had to be conciliated. In the latter case, a counter-charm was needed.

Key words: Karelia, healers, illness, popular religion.

Introduction

Border Karelia is an area on the north and northwest shore of Lake Ladoga. For at least the last three thousand years, it has been inhabited by Finnic peoples. Their neighbours, the Slavs, arrived in the latter part of the first millennium CE. The Finnic and Slavic peoples evidently did not mix much, but a mutual exchange of cultural features was common, particularly from the Slavs to the Finnic peoples (Kalima 1952). Borrowings can be seen, for example, in religion, both in its pre-Christian and its Orthodox Christian forms.

Politically, Border Karelia was for a long time a conglomerate of clans which, when menaced by an enemy, formed alliances either with each other or with outsiders, above all with Slavs, but who otherwise acted independently. In the early 11th and 12th centuries, the Slavs and the Swedes started to expand into Border Karelia and to tax its people. Until the early 17th century, the area was in the Slavic sphere. In the early 18th century, after a century of Swedish rule, it was annexed by Russia. From the Russian revolution and Finnish independence in 1917, and until the end of the Second World War, it was a part of Finland. At that time, a substantial majority of the inhabitants were Orthodox. The rest were Lutherans. Most Border Karelians lived in the countryside. There existed no real cities in the area in the period under review. In what follows, I will focus on maintaining and regaining welfare in the Orthodox Border Karelian countryside during the late 19th and early 20th century.

By welfare, I mean 'being healthy'. To be healthy, in turn, does not mean merely personal well-being. In traditional Border Karelian rural society, it meant general prosperity, such as the success of one's family and relatives, or success in farming, rearing cattle or hunting. Briefly, welfare implied a set or a system of depending relations between humans, animals and 'supernatural powers'. In Border Karelia, the latter were regarded as regulating the success or failure of economic efforts, as well as personal health and prosperity, and, depending on the situation, were referred to and acted upon as (Orthodox) Christian saints or 'pagan' spirits, or both (Haavio 1959).

Societal relations, in turn, can be conceived of as predominantly open (emphasising exchange and interaction with other societies) or closed (economically, socially and spiritually self-supporting). Traditional rural societies have been represented as closed, rather than open (Foster 1965; Stark 2005). According to the US anthropologist George Foster's view, though admittedly old (1965), people in closed societies tended to explain welfare in terms of a cognitive model which he labelled as a 'limited good' view. According to this, the amount of welfare within a society is finite and uncertain, and one feels always in danger of losing it or having too little of it. This leads, in Foster's view, to intra-societal quarrels, and one always has to be prepared to struggle in order to secure a share of the good (Foster 1965, p.296). Moreover, people have to constantly guard the distribution of good (or welfare), and if someone seems to flourish, s/he is suspected of unfairly tapping the good of others. Respectively, if

someone's luck fails, it is assumed that somebody else has abrogated it by dubious means. Foster argued that limited good is a vicious circle, within which there is nothing (or very little) one could do in order to increase one's share in welfare, except at the expense of others (Foster 1965, pp.297, 301).

In what follows, I reconsider Foster's argument[1] about the limited good view, and the possibility to increase welfare in a closed society, by using three Border Karelian examples. Two of them deal with healing an illness and a lack of physical attraction, that is, bodily welfare. The third is about finding lost cattle, or economic welfare. In all these cases, a specialist (whom I call a healer) is used to improve the situation. In his article, Foster focused on the economic dimension of limited good, and referred to healing only in passing, when stating (1965, p.299), that 'health is a "good" that exists in limited quantities'. I take this to mean that, for him, health, too, was a 'thing' similar to economic resources, for which, in Foster's view, one was constantly struggling.

Healer and healing in Border Karelia

It seems that in pre-modern Orthodox Border Karelia, practically everyone was somehow familiar with certain ways of treating illnesses and other troubles. However, not everyone had the skill to treat a wide variety of cases, or to do so with success, because this required a particular ability to negotiate with, and in some cases to be possessed by, the 'powers' that were considered responsible for the illness or trouble (Piela 1989; Stark-Arola 1998).

There is no detailed documentation on the number of skilled healers, or on the scope of their activities in Border Karelia from any period of time; but we may suppose that they were quite common. Some of them maintained their status even after the gradual modernisation of local culture (economic changes, state-provided education, the increase in social mobility, the medical treatment of illnesses, and so on) questioned the social, economic and ideological basis of local, indigenous rituals and beliefs since the late 19th century. During this transition, Karelian peasants kept resorting to persons renowned for their skills in healing, either right from the beginning or as their last hope, after noticing that medically trained doctors, who were rare in Orthodox Border Karelia until about the eve of the Second World War, could not help them (Genetz 1870, pp.92-96; Tenhunen 2006, p.91).

[1] Related views have been presented, among others, by Stark (2005) and Vuorela (1960).

Skilled pre-modern Karelian healers seem to have been both men and women, although for a long time men evidently predominated. Most health troubles were treated indiscriminately by healers of each sex, but there were some exceptions, one of which (relating to a lack of power to attract) is discussed below. As for the other welfare problems, roughly speaking, healers looked after the prosperity of activities associated with their respective sex: male healers looked after hunting and fishing, for example, and female ones looked after cattle rearing. However, there were exceptions. Modernisation changed more quickly and more forcefully the position of Border Karelian men than that of women. With modernisation, men became more and more a part of 'unlimited' systems of exchange with outside societies, and started to resort to other than local resources for their material well-being. Therefore, roughly at the beginning of the 20th century, the number of women among Border Karelian healers started to increase, whereas the variety of cases they treated remained limited to healing illnesses and dealing with matters related to activities carried out by women.

The main reason for illness continuing to be treated as part of the healers' field of activity seems to have been the local people's preference for a traditional reason for the causes of an illness over the medical understanding put forward by outsiders, such as doctors and government officers. The traditional reasoning was that if someone fell ill, a (personified) force from water, the forests, or death or dead people had infected him or her. Alternatively, one could fall ill if a person with wicked intentions had cast the evil eye on him or her (Stark 2002, pp.77-110). Such a rendering was both easier to comprehend and gave more options to treat the problem than a precise medical rationalisation coupled with the use of only one or two remedies. Therefore, local healers were seen as being more competent than medical doctors. The former said they could negotiate with or discuss the cause of the illness that the patient had, whereas the latter only prescribed medicine, which either helped or did not, but did not establish any societal contact with the illness. In other words, local rendering integrated the illness into the society and the tradition familiar to the patient, whereas the medical explanation connected it with the foreign (that is, outside, unknown, and hence, perhaps, menacing) world of germs, bacteria, and so on. Moreover, local healers could offer help even in cases which medical doctors ruled as being outside their sphere of authority, such as love potions or finding cattle lost in a forest (Nenonen, Rajamo 1955, p.78).

Let us start with the latter. The episode discussed here took place in the 1930s in the parish of Suistamo, northeast of Lake Ladoga, where the mistress of

the house of Kuljukka asked a local 'medicine-man', Kröpin Prokko, to assist her in finding some cows that were lost in the forest where they usually grazed. According to the local idea, the cattle were not lost, but were hidden by the forest (in Finnish *metsän peitossa*, literally 'blotted out by the forest'), that is, the spirit of the forest (in Finnish *haltija*) had become angry, and supposedly seized the cattle (Holmberg 1923). The story does not say whether the forest was just airing its opinion, was consciously malevolent, or was insulted by some member of Kuljukka's household.

Prokko's actions suggest the former suppositions. He took three strings of different colours from the mistress, and proceeded along a path leading to the grazing. Near the pasture, he used the strings to tie two alders[2] down from their tops to make an arch over the path. Then he picked up a small stone and put it on a larger one right by the path, saying: 'Here is a hernia, carry it if you cannot find the cows.' Here, the alders stand for the spirit of the forest, which was metaphorically 'bound' by the threat that if it did not release the cattle which it was believed to be hiding it would suffer from a hernia. The informant telling the story added that if the cows were not found within three days, the alders were to be unbound. In this case, they were found the next day (TSE, p.29). The deadline of three days is common, but not the only way in Karelia. The alternative would have been to leave the forest tied until the cattle were found. The habit of tying itself was widely known in eastern Finland, and on the Russian side of the border (Holmberg 1923, pp.30-41).

Applying Foster's model, we may reason that the forest (or the pasture it provided) was the foundation of the prosperity of the Kuljukka cattle. The local view was that, if treated correctly, the forest should share the pasture with the villagers. In this case, the forest refused to cooperate (or so the situation was understood) for some wanton or arbitrary reasons. Nevertheless, in such a case, the owner of the cattle was not helpless. She was ready to fight back, and could use various means to force the forest on to the defensive. Binding the forest was one of them. However, by saying that it was effective merely for three days, the informant suggested that the human ability to affect the situation was limited.

My second case is about illnesses believed to be caused by the forest. In Finnish, these kinds of afflictions were called *metsännenä* or *metsän viha*. The former literally means 'the nose of the forest', and the latter 'the anger of the forest'. The notion was most typical of the area going from southern Olonets through Border Karelia to the present Finnish northern Karelia and the eastern Finnish province of Savo (Åstedt 1960, p.318). The terms 'nose' and 'anger' indicate simultaneously an illness, of which the origin is unknown or vague, and a spirit or power (in Finnish *väki*, literally 'folks', but also an authority embedded in one's person or available to him or her) of a particular place, whom someone has offended by inappropriate behaviour or talk. The spirit has therefore, so it was believed, become angry and afflicted the offender with an illness, often some sort of skin disease or eye disease (Manninen 1922, pp.69-70; Åstedt 1960, pp.308-312). To recover, the sick person had to apologise. The form of the apology depended on the offence, and to find the correct way to apologise, they had to contact a healer (Stark 2002, pp.147-154). This particular case is from the 1860s, but it is typical of later times as well.

Paraskeva, a four-year-old girl from the parish of Suistamo, suffered from ailing eyes (the trouble is not specified exactly). An elderly local widow[3] diagnosed the illness as *metsännenä*, which means, although the story does not mention it, that probably the girl had been in the forest and had been frightened by something, a common cause of illness in Lithuanian tradition also (Mansikka 1929, p.31), or she had touched a wild animal, dead or alive.[4]

The widow took Paraskeva to the forest, probably to the place where the disease was supposed to have been transmitted, and buried in the moss a 'gift', a small roll of cloth containing a tiny portion of quicksilver,[5] saying three times: 'It might be our fault or your wrongdoing, forgive us.'[6] This was rather a common expression when soothing an angry spirit, although it was usually preceded with a greeting addressed to the forest spirits. Then, she and Paraskeva returned home (TSE, pp.66-67; Wartiainen 1935, p.75).

The report does not say whether Paraskeva actually recovered or not. However, that is not the point. The point is that the illness was presented as an interruption in the correct relations between human beings and the forest, just as in the previous case of the cattle. If we

[2] In Karelian the word for 'alder' means both a species of tree and blood. Alternatively, the tree could be a birch (Holmberg 1923, p.34). In general, the alder was an ambivalent tree considered both able to expel evil forces (Paulaharju 1995, p.219) and having been made by the devil.

[3] She was evidently regarded as an expert in healing, although the story does not indicate this.

[4] These are the most common causes of *metsännenä* illnesses in Finnish tradition (Åstedt 1960, pp.309-310).

[5] Quicksilver was one of the ingredients by which new-born babies in Orthodox Border Karelia were 'insured' against evil spirits (Vilkuna 1959, p.20).

[6] The place where the spirit was apologised to was not usually chosen at random, but villages had particular places for it (Wartiainen 1935, pp.70-71). In Paraskeva's case, it is impossible to be sure.

reconsider this in societal terms, my argument is that it really makes a difference how one behaves within a closed society. If one transgresses the limits of proper behaviour, one shatters the (supposed) balance in traditionally accepted correct relations, and endangers the societal welfare maintained by socially correct and fitting behaviour. Seen from this point of view, the illness was the forest's way of forcing the villagers not to forget themselves.

In Paraskeva's case, and in Orthodox Border Karelia in general, the process of falling ill and getting better was conceptualised in human, and often emotional, terms: the forest could be offended, become angry, and had to be apologised to. In other words, illness and recovery were treated in the same way as human relations. This, I presume, indicates that both were considered to be highly important: human welfare depended as much on human-human as on human-forest relations. Here, the Border Karelian (and eastern Finnish) way of diagnosing and healing differed from the western Finnish one, in which the healer conceptualised the illness and its (argued) causes in a less personified way (Piela 1989, p.82).

The third case is about a love potion. Strictly speaking, wooing someone or trying to win his or her affection is not an illness, although we can figuratively call a person 'lovesick'. Relationships and love affairs are an essential part of the human condition and prosperity, and, not least, the reproduction of the family line and local society. Therefore, although problems with them are usually not treated by medical doctors, they play an important part in the healing activities of a closed society.

A well-known Border Karelian lady of the early 20th century, Matjoi Plattonen (1842–1928), herself a pious Orthodox believer from the parish of Suistamo, when interviewed about folk traditions in the 1920s, said how when it seemed that a girl would have no suitors, she advised the girl to make a bath whisk of nine sorts of flowers and to warm a bath (sauna). Then she took the girl with her to the bath, during which she recited a love charm saying (in prose translation): 'Rise o love [in Finnish *lempi*, actually 'amorousness'] to stream, [rise o] honour to be heard over six denominations, over seven parishes, [rise] on the loins of this baby, on the heights of this maiden. Virgin Mary,[7] our Mother, our maiden saint, come and help me to assist this baby …' After the bath, the bath whisk was placed on the top of a stick, which then was asked to bend towards the direction from which the suitors would come (Tenhunen 2006, pp.91-92). Evidently, during the bath, the bath whisk was considered somehow to have contracted the power of *lempi*, dormant in the girl, and spread it beyond the village borders. Similar bathing and charming often predated occasions in which girls had the opportunity to meet young men (for example, at village feasts) (Stark-Arola 1998, p.121).

Matjoi's case contains several interesting details. First, she summoned a 'power', *lempi*, to help the girl. The concept of *lempi* indicates the female's personal attractiveness, her 'share' in love, but also her sexual reputation (Piela 1989, p.97; 1990, p.215), which the girl was diagnosed not to manifest (and the lack of *lempi* was the reason why the suitors did not come). The healing was meant to reinvigorate the girl's power of *lempi*, to make it reappear. And in the same way as every illness had to be treated separately, *lempi* had to be summoned anew in each particular case.

At a general level, Matjoi's actions are an example of the female way of increasing the power of love within a particular area (a closed society), and not so much of redistributing its amount among the members of a given area, as Foster's view would suggest. It cannot be supported even if we add to the above story the popular Karelian notion, not mentioned in the source quoted, that the lack of *lempi* was seen as being caused by an envious person (who could be another villager or an outsider) (Piela 1989, p.98; 1990, p.215). If we take this into account, we still cannot say that Matjoi's restoration of the girl's love power meant a deduction from someone else's power. Rather, it was, from this perspective, the return of the evil intention (the envy) back to its 'sender', much in the same way as in the case mentioned above of tying the forest.

Further, Matjoi's charm indicates that in popular belief, elements of Orthodoxy, the local official or institutional religion, mixed freely with non-official or folk views. That is, she used various means to restore, increase or strengthen the girl's welfare.

Thirdly, Matjoi's charm (a variation of some commonly known verses) contains explicit sexual connotations (the loins[8]), suggesting that in the local perception, health, fertility and reproduction belonged together. Lastly, Matjoi shows, like the cases mentioned above, that in her view, human destiny was not predetermined, but could be changed. The overall tune of Matjoi's love ceremony is rather optimistic: after the ritual, suitors will come, because, I presume, their coming is both socially expected and good for societal relations.

Within the framework of limited good, this kind of optimism is only possible if someone else's *lempi* diminishes, causing her to fail to find suitors. However,

[7] Summoning the Virgin Mary occurs, but it is not common in Karelian love incantations (Piela 1990; Stark-Arola 1998).

[8] Other versions often use more explicit sexual terminology.

Matjoi does not suggest anything like this. On the contrary, she states that the girl's *lempi* will be famous in six denominations and seven parishes.[9] Thus, nobody's *lempi* will diminish, but different people will gain something by Matjoi's 'raising' of the love power of this particular girl.

The healer's control of powers (spirits) distributing welfare, but also being able to take it back, was evidently a major reason why healers were regarded not only as restorers but also as destroyers of health. Agnes Viisanen, a daughter of the son of the brother of Mäki-buabo, a healer from Suistamo who died in 1944, argued that Mäki-buabo could not only restore health, she also knew how to hide a cow or cattle. They were found only after their owner gave Mäki-buabo something as a gift. According to Viisanen:

such episodes were common. If Buabo became angry with someone, she could cast a spell and summon a bear to that person's farmyard. Only a few dared to drink her coffee, because they suspected she had added something to it. Once at a wedding, she make the bride such a concoction that another girl, who tasted it by accident, became mentally ill and was in hospital for the rest of her life (MKE, p.73).

I do not know how common this kind of malefaction was for other healers in early 20th-century Border Karelia. However, it was commonplace in Russia in earlier times (Warner 2002, p.63). Nevertheless, Mäki-buabo was not necessarily a malevolent person. It could be that by 'getting angry' she aimed at strengthening her societal position. As Laura Stark has suggested in another context (2005, pp.86-87), respect and awe by others could give the healer more autonomy in local relations, and thus make her (or him) more independent. Foster would perhaps say that Mäki-buabo struggled over limited authority within her society.

To return to the case of *lempi*, according to the view of limited good, an increase in the welfare or happiness of a girl who is just about to marry would require that someone else loses her love power. From this perspective, the girl could never be sure of her welfare, and had therefore to engage in constant negotiations and struggles with forces that are supposed to distribute *lempi*, and also with other people who are supposedly attempting to seize her power in love. But speaking about love and health as something limited (in the same way as, say, the harvest or catch or quarry), in my opinion, does not make much sense. Unlike material goods, *lempi* and apologising are unlimited. They cannot be cultivated like, say, grain. The human's share of them can differ and fluctuate, and therefore give rise to quarrels; but they do not run dry, because they are continually generated, as in the above cases, by the might of the power of the word and symbols to reestablish correct societal relations and social order.

Conclusions

The concept of limited good presupposes the notion that the quantity of welfare, including health, is restricted and can be increased only at the expense of another. In the field of the economy, the other usually meant the human neighbour. This could be so in the case of health or cattle as well, but in two of the above cases it was not. Contrary to the limited good view, here the increase in good (finding cattle, getting well) did not happen at the expense of, but in relation and in connection with, the other. Thus, regaining one's welfare did not diminish that of one's co-villagers (Foster 1965, pp.306-307), but improved it vis-à-vis the non-human other (the forest, the *nenä*). The third case (the manifest lack of love power) implies a co-villager's or a stranger's malevolence as the cause of the problem; but welfare (the reinvigoration of the power of *lempi*) was regained by activating the girl's own dormant power of *lempi*, rather than by seizing that of someone else.

Although my three episodes are only a tiny selection of different types of healing actions, I see Foster's model as needing some rethinking in cases where societal relations are not based merely on rational choices, but where emotions, attitudes and other 'irrational' elements are involved. Good and luck may be limited in the sense that not all have them, so there may be arguments and dust-ups. However, emotions and actions related to them (threatening an unfair spirit, apologising, reinvigorating the power of *lempi*) are unlimited; they can be resorted to over and over again. I do not claim that economic aspects, emphasised by Foster, are untouched by emotions. I only argue that emotions cannot be deduced to economic struggles and disputes.

Therefore, welfare in rural societal relations should not be seen merely from a rational and material perspective, but as consisting of diverse, intertwined and overlapping approaches to solving various problems in local life. In my opinion, Foster's perspective makes most sense in cases in which a person accuses a neighbour of 'stealing' his or her luck in farming or hunting (Stark 2005, pp.92-97). In such cases, we certainly have a real struggle over limited resources (land, game). However, if the trouble is not about material competition with a

[9] By denomination, Matjoi evidently meant parishes, not different confessions. In Finnish, she used the words *kirkkokunta* ('denomination') and *seurakunta* ('parish'), which rhyme nicely. I am quite sure that the rhyme, not the exact meaning of the words, is what matters here.

neighbour but is seen in relation to (local) spirits, as in the case of Paraskeva and the mistress of Kuljukka, we no longer have a struggle over limited good, but a negotiation about fair or righteous or proper behaviour on the part of, or towards, the spirits. In such cases, the issue is not about fighting over resources, but about restoring or re-creating proper relations.

Taking this into account, I would restate Foster's proposition that a major driving force behind the (peasant) view of limited good is the human desire to maximise one's own (or, what amounts to the same, to minimise the other's) security. The statement itself is, of course, a commonplace. What I think needs further clarification is, first, what is considered to endanger security, and, second, how the danger is averted.

In two of the cases discussed above, the danger comes from outside (the forest, although one could, of course, argue that the forest is a metaphor for a malevolent co-villager), and is somehow, if only vaguely, personified, having a will (to seize cattle) or feelings (in being angry). In the third case, the danger may be caused by someone who (for some unspecified reason) envies the girl, thus affecting her with a trouble comparable to that caused by a *nenä* (spirit), but the data does not support this. To sum up, in the cases of the cattle and Paraskeva, danger is presented as the emotion of a malevolent being. In Matjoi's case, the danger comes from within, from the girl's own inability to use her power.

It may well be that in all three cases the main characters (the owner of the cattle, Paraskeva, and the unnamed girl) wanted to maximise their share of good; thus far, Foster's model may work. But it does not actually, in my view, explain the attitudes behind the 'will' to maximise security. In the cases related to the forest, the healer did not merely pursue his or her vested interest, or that of the main characters, the mistress of Kuljukka and Paraskeva, but also aimed for a reconciliation with the forest. That is, he or she tried to maximise the benefit to both parties. The Kuljukka woman benefitted by getting back her cattle and by forcing the forest to behave itself, that is, fairly. Paraskeva, whether or not her eyes improved, evidently benefitted emotionally by being apologisedto, and, I suppose, so did *nenä*, the cause of her illness. The case of the unnamed girl is more obscure, but it seems that at least the healer aspired not to harm anyone, except, perhaps, the implied envying person. On the contrary, she aimed at waking up the girl's dormant power for her own benefit. Again, inner feeling, the girl's belief in her own power, was (at least) as important as the rational maximising of limited good.

In all three cases, a specialist (a healer) was recruited to strengthen an affected person by restoring a proper societal-like relation. The means which they used to gain the desired goal were the same: charms and rituals, which outsiders commonly dub as magic. My conclusion is that when proper relations between humans or between humans and non-humans were regarded to waver in Orthodox Border Karelia (or when, in Foster's terms, a struggle over limited good took place), local people did not just let things happen, but had at their disposal various corrective means, mastered by healers, by which they could affect the course of events. Neither did people simply quarrel or pursue their own interests. They were also willing to cooperate, not only for their own benefit but also for those they needed, or were (or felt to be) dependent on in everyday life, be they humans or spirits.

This mutual aid (to borrow Kropotkin's term), or constant re-creation of correct (from the villagers' view) societal relations, was not disinterested, because each party was expected to benefit from it. But it was not a struggle. Rather, it was an operation aiming at restoring a functioning society and social order, endangered by a sudden burst of malevolence, an offence, or lack of power. Therefore, a closed society was not only a world where the inhabitants were forced to struggle over (limited) resources, as Foster seems to imply. It was also a world where they took care of ways to (temporarily) eliminate causes of struggles by restoring everything to its proper place. In this world, healers had an important role.

Abbreviations

MKE – A. KALKKINEN, ed. *Muistoissa kylät elävät: Suistamon Perinneseuran keräämiä muistikuvia ja tarinoita Suistamon kylistä ja niiden asukkaista*. Helsinki: Suistamon Perinneseura r.y., 1993

TSE – A. KALKKINEN, ed. *Tälleh siel elettih: Aleksanteri Saralan tallentamaa muistitietoutta Suistamon Koitosta*. Joensuu: Karjalaisen Kulttuurin Edistämissäätiö, 1987

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Received: 26 April 2011; Revised: 5 May 2011;
Accepted: 16 May 2011.

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GYDYTOJAS, GEROVĖ IR „RIBOTO GĖRIO“ SAMPRATA SUOMIŲ ORTODOKSŲ PARIBIO KARELIJOJE XIX A. PAB. – XX A. PR.

Teuvo Laitila

Santrauka

„Riboto gėrio“ samprata išreiškia idėją, kad gėrio kiekis, įskaitant sveikatą, yra ribotas ir gali būti pagausintas tik kitų sąskaita. Ekonominiu požiūriu „kitas“ dažniausiai reiškė kaimyną. Tas pat gali būti ir su sveikata ar galvijais, tačiau dviem aukščiau aprašytais atvejais tas negalioja. Oponuojant „riboto gėrio“ perspektyvai, čia gerovės pagausinimas (bandos atradimas, pasveikimas) vyko ne kitų sąskaita, o palaikant su jais santykius bei ryšius. Taigi kieno nors gerovės pagausinimas vykdavo ne per kaimynų išteklių mažinimą (plg. Foster 1965, p. 306–307), bet per santykių gerinimą su nežmogiškomis būtybėmis (mišku, *nenä*). Trečiu atveju (akivaizdus meilės jėgos trūkumas) tikėta, kad problemą sukelia kaimynas ar piktavalis prašalaitis, bet gėris (*lempi* jėgos atgavimas) atkuriamas sužadinant neveikiančią pačios mergaitės *lempi* galią, o ne atimant ją iš ko nors kito.

Straipsnyje, remiantis trimis paribio Karelijos pavyzdžiais, persvarstoma Fosterio idėja apie uždaroje bendruomenėje gyvavusią riboto gėrio ir galimybės jį padidinti sampratą. Dviejuose pavyzdžiuose atitinkamai pasakojama apie gydymą ir ligą bei fizinio patrauklumo trūkumą, t. y. kūno gerovę. Trečiame pavyzdyje kalbama apie pasiklydusios bandos suradimą, arba apie ekonominę gerovę. Visais atvejais situaciją pagerindavo specialistas (kurį aš vadinu gydytoju). Fosteris straipsnyje sutelkė dėmesį į ekonominį „riboto gėrio“ aspektą, o apie gydymą užsiminė tik teigdamas, kad sveikata yra „riboto kiekio gėris“ (1965: p. 299). Dėmesį į tai atkreipiu todėl, kad sveikata, dėl kurios, Fosterio nuomone, vyko nuolatinė kova, yra artimas ekonominiams ištekliams dalykas.

Net jei šie trys epizodai tėra tik mažytis pasirinkimas iš gydymo veiksmų įvairovės, manau, kad Fosterio modelį reikia permąstyti tais atvejais, kai socialiniai ryšiai yra grindžiami ne tik racionaliu pasirinkimu, bet ir kai figūruoja emocijos, požiūriai ir kiti „iracionalūs“ elementai.

Gerovė ir sėkmė yra ribotos dėl to, kad ne visi mes jų turime, ir todėl gali kilti ginčų bei kivirčų. Tačiau emocijos ir su jomis susiję veiksmai (piktosios dvasios

bauginimai, atsiprašymas, *lempi* galios sužadinimas) yra riboti; jie gali būti nuolat persidalijami. Aš netvirtinu, kad Fosterio išryškinti ekonominiai aspektai nėra palytėti emocijų. Aš tik įrodinėju, kad emocijos negali lemti ekonominio varžymosi ir konfliktų.

Taigi gerovė kaimo bendruomenės santykiuose turi būti vertinama ne tik iš racionalumo ir materialinės perspektyvos, bet ir kaip susidedanti iš skirtingų, susipinančių požiūrių, sprendžiant įvairias socialinio gyvenimo problemas. Mano nuomone, Fosterio požiūris labiausiai akcentuoja tuos atvejus, kai asmuo apkaltina kaimyną vagiant jo/jos ūkininkavimo ar medžioklės sėkmę (plg. Stark 2005: 92–97).

Tokiais atvejais įžvelgiama reali konkurencija dėl ribotų išteklių (žemės, laimikio). Tačiau jei problema kyla ne varžantis su kaimynu dėl materialių gėrybių, o dėl santykių su dvasiomis (vietinėmis), kaip minėtais Paraskeva ir Kuljukka šeimininkės atvejais, mes susiduriame jau nebe su riboto gėrio atveju, o su derybomis dėl gero, teisingo ar deramo dvasių ar žmonių elgesio. Šiais atvejais esmė yra ne kova dėl išteklių, o tinkamų santykių susigrąžinimas ar atkūrimas.

Turėdamas tai omenyje, aš performuluoju Fosterio idėją, kad pagrindinė „riboto gėrio“ įvaizdžio (valstiečių) varomoji jėga yra žmogaus noras užsitikrinti didžiausią saugumą (kitais žodžiais tariant, sumažinti kitų saugumą). Žinoma, šis teiginys pats savaime nėra naujas. Nuodugniau paaiškinti pirmiausia reikia tai, kas kelia grėsmę saugumui, ir, antra, kaip yra išvengiama pavojaus.

Dviem aukščiau aptartais atvejais pavojus ateina iš išorės (daugelis turbūt paprieštarautų, kad miškas tėra tik piktavališko kaimyno metafora) ir yra, nors ir neryškiai, personifikuotas, turintis norų (pagrobti bandą) ar jausmų (supykdytas). Trečiu atveju pavojų gali sukelti kažkas, kas (dėl neaiškių priežasčių) pavydi merginai, taip pakenkdamas jai panašiai kaip nenä (dvasia), nors faktai to ir nerodo. Apibendrindami bandos ir Paraskeva atvejus, galime pažymėti, kad pavojus pasireiškia kaip piktavalės būtybės emocija. Matjoi atveju pavojus kyla iš vidaus dėl merginos negebėjimo pasinaudoti savo galia.

Gali būti, kad visais trim atvejais pagrindiniai veikėjai (bandos savininkas, Paraskeva ir neįvardyta mergina) norėjo pagausinti savo gėrio dalį, kas peržengia Fosterio modelio ribas. Mano nuomone, tai nepaaiškina požiūrio į „norą“ sustiprinti savo saugumą. Atvejais, susijusiais su mišku, ar Kuljukka ir Paraskeva šeimininkių veikloje, gydytoja(-s) ne tik paprasčiausiai siekia savo teisėtų interesų, bet ir nori susitaikyti su mišku. Tai reiškia, kad ji(-s) mėgino sustiprinti abi sferas. Kuljukka moteris pagelbėjo, sugrąžindama bandą ir įtikindama mišką pasielgti kitaip, t. y. sąžiningai. Paraskeva, nepaisydama, ar akys pasveiko, neabejotinai darė įtaką emociškai – atsiprašinėdama ir, mano nuomone, taip darė dėl savo ligos priežasties – *nenä*. Neįvardytos merginos atvejis yra gana neaiškus, tačiau panašu, kad gydytoja greičiausiai nesiekė niekam pakenkti, išskyrus numanomą pavydintį asmenį. Priešingai, ji siekė sužadinti pačioje merginoje slypinčią neveiksnią jėgą. Vėlgi vidinis jausmas, mergaitės tikėjimas savo vidine galia buvo (mažiausiai) tiek svarbus, kiek ir racionalus riboto gėrio pagausinimas.

Visais trim atvejais pakenktam asmeniui pagelbėti pakviestas specialistas (gydytojas) atkurdavo deramus socialinius santykius. Trokštamam tikslui pasiekti jie naudojo panašias priemones: užkalbėjimus ir ritualus, kuriuos pašaliečiai įvardijo kaip magiją. Darau išvadą, kad kai ortodoksų paribio Karelijoje derami santykiai tarp žmonių ir ne žmonių susilpnėdavo (ar kai, Fosterio žodžiais tariant, vykdavo varžymasis dėl riboto gėrio), vietiniai žmonės ne tik pasyviai šį procesą stebėdavo, bet ir turėjo būdų, vadovaujami gydytojų, jį koreguoti. Tačiau žmonės nesikivirčydavo ar nesiekdavo savų interesų. Jie norėdavo bendradarbiauti ne tik dėl asmeninės naudos, bet ir dėl tų, kuriems jų reikėjo ar nuo kurių jie priklausė kasdieniame gyvenime, nesvarbu, ar tai būtų žmogus, ar dvasia.

Ši abipusė pagalba (pasiskolinus Kropotkino terminą) ar nuolatinis deramų socialinių santykių atkūrimas (kaimo žmonių požiūriu) neprarado aktualumo, nes kiekviena pusė tikėjosi naudos. Bet tai nebuvo kova. Priešingai, tai buvo veiksmas, siekiant atkurti veikiančią visuomeninę ir socialinę tvarką, kuriai grėsmę sukėlė staigus blogio, skriaudos prasiveržimas ar galios trūkumas. Taigi uždara bendruomenė buvo ne tik pasaulis, kurio gyventojai buvo verčiami kovoti dėl (ribotų) išteklių, kaip teigė Fosteris. Tai buvo ir pasaulis, kuriame žmonės, atstatydami viską į deramas vietas, praktikavo konkurencijos priežasčių šalinimo būdus. Šiame pasaulio kūrimo procese gydytojai atliko svarbų vaidmenį.

Vertė Jūratė Šlekonytė

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

EILA STEPANOVA

Abstract

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

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

I

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

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

Aims and objectives

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

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

Word power

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

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

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

* **The above article is published here without prior review by our language editor.**

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

Finnic lament traditions

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

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

(1)

Valkualkua vualimaiseni valtajouččenuisien valkevuisikse valkeih šyntysih, jotta valkeih luatusih valkeih šyntysih vaštualtais valkiet omakuntaset.

Kukkahien kummalintusien kujillisikse kuvašvetysillä kujin luajitelkua ta kuklasien kuvallisiksi työ kujin ašetelkua kuvuamaistani kulu šyntysih. Häntä kun kukkahih luatusih kulu šyntysih kujin ašeteltais.

Ihaloijen ilmajouččenuisien innollisikse innon armaš itvomaiseni innon luajitelkua ihaloih šyntysih ihaloilla enovetysillä.

Tulkua valkeista šyntysistä valmistelomah vaškivajosuisie, kuita myöten valkeih šyntysih vallan kualelou vallan pikkaraini vualimaiseni.

Ettäkö vois tuuvehista šyntysistä, tunnon armahat tuuvehet omakuntaseni, tulituohukšuisie tunnon luajitella, hiän niitä myöte tiän turvasih tunnon kualelis tuuvehih šyntysih tuuvittamaiseni?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Lithuanian laments

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

(2)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Pulk po kojelių mano motinėlei gimdytojėlei, mano tėveliui augintojėliui.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

History of the research

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

II

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

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

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

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

Stylistic and poetic features

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

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

(3)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(4)

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

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

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

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

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

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

Lithuanian:

(5)

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

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

Karelian:

(6)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Metaphoric (formulaic) language

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

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

Conceptions and images of death

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Funeral rituals and motifs

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

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

Preparations for the journey

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

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

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

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

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

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

(7)

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

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

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

(8)

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

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

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

The burial and journey

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

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

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

Lithuanian

(9)

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

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

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

(10)

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

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

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

Memorial feasts

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

Laments as communication

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

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

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

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

III
The mythic world of laments

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

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

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

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

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

Conclusion

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

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

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

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

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Received: 26 April 2011; Revised: 6 May 2011;
Accepted: 16 May 2011.

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

EILA STEPANOVA

Santrauka

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Vertė Lina Būgienė

THE LATVIAN MYTHOLOGICAL SPACE IN SCHOLARLY TIME

TOMS ĶENCIS

Abstract

Mythological space is a scholarly construct, related to various disciplines and representing different research agendas, theoretical standpoints and institutional affiliations. As such, it is illustrated in this article by three case studies relating to reconstructions of the Latvian mythological space. The work of Ludvigs Adamovičs represents the conceptualisation and description of the mythological space in interwar period studies of ancient religion. His views are contested and elaborated by Haralds Biezais in the postwar period within the émigré academic environment. Finally, studies of mythological space by Janīna Kursīte represent the most recent scholarly production in this direction.

Key words: Latvian mythology, intellectual history, mythological space, scholarly time, Ludvigs Adamovičs, Haralds Biezais, Janīna Kursīte.

Introduction

This article addresses the construction of a particular object of scholarly research, Latvian mythological space. As such, it will fulfil two tasks: firstly, it will describe and analyse particular models of mythological space created during the development of Latvian folkloristics and studies of religion; and secondly, it will provide a critical insight into the scholarly environments where these models were created and discussed, thus exploring possibilities for reciprocal links between the creation of the research object and the research results. Mythological research has always blurred disciplinary boundaries, overlapping the borders of fields such as folkloristics, the study of religion, linguistics and history. Therefore, the history of mythology as a scholarly construct requires a framework to map mutual relations of disciplines, theoretical schools, institutions and scholars involved in each particular study of myths. As there are no records of an explicit theory of mythological world structure created by ancient Latvians themselves, this article will be a reconstruction of the construct. The constructed nature of the research object raises questions as to its epistemological basis, as well as the purposes of its emergence. As such, from a broader perspective, it could be related to Michel Foucault's analysis of relations between power and knowledge production, and mechanisms of how the so-called 'human-sciences' invent, construct or discover their objects of study (Kuutma 2006, p.18; Foucault 1980). An appropriate, one could say deconstructive, analysis has already been applied to mythology-related fields of studies: for example, to the politics of religious studies (Junginger 2008), the ideological determination of history as a scholarly practice (Nisbet 1999; Hroch 1999), the role of folkloristics in building the national consciousness (Anttonen 2005; Bendix 1997), and the political involvement of anthropological and ethnographical studies (Kuutma 2006; Ó'Giolláin 2000). However, the construction of mythology has mostly been overlooked, perhaps due to its specific location between disciplines, and its tendency to construct a self-contained realm of knowledge.

'In this investigation it will be found that there are two pure forms of sensible intuition as principles of a priori cognition, namely space and time, with the assessment of which we will now be concerned.' These are the opening words of *Critique of Pure Reason* by Immanuel Kant (Kant 1998, p.157). Although from a slightly different perspective, this article will also proceed along similar line. The epistemological turn towards 'pure forms' has also influenced studies of mythology, creating an impressive variety of works concerned with the reconstruction of mythical space and time from the most abstract level, analysing mythical consciousness, another scholarly construct of the 20th century, to studies of world structure in mythologies of certain nations or other groups. A particular worldview created by mythical consciousness and rendered through mythical perception has been described by Ernst Cassirer (Cassirer 1965; 1967), also elaborating on the notion of mythical space within it characterised by various determinations according to the nature of this form of consciousness. Cassirer shares with Mircea Eliade the concept of sacrality. Juxtaposed against a profane or common dimension, sacrality becomes the main characteristic of the mythological space (Eliade 1996; 1999) and of the mythological world in general. The functionality of the sacral zones in space has been described by Arnold van Gennap (1960) in his influ-

ential theory on rites of passage. Serious attention to space has also been paid within the theory of structuralism (Meletinskij 1973; Douglas 1996; Levi-Strauss 1996) through analyses of different levels of mythical narratives. An important field of reference regarding the subject matter is also to be found in the studies of Indo-European and Proto-Indo-European themes within different disciplines. The benchmark in this field is the theory of tripartite Indo-European ideology developed by Georges Dumézil (1996). His discovery of the omnipresent tripartite functional structure has been elaborated into complicated mythical geographies, as well as criticised and complimented (Lincoln 1986; 1991; Lyle 1982). The ancient Indo-European mythological space has also been analysed by scholars of the Moscow-Tartu School of Semiotics, involving the Latvian language and mythology in comparative analysis (Gamkrelidze, Ivanov 1995). The majority of these approaches reverberate to some extent through constructs of the Latvian mythological space. Still, there are only a few works that deal with the subject explicitly, describing the structure, semantics and strategic dispositions within the mythological space. Mostly, this is effected through notions of *the other world*, *Heaven*, *the underworld*, the hero's journey and the sun's way in the sky. The majority of the works touch upon spatial relationships indirectly, through implicit statements accompanying descriptions of pantheons, mythical events, heroes and other issues.

Time is important in three ways in relation to mythological space. First of all, it is so-called mythological time or special modes of time characteristic of the same form of consciousness (perceptions, narration, depending on the researcher's standing) that shape mythological space. Certain temporal factors have also been described in models of Latvian mythological space (Straubergs 1922; Adamovičs 1937; Kursīte 1999). Secondly, time enters mythological research with attempts to date the age of a phenomenon. To which century should the world-view belong that is extracted from an analysis of folklore materials recorded during the 19th or 20th centuries and secondary sources that are several centuries older? Some researchers who have their own hypothesis of Latvian mythological space have identified a golden age of Latvian mythology during the Bronze Age or Iron Age (Šmits 1926; Švābe 1923); some speak of the Late Iron Age in particular (Adamovičs 1937), or the syncretism of later ages (Adamovičs 1940b). In turn, some use the arrival of Indo-European tribes as a demarcation line that divides two different world orders; whereas others synthesise Indo-European and more ancient world-views together into a kind of unhistorical, one could say mythological, time (Kursīte 1999; Toporov 1986).

Ultimately, time constitutes mythological space as a scholarly time, historical conditions of research. Scholarly time is a diachronic, heterogeneous set of flows that allows the classification and tracking of the different trajectories that research into Latvian mythology has taken. Flows of scholarly time can be parallel; they are characterised by continuities and discontinuities, partial transmission and theoretical dead-ends. This reflects all ideologies, practices, methodologies, personal alignments, and material and institutional preconditions regarding any scholarly research at a particular historical moment. The very concept of mythological space is anchored in its own scholarly time. To reconstruct these conditions of knowledge production, I propose to explore scholarly and popular works, biographies and autobiographies of the scholars involved, and contemporary theories and historical ideologies. Only an ongoing comparison of text and the context of its creation shows why particular sources are chosen for the construction of Latvian mythology, which research goals are set, what kind of research is carried out, and how it is characterised by continuities and discontinuities over longer periods of time. Complementing the research I am doing at the Archives of Latvian Folklore regarding personalities in Latvian folklore, the methodology of this article is similar to the one applied in the biggest recent project of disciplinary history carried out in Estonia (Kuutma, Jaago 2005).

General background and sources of Latvian mythology

Research into Latvian mythology has always been shaped by tension between ethnic, regional, linguistic and political markers. These factors, often far from fully articulated, legitimise one or another definition of the research subject, Latvian mythology.[1] Ethnicity, which is a given fact for 20th-century researchers, was not a historical reality due to the formation of the Latvian nation as late as during the second half of the 19th century. In reconstructions of Latvian mythology, ethnicity is in a way backdated to the tribal society of the Late Iron Age or even earlier (Adamovičs 1937). The tribes that inhabited contemporary Latvia were far from united politically, and their beliefs differed, depending, for example, on Scandinavian influences in the southwest or Slavic ones in the east, or Livonian ones (the Liivi were a tribe of Finno-Ugric origin) in the coastal region (Baltic states 2010). Interestingly, Livonians, who historically inhabited a rather large part of Latvia, are totally excluded from all the major

[1] For more on the background and role of folkloristics in the construction of Latvian national ideology in the 19th century, see Bula 2000.

works on Latvian mythology, and, with a few exceptions, are marginalised as an alien influence on later Latvian mono-ethnic beliefs.

One of the conceptual models in research into Latvian mythology that allows this exclusion is based on comparative linguistics. The Latvian language belongs to the Indo-European family of languages, representing a branch of the Baltic languages (which also includes Latgalian, Lithuanian, Samogitian and several extinct languages, such as Old Prussian, Galindian, Sudovian, Old Curonian, Selonian, and so on) (Baltic languages 2010). It is tempting to assume that cultural similarities are identical to linguistic similarities. Theories on the migration and development of languages also allow for the cultural heritage to be dated back to the times of the hypothetical Proto-Indo-European language, spoken by the Proto-Indo-European community (Šmits 1926). Several mythological research strategies emerge from recognised linguistic affinities. In many ways, a language-based model contradicts regional history. The Baltic States are a geopolitical unity formed by three independent countries, first established after the First World War: Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. While linguistically Latvia is closely related to Lithuania, a common history unites it more closely with Estonia. The Estonian language belongs to the Finno-Ugric family of languages. Contemporary Latvia and Estonia had common inhabitants before the arrival of their Indo-European ancestors (Baltic States 2010), and after the arrival of the Crusaders in the late 12th century they formed one political unity, Livonia, for several centuries. After the schism in Western Christianity, Estonia and most of Latvia became predominantly Protestant regions, while eastern Latvia and Lithuania were predominantly Catholic. Estonia and Livonia were integrated into the Russian Empire in 1710, and joined by Lithuania at the end of the 18th century (Latvia 2010; Baltic States 2010). We should note that: 'The emergence of something Latvian next to Lithuanian, or Estonian alongside these two, was not the straightforward instrumentalisation of a well-demarcated, recognised individual ethnicity, but the result of deliberate (and often contested) acts of demarcation and identification' (Leerssen 2006, p.167).

Mythological research and folklore in general played their role in this process (Bula 2000; Kuutma, Jaago 2005). Radically different regimes of knowledge production duly create different versions of Latvian mythology during the post-Second World War period, as is represented by Soviet Latvian researchers on the one hand, and by exiled Latvian researchers on the other hand. This parallel research results in a problematic fusion during the 1990s, at which time the continuity of research from the interwar period with its agenda is informed by postwar developments in Latvia and abroad, also incorporating the last theoretical trends developed in the Soviet Union. The aforementioned factors also influence preferences for one or another source used in constructions of particular models of Latvian mythology and mythological space.

These reconstructions are mainly based on two groups of sources, historical records (chronicles, church visitation records, and so on) which mention certain cult practices or names of deities, and folklore material that was collected, with a few exceptions, as late as starting from the second half of the 19th century. The collection, editing and publication of the folklore material still continue today. However, all larger bodies of texts were already published prior to 1944, and were therefore equally available to all researchers of the postwar period. The availability of historical records differed during the first half of the 20th century: the majority of records were available to a wider public in the 1930s, courtesy of a reprint of Wilhelm Mannhardt's *Letto-Preußische Götterlehre* (1936), the publication of sources of Latvian history in Arnolds Spekke's *Latvieši un Livonija 16. g. s.* (1935) and *Die Jahresberichte der Gesellschaft Jesu über ihre Wirksamkeit in Riga und Dorpat 1583-1614* (1925) by Edith Kurtz and *Baznīcas visitācijas protokoli* (1931) by K. Bregžis (Adamovičs 1940d).

Several authors from the interwar period have discussed widely the historical sources available for their mythological research, although in the ensuing analysis not all of them provide correct references to the sources used. Thus, Pēteris Šmits (1926) lists the historical records of the 18th century in detail. Following the literary tradition, early authors rewrote each other's texts, also non-critically adding all the available data from the mythologies of neighbouring regions, thus creating a list of gods that were later used in the composition of Latvian mythical pseudo-pantheons by 19th-century romanticists. As the latter were the subject of Šmits' critique, their sources are described and analysed in *Latvian mythology* (Šmits 1926). With regard to the historical records of the 18th century that in a way assimilate many early sources, Šmits (1926) and other authors (Straubergs 1934; Adamovičs 1940c *et al.*) usually mention August Wilhelm Hupel's *Topographische Nachrichten von Lief- und Ehstland* (1774–1782), and *Vollständiges deutchlettisches und lettischdeutsches Lexicon* (1777) by Jacob Lange. The latter includes and elaborates information from the *Gelehrte Beyträge zu den Rigischen Anzeigen* newspaper, in which the first Latvian pseudo-pantheon was published in Riga by an unknown author in 1761, and by Johann Jacob Harder in 1764. Lange's lexicon is also the source of the mythological appendix of *Lett-*

ische Grammatik by Gotthard Friedrich Stender (2nd ed, 1783). Among the most comprehensive reports of historical records mentioning mythological beings and practices are several articles by Kārlis Straubergs (Straubergs 1934; 1949; 1943). Straubergs also provides an overview of sources of Lithuanian and Prussian mythologies, further listing the documents he has used in his reconstruction of genuine Latvian mythology. The first record of religious practices in the region was found in *De Germannia* (98 AD) by the Roman historian Tacitus. Early but rather poor references on the subject are also provided by Adam of Bremen in his chronicle *Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum* (1075), a bull issued by Pope Innocent III (1199), the writings of Oliverus von Paderborn (1212) and Ghillebert de Lannoy (1413), and the statutes of the city of Riga *Statuta provincialia concilli Rigensis* (1428). More evidence was recorded in the 16th and 17th centuries. Examples of this include *Cosmographia* by Sebastian Münster (1550), the travel notes of Johann David Wunderer (1589) and Reinhold Lubenau (1585), a report by Salomon Henning (1589), *Chronica der Prouintz Lyfflandt* by Balthasar Russow (1584), the annual reports of Jesuit collegiums, *Encomion Urbis Rigae* by Heinrich Ulenbrock (1615), *Livonicae Historiae Compendiosa Series* by Dionysius Fabricius (1611–1620), protocols of legal proceedings (especially witch and werewolf trials), and the works by Paul Einhorn *Wiederlunge der Abgötterey* (1627), *Reformatio gentis Lettice* (1636) and *Historia Lettica, das ist Beschreibung der Lettischen nation* (1649). Various customs were also described by Christian Kelch in his *Liefländische Historia* (1695).[2] As these early records were rather fragmentary and heavily influenced by the agendas of their authors, most of whom were members of the clergy and of whom only a few understood the local languages, they remain only as a secondary source that can be used to support hypotheses based on studies of folklore materials.

The most important source in reconstructions of Latvian mythology, as will also be seen in the following case studies, was folk songs. *Latvju dainas*, the first fundamental edition of folk songs, was published by Krišjānis Barons and Henry Wissendorff in six volumes from 1884 to 1915 (with two more editions in 1922–1923 and 1989–1994).Thirteen years later, it was followed by an edition of *Latvju tautas dainas* by Roberts Klaustiņš in 12 volumes. In 1936, the Archives of Latvian Folklore published *Tautas dziesmas*, a sequel to *Latvju Dainas*, consisting of newly collected texts. After the Second World War, exiled Latvians in Copenhagen published *Latviešu tautas dziesmas* in 12 volumes (1952–1956), combining the Barons and the Archives of Latvian Folklore editions. At the same time (1955), a selection of folk songs was published in Soviet Latvia by the successors of the Archives of Latvian Folklore, the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore. All three volumes came up with a new classification system, one foregrounding social relationships. The first volume of the academic folk song edition, *Latviešu tautasdziesmas*, was published in 1979 (for the publishing history of these and later-mentioned definitive editions of Latvian folklore material, see Ambainis 1989, pp.67-87, or Archives of Latvian Folklore 2011). This work still continues today: nine out of the 15 planned volumes have now been published.

The first basic collection of Latvian folk tales and legends in six volumes was published by Ansis Lehris-Puškaitis in 1890–1891. His material was supplemented and arranged according to the classification by Arveds Švābe (1923) in two volumes, and by Pēteris Šmits (1925–1937) in 15 volumes. The Latvian Folk Tale Type Index, based on the same classification system, was published in 1977 (Ambainis 1989, p.115). The Latvian exile community republished the 15 tomes of Šmits' folk tales and legends (1963–1970) in the USA (Ambainis 1989, p.123). Charms, beliefs and customs for researchers in the first half of the 20th century were available mainly from publications in nationally oriented periodicals of the last 50 years, the collection by Fricis Brīvzemnieks-Treuland (1881), the appendices of Barons and Wissendorff's folk song edition, and material gathered in the Archives of Latvian Folklore. *Latvian charms* in two volumes was published only in 1939–1941 by Kārlis Straubergs, and *Latvian folk beliefs* in four tomes was published in 1940–1941 by Pēteris Šmits. The basic edition of *Latvian folk customs* was published in 1944 by Kārlis Straubergs (Ambainis 1989, p.88). The three following case studies examine the different versions of the reconstructed Latvian space, demonstrating the choice of particular sources and the relation of this choice to disciplinary and theoretical agendas, the intellectual environment, and particular theories.

Ludvigs Adamovičs

Ludvigs (Ludis) Adamovičs (1884–1943) was a Protestant priest, theologian and Church historian, and also the minister of education of the Republic of Latvia from 19 May 1934 to 10 July 1935 in the heyday of the nationalist authoritarian regime established by Kārlis Ulmanis after a coup d'état in 1934. A theology graduate from the University of Dorpat (Tartu), after a short time in the Church he became an associate professor of theology at the University of Latvia in 1920.

[2] Almost all the works mentioned here are republished in Vėlius 1996–2005.

Deported in 1941, he died two years later (Ķiploks 1993). The scholarly interests of Adamovičs consisted mostly of research into the history of the Protestant Church in Latvia, until the second half of the 1930s, when he started to publish articles on issues of Latvian mythology, paying special interest to the deity Jumis (Adamovičs 1932; 1940a), the household daemon *pūķis* 'the dragon' (Adamovičs 1940b), ancient cosmology regarding a stairway to Heaven and the heavenly yard in folk songs (Adamovičs 1938; 1940c), and the phenomenological reconstruction of the ancient Latvian religion (Adamovičs 1937; 1940d). Published in the last years of the interwar period, his work represents the most sophisticated system of Latvian mythology created during this period. His theological background enabled him to apply an approach that was different to that of his fellow scholars, historians and philologists. His programme for studying Latvian religion or mythology is based on the theory of the phenomenology of religion, referring to the Dutch scholar Gerardus van der Leeuw and the hypotheses of differentiation and integration as the main processes that characterise religion as a dynamic system (Adamovičs 1936 *et al.*).

Ancient Latvian world view (1938) is perhaps still the most complete description of spatial dispositions in Latvian mythology. At the same time, this 40-page article summarises and questions all previous research on the issues analysed. Later, the author summarised his concept of mythological space according to three themes, quoted here at length to illustrate the typical form of such reconstructions in the interwar period:

'1. The Heavenly Mountain. Ancient Latvians have imagined the sky in the form of a high mountain, called the Mountain of Pebbles, Silver Mountain or Ice Mountain. The first two designations denote a spangled sky, while the third derives from an explanatory myth on the formation of snow. The Heavenly Mountain descends into the World Sea. In several folk songs, the mountain has been transformed into a table with four corners. On this mountain, or by it, or around it, or otherwise, the Sun moves on its daily orbit. Completing it at the foot of the Mountain, she (the Sun) starts her night return-patch through the World Sea and the underworld in a silver or gold boat. Changing the mode of movement at the sea, the Sun swims her horses. In areas where such a clear notion of the sea being in the West is absent, the Sun sets on a lake, the great river Daugava, or in some mythical place where there are nine lakes, or where nine rivers meet.

'Some songs depict the Sun in unceasing movement, but some tell of her resting in the middle of the day or sleeping at night. These songs testify to the developing anthropomorphisation that distinguishes the mythological figure of the Sun from her natural basis, the sun.

'Furthermore, the ways of the ancient Latvian God (the Heavenly Father) on the Heavenly Mountain are depicted mainly as driving, across a hill or reed, gravel or copper bridge, that is, a rainbow. The most frequently sung about is his trip "down the hill".

'2. The Sun Tree. Ancient Latvians were aware of the special Sun Tree, which is a particular derivation of the mythical World Tree, a projection of the Milky Way in myths. In the descriptions of this tree, bright precious metals, silver and gold, are not spared. A frequent depiction presents the tree as a birch tree with three leaves or forked branches where the Sun, the Moon, God, Laima, Auseklis (the morning star), or the Daughter of the Sun rest or act.[3] Moreover, it seems that the setting and rising of the Sun is always connected with the same tree.

'The mythical place where the Sun Tree grows is "at the side of the Sun's path" or "at the side of the sea path". This is in the far west, where the Sun's daily orbit ends, by the sea, beyond the lake, in the Daugava; in other words, by the mythical border zone of this world, where the natural horizon is visible and the slope of the Heavenly Mountain approaches the Earth. Laying its roots here, the Sun Tree extends all over the sky, and appears as the true tree of Heaven.

'This is how Ancient Latvians have imagined that beyond all lakes and hills at the very edge of the earth or seaside, the borders of this world, Heaven (the Heavenly Mountain) and the underworld ("the other world") meet. There grows the mythical Heavenly Tree, in whose branches the Sun, the Moon and other heavenly bodies each settle at a particular time. There, the Sun rose every morning, and adorned herself and her daughters, to shine all over the world.

'Perhaps at the beginning, this Sun Tree was imagined in the shape of a wonderful shining oak ("golden branches, silver leaves"), but later free poetic fantasy lost the real mythical meaning of the Sun Tree and started to imagine other trees also like the Sun oak, imagining them "at the side of the Sun's orbit". Around this time, the mythical notion of this path also ceased to exist. There only remained the abstract notion of a Sun Tree that could be applied to an oak or a lime, birch, willow, hazel or sallow, or even to a rush. In the end, the oak was placed in the mythical heavenly Daugava, which, according to its origins, is the same Sun Tree, a projection of the Milky Way in the world of myths. But the slender rush remained on a stone or on an island in

[3] In Latvian, Saule, Mēness, Dievs, Laima, Auseklis, Saules meita.

the middle of the sea, or beyond the sea that (stone) is the landmark of this and the other world, on the very horizon. Some songs suggest that in their imaginations the inhabitants of particular farms also decorated their sacred oaks (sacrificial oaks) with elements of the Sun Tree myth. Other songs imagine the Sun as an apple, a pea, a nut or a ball that rolls along the branches of the Sun Tree.

'3. Three levels of the world. Overall, the Ancient Latvian God means the sky: there, his dwelling place must be. Folk songs that tell of God sleeping on the Earth (under a stone, in a bush of vervains) do not seem to be taken seriously in the reconstruction of myths. An idea propagated by Professor Kārlis Straubergs and outlined in the article *World Sea* (Straubergs 1937) that God, the Sun and the Moon dwell in the underworld does not seem well founded. The ancient Latvians do not separate this and the opposite world; instead they separate three levels of the world: Heaven, Earth and the underworld that meet in the World Sea on the horizon. The path from one level to another leads through the horizon and across the World Sea.

'Direct traffic in a vertical direction is also possible. From the Earth it is possible to get to Heaven by a heavenly stairway: the branches and leaves of a tree, a beanstalk or a rose. The direct route to the underworld is depicted in fairy tales: it goes into the Earth through a well, a spring, a deep cave, or a hole. These fairy tales already know and mention the other way: from the underworld one can get on to the Earth across the World Sea and through the horizon. They also know about travelling to the sky: there and back. Sometimes special stairs are used, but a direct path to Heaven is also familiar, via smoke or broom, and coming down by a rope that is fastened to a cloud. But fairy tales also relate that it is possible to go to Heaven across a big sea, that is, through the horizon. There is a crossroads where three roads meet or separate: to Heaven, Earth and the underworld.

'In their basic elements, these views of the Ancient Latvians concur with general notions of the world-view and the World Tree as they are depicted by W. Wundt (1909), but the Latvians have their features; nice poetic depictions stand out especially' (Adamovičs 1940b, pp.364-366).

So, according to Adamovičs, mythological space consists of variations between mutually displaceable semanthemes and a basic structure of three levels, namely the underworld, this world, and Heaven. Variations across the genres, within one genre and across geographical locations where particular folklore materials are collected, are problematic, considering one fixed Ancient Latvian world-view and cosmology. After describing a variety of Sun Trees, the author himself states that: 'Such examples are more likely evidence of free combinations of mythical folk songs than the basis of joining them all together in one view' (Adamovičs 1938, p.22).

Still, by trying to provide a logical description of mythological space, Adamovičs uses various devices of interpretation to establish one primary system, regarding which other variations are seen as deviations akin to a course of profanation. An eloquent illustration of such an interpretation is an example of the World Sea semantheme. Adamovičs refers several times to the article *World Sea* (1937) by Straubergs. In the latter, the classical philologist refers to the Ancient Greek myth of the Ocean that flows all around the world (Straubergs 1937, p.169). Adamovičs accepts the notion of the sea all around the world; still, a closer analysis of folklore material shows this assumption to be somewhat problematic with regard to the folklore of eastern Latvia, that is, regions that are further away from the Baltic coast. As there is no evidence of the notion of the sea or any other large body of water in an eastern direction, the author just notes that 'folklore regarding this matter was somewhat reserved' (Adamovičs 1938, p.4). Furthermore, the author claims that: 'Regarding the position of the sunset, as we can see, empirical experience in the eastern part of Latvia has overshadowed the notion of the World Sea. It is substituted by the lake and the broad Daugava, besides the mythical places "beyond the nine lakes" or "where the nine rivers flow"' (Adamovičs 1938, p.7).

However, during the course of further investigation, the World Sea remains important only as far as it is located in the West, because that is the place where, according to Adamovičs, all three levels of the world meet. While folklore materials provide different locations of passages between the worlds, Adamovičs refers here to the comparative study by Wundt (Adamovičs 1938, p.31; Wundt 1909, p.220). Therefore, a mention of the sea or the River Daugava in connection with the sunset is also interpreted as a reference to the 'far west, mythical border zone of the world where a natural horizon is visible' (Adamovičs 1938, p.23ff). Following this example, other references to the sea are reduced to the World Sea in the west.

A similar pattern of interpretation also characterises the author's analysis of the World Tree. Likewise, he refers to Wundt's idea that: 'The World Tree spreads its roots among the depths of the Earth and reaches the sky with its branches, holding together the whole world, being in the middle of the Earth itself, which overshadows whole world with its leaves and hosts heavenly bodies in its branches. The prototype of the World Tree is

the Tree of Life' (Adamovičs 1938, p.15; Wundt 1909, pp.193, 210, 214, 219).

The author finds the Sun Tree to be the main Latvian variation of this semantheme, and also locates it at the far west, where the Sun sleeps at night. However, he admits that the same World Tree also grows in the underworld, and as it is depicted in fairy tales (*ibid*., p.34) the other locations of the Sun Tree are considered to be a deformation of the original myth (*ibid*., p.26). This is explained either by a poetic play of words or by mythical syncretism, where other trees acquire the characteristics of the Sun Tree. There are also several other places where Adamovičs speaks of the profanation or degradation of original mythical notions. For example, regarding the folklore materials where the Sun Tree could have been found by a shepherd's girl (*ibid*., p.17) or God could hide in a bush of wormwood or mugwort[4] (*ibid*., p.29), or sleep under the grey stone (*ibid*., p.28). Such a devolutionist view of the myth is somewhat contradictory to his notion of the 'natural base' as the primary source of the mythical imagination. Mythical semanthemes are not only grounded in this 'natural base', but also designate the more ancient, older level of the world-view. With regard to various themes, Adamovičs states that this or another notion has already evolved from its natural base, that is, physical object. God as the sky and the Sun as the sun are primary images. The greater their anthropomorphic features, the later the stage of mythological development they characterise (Adamovičs 1938, pp.11, 25, 31). Such a development also implies several world structures, from 'less developed' or 'nature like' to 'more developed', with the Heavenly Yard and its inhabitants characterised by an elaborated social structure.

Another interesting question in Adamovičs' mythical world order concerns Vāczeme. Its literary translation is 'Land of the Germans', and the contemporary name in the Latvian language for Germany is Vācija, a shortened form of Vāczeme. In several folk songs, it bears characteristics of the netherworld. Pēteris Šmits admits that theorists leaning towards animism consider Vāczeme as a land of the dead, while he explains these characteristics as a simple misunderstanding, because Germany is located to the west of Latvia (Šmits 1926, p.65). Adamovičs makes only a cursory reference to this question, stating that Vāczeme meant to ancient Latvians 'a place of otherness', due to an encounter with the different culture brought to Latvia by the Germans. At the same time, he admits that many mythical elements in descriptions of Vāczeme require special attention, and Vāczeme is not only a place of otherness, but also of wrong-way-roundness (Adamovičs 1938, pp.20-21). This description also applies to the Opposite World, where Straubergs (1937, p.171) locates the 'home of the Sun, Moon, God, and all higher powers, and souls' (Adamovičs 1938, p.19). While Straubergs claims that the idea of God and God's location in Heaven is comparatively new, Adamovičs states that both the Sun and God live in Heaven, and that: '… a special home of the gods and dead souls far away on the horizon is not the primary independent concept, but only a transitional combination' (*ibid*., p.31).

Instead, Adamovičs proposes that the Sun, God, God's sons and other deities spend their nights in the Great Heavenly Yard. That is generally everything that the author writes about Heaven, the third level of the world. The situation is much different regarding the underworld. Adamovičs refers to many fairy tales describing various paths to the underworld (caves, wells, springs) and out of it (directly, across the sea, by flying), locations of those entrances and exits both in this world and the far west, inhabitants of the underworld, and the quests of heroes. The question of the home of dead souls, a subject not considered by Adamovičs, remains problematic in this tripartite world-structure. Other issues discussed in the *Ancient Latvian World View* are also characteristic of other scholarly products of the interwar period, acquiring the most comprehensive form in this essay by Adamovičs, and interpreted according to the theories he preferred.

Haralds Biezais

The next case provides an insight into the research of the Latvian mythological space a couple of decades later, across the Baltic Sea, and in a totally different academic and political environment. The theologian, priest and historian of religion Haralds Biezais (1909–1995) was definitely the most influential researcher into Latvian mythology after the Second World War. Biezais studied in Zurich and Strasbourg, but gained his theology doctorate from the University of Latvia. Living during the interwar period in Latvia, his interests were related mostly to theology and pastoral practice. After the Soviet occupation in 1944, he left Latvia and went into exile to Sweden. Besides his clerical duties, he became an assistant to the Chair of Systematic Theology at the University of Uppsala, at the same time as studying philosophy and history. Therefore, the first of his main works in the field of Latvian mythology was his doctoral thesis *Die Hauptgöttinnen der alten Letten* (1955). It was later followed by the fundamental monographs *Die Gottesgestalt der lettischen Volksreligion* (1961), *Die himmlische Götterfamilie der alten Letten* (1972) and *Lichtgott der alten Letten*

[4] *Artemisia absinthium* and *Artemisia vulgaris*, widespread slightly hallucinogenic plants.

(1976), numerous articles, entries in encyclopaedias, and presentations at conferences. In 1971, Biezais accepted a professorship of religious history from the Faculty of Theology at the University of Åbo/Turku in Finland (Pakalns 2006; Leitāne 2008).

In some respects, Biezais continues a previous research tradition: it is his interest in genuinely Latvian material in the reconstruction of mythology that in a way borders on a scrupulous purism excluding all possible influences. His Latvian mythology is mostly folk song mythology, due to the folk song status of most Latvian folklore material. All his main works are dedicated to the Latvian pantheon, while references to his research are usually encountered in works on Baltic mythology. For example, his article (2010) on Baltic religion in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* is dedicated to the Baltic region, but based mostly on material related to Latvian mythology. Biezais' interest in Latvian polytheism which relates to concepts of kingship in Indo-European mythology and his lack of interest in lower mythological beings and chthonic deities have also been interpreted as being particularly characteristic of the Latvian political or psychological exile position and a strategy of dissociation (Leitāne 2008).

Questioning many conclusions drawn by Adamovičs and other interwar researchers, Biezais describes mythological space in the chapter 'World-View and Mythical World Outlook' in *Heavenly Gods' Family of Ancient Latvians* (1998 [1972], pp.136-188), analysing also particular motifs in detail in *The Image of God in Latvian Folk Religion* (2008 [1961], pp.81-87). In 'World-View and Mythical World Outlook', Biezais warns that his aim is not to give a complete description or an explanation of the ancient Latvian world-view, but only to explore moments 'that are related to the sun and its role in mythical and religious experiences' (Biezais 1998, p.136). Still, his description of the world structure is rather comprehensive. Biezais also does not get into difficulties relating mythical phenomena to their precise natural base, admitting that the interpretation of myths is about meaning rather than images (Biezais 1998, p.136; 2008, p.67). Instead, his interpretations have a more social insight, on the one hand reconstructing the heavenly family, and on the other hand relating it to the peasant psychology. His disagreement with interwar period researchers like Adamovičs, Straubergs, and to some extent Eduards Zicāns, is mainly limited to a differing evaluation of folklore genres. As a matter of fact, his interpretation leads to almost exclusively folk song mythology. Biezais is aware of a thick layer of Christian syncretism in folk songs. Although most of them were collected during the 19th century or later, the author states with certainty that the Latvian peasant from whom songs are collected lived at that time in a world of religious notions that are closely related to his pre-Christian religion (Biezais 1998, p.141). This is in stark contrast to his view of fairy tales: he claims that Latvian fairy tales and the views included in them represent 'shared traditions of European culture', and therefore reflect rather Christian views (*ibid*., p.145). On this basis, he contests the tripartite world structure promoted by Straubergs (1922) and Adamovičs (1938), because both of them referred to fairy tales only. As an alternative to this, Biezais offers a simple division of 'this world' and an invisible other world, where the latter is inhabited by dead souls, dwelling in an environment more or less similar to 'this world' (Biezais 1998, p.144). According to him, the location of this realm of dead souls is somewhat virtual, rather than being located in some particular region of mythical geography, the far west, or elsewhere.

Interpreting folk songs, Biezais comes to the same conclusion as Adamovičs regarding the Heavenly Mountain: it represents the sky. The sun travels across or around it in a circular movement. Biezais explains variations of this movement in different folk songs as 'varying perceptions of individual creators of the texts', thus making him the first to consider the role of tradition-bearers in Latvian mythological narratives. His interpretation of the World Sea is also interesting. Biezais argues that neither the notion of the World Sea surrounding the entire Earth nor the notion of the underground sea are clearly expressed in folklore material or other sources of Latvian mythology (Biezais 1998, p.174), and that therefore such notions have to be left out of consideration if we are to remain within the material of Latvian folklore only. He also denies Adamovičs' already-mentioned argument that the sea is substituted by other water bodies in eastern Latvia, due to the lack of the presence of the real sea, referring to folk songs recorded in the very east of Latvia that mention the sunset at sea. At the same time, he disagrees with Straubergs (1937), and proposes the sea as another metaphor for Heaven (Biezais 1998, pp.175-176). Moreover, he further states that this notion could be older than the idea of the Heavenly Mountain, though neither view is contradictory.

While other researchers using fairy tale material have described the underworld in detail, Biezais pays special attention to Heaven and to the Heavenly Yard. The hosts of this realm are the Sun and God (Biezais 1998, p.146; 2008, p.81). The Heavenly Yard has also been described earlier (Adamovičs 1940c). What is new about the work of Biezais is his caution regarding the construction of the Heavenly Yard from separate semanthemes scattered across the body of folklore material. He supposes that the buildings of God's household are located around the central yard, that there are three

springs, and that the surroundings consist of forests of oak, lime, pine, birch and spruce. Silk meadows and golden mountains, gardens, rivers, springs and the sea are also part of ancient Latvian heavenly topography (Biezais 2008, p.86). Still, he admits that there is no direct evidence about God's house or the Heavenly Yard in folk songs (*ibid*., p.81); therefore, those images are deduced from the descriptions of actions of God, his sons and other inhabitants of the realm, and also from particular semanthemes like 'God's front door' (Pakalns 1992). His final conclusion is as follows: 'Due to poor sources, only the fact that God also has his house in Heaven must be accepted' (Biezais 2008, p.84). Nevertheless, there is one building from the Heavenly Yard that has attracted the special attention of the author, the Heavenly Bath-house or Sauna. It has all the common celestial mythical signifiers: gold, silver and diamonds. Somewhat problematic is only the fact that it is almost never mentioned in connection with God, at least not in sources Biezais trusts. Instead, in this bath-house we can more often encounter sons of God and daughters of the Sun, and sometimes also the Moon and other celestial deities (*ibid*., p.325). Analysing the meaning of this semantheme, Biezais reaches several conclusions that are important for his scholarly agenda in general. First of all, it is a direct all-embracing correlation of empirical reality and transcendental realms. Therefore, the special place of the bath-house in the Heavenly Yard is derived from its special place in the Latvian peasant's household, as the place of birth, various rituals, and the dwelling place of several lower mythological beings. This also implies a shift in religious studies from texts to contexts. As Biezais writes: 'In a broader interconnection, this uncommon feature of Latvian mythology supports the direction of research that demands that religious studies pay more attention to the ecological facet' (*ibid*., p.327).

Furthermore, the Heavenly Bath-house seems to be unique to Latvian mythology, with no direct analogies in other religions (*ibid*.). This shows the interrelation of comparative studies with nationally oriented research based on the folklore material of one language group only, and confirms ethnic mythology as a particular object of study, because features like this would go unnoticed when researching older or broader levels of mythological notions like Baltic or Indo-European mythology. In summary, Haralds Biezais has a particular opinion of folklore genres which has shaped his interpretation of the Ancient Latvian mythological space. The latter in this particular case could be more specifically called the mythological space of folk songs; therefore, several unique structures are left outside his model.

Janīna Kursīte

The third case, enlightening the dynamics of the research, is the latest publication on the Latvian mythological space by Professor Janīna Kursīte. A member of parliament, dean of the former Faculty of Philology of the University of Latvia, vice-rector of the Academy of Culture (1995–1997), and full member of the Latvian Academy of Sciences since 1997, these are just some of her current and previous positions that make her one of the most influential, if not the most influential folklorist in Latvia today. Trained at the Faculty of Philology at the University of Tartu in the early Seventies, she continued her academic career at the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art in Riga, acquiring a PhD in philology[5] in 1982 and a habilitated doctor's degree in philology in 1993 (Latvian Scientists 2010). Kursīte's scholarly interests are manifested in publications, the organisation of fieldwork and courses[6] given at the University of Latvia ranging from Baltic mythology and Latvian folklore to the poetics of poetry and the national identity.

In an essay on mythological space published in the book *The Mythical in Folklore, Literature, Art* (1999), Kursīte provides a brief draft of the Latvian mythological space. Unfortunately, there are very few references to folklore material or works previously written on the subject. On the most abstract level, Kursīte conceptualises mythical space as heterogeneous. Referring to Mircea Eliade, she characterises this heterogeneity in terms of 'sacrality' and 'chaos', where sacral spaces are surrounded by unshaped, chaotic realms (Kursīte 1999, p.499). Her other principle of categorisation is binary oppositions: in this case, the opposition of the middle and the side is mentioned more often. These abstract principles are illustrated by examples of various spatial semanthemes, in many cases reducing the meanings of these semanthemes to prototypical situations in the initiation or creation of the world. Interestingly, despite the discussion in the early 1930s and the critique by Biezais (Adamovičs 1938; 1940c; Biezais *et al*. 1998), Kursīte, without any reference to folklore or other material, claims that 'mythological space traditionally divides into two parts (this and the other world), or three parts (Heaven, Earth, the underworld)' (Kursīte 1999, p.500). Moreover, 'mythical space as a

[5] PhD, Candidate of Sciences in the former USSR, the equivalent of a PhD in Western countries.

[6] Latvian Folklore, Mythology of the Balts, Finno-Ugric Folklore, Folklore and Literature, Theory of Literature, etc.

whole consists of nine separate parts' (*ibid.*). As there are no direct descriptions of such a space of nine parts, this division is derived from the significance of the number nine in Latvian folklore and its frequent appearance together with spatial signifiers, such as nine lakes, nine seas, nine doors, nine leaves of a (cosmic) tree, and so on. This division into nine parts is supported by comparative references to Scandinavian and Hindu myths.

Kursīte distinguishes the other world as an opposite realm of 'this world', wherever the former is located, in Heaven, under the Earth, or on another level of the same Earth, or in Vāczeme, or the far west. Kursīte lists all these variations as equally valid, paying more attention to the diverse ways that lead to the other world. These are various plants growing up to Heaven, caves and holes leading to the underworld, ways across the water, and simply losing one's way in the common environment. Almost all these ways are mentioned only in fairy tales. Kursīte only briefly touches upon the question of Vāczeme, identifying it with the land of dead souls and putting it in the way of the Sun. There, the land of the dead is described as a 'zone of numbness' (*ibid*., p.501), otherwise rather similar to this world. Describing the dialectics of the middle and sides, Kursīte emphasises the connection of their meanings with ritual practices: the symbolic re-creation of the world (*ibid*., p.503), or sacrifice to chthonic deities (*ibid*., p.504). The middle is described as an ambivalent place, according to different folklore material; it can be the safest and the most dangerous place in the mythical space. She relates both the middle and the sides to rites of passage. The status of places shifts according to binary oppositions: where the middle is safe, the sides are dangerous, and vice versa. Kursīte also somewhat briefly notes that there is a mythical view of the southern direction as being better than the north. The concept of sacred 'mini-spaces', holy places, springs, mountains, and so on, where the rituals took place, is also derived from a notion of the heterogeneity of space (*ibid*., p.505).

Another chapter of the same book is devoted to the mythical River Daugava. According to the aforementioned division of the sacred and profane worlds, Kursīte writes that: 'The river, like a spring, a lake, water in general, and trees, groves and stones and caves, belong to ancient sacral objects' (Kursīte 1999, p.83). Therefore, the actual River Daugava is not a projection of something (Adamovičs 1938), but a sacred river localised in both this and the other world. It is 'the main mythical river' of Latvia (Kursīte 1999, p.94). The author mentions that the Sun Tree grows in the Daugava, but does not relate it to the sun's orbit in the sky. Instead, she emphasises the function of spatial division: 'When created, the Daugava becomes a border between orderly and chaotic space, this and the other world, safe and dangerous, familiar and alien worlds, as well as those of humans and deities' (*ibid*., p.95).

The realm of dead souls is also located in a copper garden across the Daugava. Kursīte mentions the riverside as a place where initiation rites are performed. As such, the riverside or bank of the Daugava bears a special importance. As a water body, the Daugava is also the place where life emerges; at the same time, it is the path of dead souls that leads them to the realm of the dead (*ibid*., p.103).

In brief, Kursīte interprets different spatial semanthemes within a structural framework of binary oppositions, rather than trying to map out mythical space as a whole. Her interpretive standpoint is rooted in the notion of sacrality as an agency of meaning on the one hand and an understanding of folklore as a narrative of cosmogonic myths, and, on the other hand, rites of passage as the most important part of the life of ancient man's life (Kursīte 1991). As such, her approach is very flexible, and provides almost endless possibilities for interpreting folklore material, letting contradictory versions coexist within one discourse. Kursīte offers an omnipresent harmony of microcosm and macrocosm, represented in multiple mythical situations. Even more, her particular theory on the mnemonic function of folklore genres allows for the use of a range of material that is broader than ever before:

'It is characteristic of Latvian folklore that usually information about one and the same object is not repeated among its different genres. Fairy tales and legends compliment or extend what is said, for example, about rivers, lakes and the sea in folk songs. Probably this way, ancient man, who was able to store and save information (first of all sacral information) by heart only, saved space in the blocks of his memory. What is preserved in the rhyming language of folk songs cannot be duplicated in the plain language of fairy tales and legends. For a long time, research into Latvian mythical views has been based mainly on material from folk songs, with virtually no reference to fairy tales, legends, charms, beliefs and other folklore genres' (Kursīte 1999, p.93).

Structural analysis and an interest in proto-myths is characteristic of scholars of the Moscow-Tartu School of Semiotics. The author herself also refers to the work of Vladimir Toporov and Eleazer Meletinskii as being what has inspired her (Kursīte 1999, p.9). Based only on her interpretation of folklore material, her approach leaves out the question of the historicity of mythology,

creating a reconstruction of a somewhat virtual, timeless world-view.

Conclusion

As follows from the three case studies analysed above, reconstructions of Latvian mythological space have taken rather different forms, despite the more or less similar availability of folklore material and historical records. Adamovičs' programme of research consists of mapping out mythical geography; whereas Biezais describes mythical space rather indirectly, that is, how far it is related to celestial deities; and Kursīte, with the help of the notion of sacrality, outlines mythical dispositions in real landscapes. Nevertheless, the basic components of all three reconstructions are the same: a tripartite division of the world, the Heavenly Mountain, the World Sea, the Sun's orbit, and passages to other worlds. Interpretations and locations of these phenomena vary, including or excluding some of them from the subject of the research, the Latvian mythological space. Mythological time plays a rather minor role in reconstructions of mythological space: it is mentioned as an anomaly (Adamovičs 1938) of the underworld, or eternally repeated time of the creation ritual (Kursīte 1999) characteristic of specific domains of the mythical world. At the same time, the study illustrates the importance of scholarly time in research into mythological space.

Mythological research, like any other scholarly practice, is historically determined; and yet it does not illustrate a linear development. On the most obvious level, reconstructions of mythological space depend on the theoretical standpoints of researchers. The theory of mythical semanthemes derived from a natural base restricts Adamovičs' reconstruction of mythical space; while the relation of the same semanthemes to rites of passage and cosmogonic proto-myth provides Kursīte with some freedom of interpretation. A comparative view of the World Tree, World Sea or tripartite structure can serve in a hierarchical ordering of images (Adamovičs 1938), a reserved attitude towards one of them (Biezais 1998), or unconditional acceptance (Kursīte 1999). Perhaps the most influential theories in the reconstruction of mythological space are those regarding folklore genres. The cases of Biezais and Kursīte illustrate this best. Whereas the former bases his model of Latvian mythological space on folk song mythology, excluding fairy tales, charms and other narrative folklore material, Kursīte refers to mnemonic functions of genre division and explores folklore of all genres. Then again, Kursīte does not verify her material with historical reports, and does not try to separate different periods of the development of Latvian mythology and the corresponding world-view.

It is much harder to draw conclusions at the meta-level of analysis. However, even if we cannot say for sure what the roles of the researcher's personality, political standing, academic position, ideological background and other similar circumstances have played in the choice of one interpretive stance, theory or another, it is still worth considering these various contexts as essential to an understanding of particular texts. If the quest for national uniqueness in mythological themes cannot be explained through the relationship of folkloristics and the idea of the nation-state, if a discussion of previous research or the lack of such a discussion cannot be attributed to the researcher's academic position or political influence, if the depiction of the all-embracing harmony of the micro- and macro-cosmos cannot be explained by the popular nature of a particular publication, and an interest in celestial deities by a particular exile mentality, these factors can still be influential, and therefore must not be left out of the analysis of Latvian mythology and the notion of mythological space within it.

The research for this article was supported by the Estonian Science Foundation, Grant No. 7795, and by the European Union, through the European Regional Development Fund (Centre of Excellence CECT).

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Received: 26 April 2011; Revised: 6 May 2011;
Accepted: 16 May 2011.

LATVIŲ MITOLOGIJOS ERDVĖ IR MOKSLINIS LAIKAS

TOMS ĶENCIS

Santrauka

Mitinę erdvę apibrėžia ir istorinės jos tyrimo sąlygos. Laikas, kada vykdomas tyrimas, yra diachroninis, nevienalytis ir atviras įvairioms įtakoms; jis suteikia galimybę klasifikuoti jau tyrinėtus dalykus ir brėžti skirtingas trajektorijas pasirinkto tyrimo objekto interpretacijose. Latvių mitologijos tyrimus visais laikais veikė įtampa tarp etninių, regioninių, kalbinių ir politinių veiksnių. Kadangi nėra žinių apie tikslią, pačių latvių sukurtą mitinio pasaulio struktūrą apibrėžiančią teoriją, latvių mitinę erdvę galima pažinti tik iš mokslinių rekonstrukcijų ir interpretacijų. Šios rekonstrukcijos daugiausia buvo paremtos dviem šaltinių grupėmis – istoriniais aprašais ir folkloro medžiaga. Pačiu svarbiausiu šaltiniu latvių mitologijos rekonstrukcijose tapo liaudies dainos. Trijų atvejų analizė rodo, kad nepaisant daugiau ar mažiau vienodo šaltinių prieinamumo, latvių mitinės erdvės rekonstrukcijų trajektorijos pasuko gana skirtingomis kryptimis. Liudvigo Adamovičiaus (1884–1943) darbuose ryški mitinės erdvės konceptualizacija ir aprašymas, kurie būdingi senovės religijos tyrimams tarpukariu; pokario metais išeivijos akademinėje aplinkoje jo pažiūras paneigė ir išplėtojo Haraldas Biezais (1909–1995); tuo tarpu Janinos Kursytės atlikti mitinės erdvės tyrimai, kuriuose atsižvelgiama į visus ankstesnius tyrimus ir remiamasi semantine-struktūrine analize, atstovauja naujausiai mokslinei šios srities produkcijai.

Liudvigas Adamovičius siūlo nubraižyti mitinės geografijos žemėlapį, Heraldas Biezais mitinę erdvę aprašo gana netiesiogiai, t. y. tiek, kiek ji susijusi su dangiškosiomis dievybėmis, o mūsų laikų mokslininkė Janina Kursytė, pasitelkdama šventumo sąvoką, mitinę sąrangą susieja ir su realiais gamtos objektais. Vis dėlto visose trijose rekonstrukcijose kartojasi tos pačios pagrindinės sudedamosios dalys – trinarė pasaulio struktūra, Dangaus kalnas, Pasaulio jūra, Saulės orbita ir keliai į kitus pasaulius. Šių fenomenų interpretacijos ir lokalizacija įvairuoja, kai kuriuos jų įvardijant arba neįvardijant kaip latvių mitologinės erdvės tyrimo objektus. Mitinis laikas mitinės erdvės rekonstrukcijose atlieka gana nežymų vaidmenį: jis minimas kaip anomalija požeminiame pasaulyje arba amžinai besikartojantis kūrimo ritualo laikas, būdingas tam tikroms mitinio pasaulio sferoms. Mitologijos tyrimai, kaip ir bet kuri kita mokslinė veikla, yra apibrėžta istoriškai, tačiau linijinės raidos neatspindi. Akivaizdu, kad mitinės erdvės rekonstrukcijos priklauso nuo tyrėjų teorinių nuostatų. Mitinių semantemų teorija leido atsirasti Adamovičiaus mitinės erdvės rekonstrukcijai, o tų pačių semantemų ryšys su perėjimo ritualais ir pirminiu kosmogoniniu mitu Kursytei suteikė interpretacijos laisvę. Komparatyvistinį požiūrį į Pasaulio medį, Pasaulio jūrą arba trinarę struktūrą Adamovičius panaudoja hierarchiniam vaizdinių išdėstymui, Biezais susitelkia tik į vieną iš minėtų komponentų, o Kursytė besąlygiškai priima juos visus. Didžiausią įtaką mitinės erdvės rekonstrukcijoms turėjo su folkloro žanrais siejamos teorijos. Biezais savąjį latvių mitinės erdvės modelį grindžia liaudies dainų mitologija, tuo tarpu Kursytė remiasi mnemoninėmis išsiskyrusių žanrų

funkcijomis ir tyrinėja visų žanrų folklorą. Vis dėlto Kursytė savo medžiagos nelygina su istoriniais duomenimis ir nebando išskirti atskirų latvių mitologijos vystymosi etapų bei juos atspindinčių pasaulėžiūrų.

Nors negalima būti tikriems dėl to, kokį vaidmenį renkantis interpretacijos kryptį, teoriją ar tam tikrą požiūrio tašką atliko tyrėjo asmenybė, politinės nuostatos, akademinis statusas, ideologija ir kitos panašios aplinkybės, šiuos įvairius kontekstus vis tiek verta traktuoti kaip svarbius tam tikrų tekstų supratimui. Net jei tautinės vienybės paieškų mitologinėse temose ir negalima paaiškinti sąryšiu tarp folkloristikos ir tautinės valstybės idėjos, o anksčiau atliktų tyrimų aptarimo arba neaptarimo negalima paaiškinti tyrėjo akademiniu statusu ar politinėmis įtakomis, jei visa apimančios harmonijos tarp mikro- ir makrokosmoso negalima paaiškinti populistiniu tam tikros publikacijos pobūdžiu, o domėjimosi dangaus dievybėmis – savotišku išeivijos mentalitetu, tie veiksniai vis tiek gali būti reikšmingi, ir todėl analizuojant latvių mitologiją ir mitinės erdvės sampratą joje negali likti nuošalėje.

Vertė Jurgita Macijauskaitė-Bonda

REVIEW

NATURAL HOLY PLACES. VALUES AND PROTECTION.

ÕPETATUD EESTI SELTSI TOIMETISED, XXXVI. EDITED BY H. VALK. TARTU 2007.

In many ways, it is surprising that natural holy places that were counted as part of the Estonian national identity as early as the 19th-century awakening only became objects of wider and more systematic academic research at the turn of the 20th and the 21st centuries. The first general descriptions of Estonian non-Christian holy sites were completed by the end of the 18th century (Hupel 1774; Hiärn 1794). From the basis of the common national romantic movement and the national identity that was under formation during the 18th and 19th centuries, a relatively stereotypical treatment of beautiful oak groves was formed, where ancient and free Estonians worshipped their gods and burnt their dead, prior to Christianity being introduced with fire and the sword (Merkel 1798; Jung 1879; Loorits 1935). The described treatment of *hiis*-sites became an ideological tool, and despite the folklore, according to which, in addition to beautiful hills and forests, swamps and clear fields were also considered *hiis*-sites (Eisen 1920), the romantic understanding can still be traced even now. The understanding of *hiis*-sites changed slightly in the second half of the 20th century, which was not the most favourable time for the study of religion, but when support for the national identity was continuously needed. Instead of the 19th-century romantic vision, academic studies of the 1920s and 1930s were used more, showing the rich variety of holy places and their strong connection with villages or single farmsteads. A view of natural holy sites deriving from the pre-Christian period, and thus directly connected to the religion and world-view of free and ancient Estonians, was then permanently adopted. Consequently, the first monograph of *hiis*-sites by an Estonian author was published only at the end of the 20th century (Remmel 1998). A decade later, a more systematic tradition of research into Estonian natural holy places can be discussed.

Until now, the treatments have predominantly been written by Estonian authors in Estonian, and have thus had a relatively modest influence on the international reader. This collection of articles, dedicated to Agne Trummal, the director of the National Heritage Board, who passed away prematurely, is definitely the most thorough and manifold treatment so far. Natural holy places are observed by different researchers from different fields, and, as a result, we can form a picture that is incomparably more diverse than the state of research has allowed until now. Although the articles are in Estonian, they are provided with English summaries, in order to attract the attention of researchers outside Estonia.

There is a clear emphasis in the collection towards issues of the protection of *hiis*-sites and other natural holy places. As Mall Hiiemäe says (p.232), the role of these holy sites is not so much the perception of sacredness, but 'it is more a question of the feeling for home and the roots of the people that we know.' Hiiemäe is absolutely right, and holy sites as symbols of the identity are just as important to Estonians as they are to most people in the world. This is shown by the very positive and strong feedback and the wide public response to the preservation campaign for natural holy places during recent years.

What are the natural holy places under discussion? It is very characteristic that none of the articles in the collection provide a definition, although several articles are concerned with presenting a sort of classification of holy places. It can be perceived from several articles that we are dealing with something that is characteristic of the Finno-Ugric world, and when studying Estonian natural holy places we have to use analogies from this area. The main aspects uniting Estonian and Finno-Ugric holy sites are, on one hand, their wealth in forests, and, on the other hand, the rules of behaviour

according to which a holy place must not be damaged, trees must not be cut down, or branches broken. But similar features can be found for most natural holy places around the world, including Christian shrines, so maybe we should not limit ourselves to parallels from Estonia or our Finno-Ugric 'kinsmen', but also look more bravely towards the south and the west?

Many articles give the impression that natural holy places are reflections of a religious whole deriving from times that started to disappear in the 19th and the 20th centuries. True, authors have referred to the destruction of *hiis*-sites that took place in the Middle Ages and the Modern Period, as well as the relatively late introduction of some holy sites. But natural holy places as such are treated as uniform and principally unchanging in time. This ahistorical approach is intrinsic to wider treatments of natural holy places (Insoll 2007, p.141). Considering the dynamism and re-interpretativity (cf. *interpretative level*, Whitehouse 2004) of folk religion, and the fact that holy places have changed in time before, even without outside or violent intervention, and that they have been abandoned and new ones introduced, we can obtain a relatively new perspective on these sites. Although Heiki Valk mentions this in his article (p.144), the collection is dominated by a timeless approach, whereby natural holy places are all treated as homogeneous.

In the longest article in the collection, Ahto Kaasik gives an overview of the programme of Estonian historical natural sanctuaries, and describes more closely the reasons, problems and different stages in carrying out the programme. Through the programme, a completely new and different picture emerges, where necessary specialists in the authorities engaged in the protection are active, specific protection regulations are elaborated, and so on. However, this situation is so far nowhere to be found yet in the world. There are several areas where natural holy places have been put under protection, they are preserved and kept preferably for the executors of rituals connected to them; but until now an official system for the protection of these places does not yet work anywhere. Moreover, a planned and capacious database with previous fieldwork and cameral studies, as well as the ensuing protective system for the places, is not known anywhere else in the world. Can we hope that Estonia will be a pioneer in this?

Aare Kasemets concentrates in his article on the role of natural holy places in the contemporary self-perception and world-view of the Estonians. Several juridical and official aspects are presented in the article that are important in launching the *hiis*-programme, but also in the treatment of natural holy sites in a general sense.

The article by Heiki Valk concentrates on the treatment of natural holy places from the standpoint of the archaeologist. He admits that classic archaeological fieldwork cannot offer much to the study of holy sites, and it is comparatively more relevant to analyse the connectedness of holy places with other archaeological sites and to try to date them in that way. Valk discusses the function of holy sites and the classification that emerges on the basis of it. A special emphasis in his article is paid to different problems of source criticism that primarily concern the linking together of folk traditions and archaeological data, as well as the determination of holy places, their age, or their wider significance.

Eerik Leibak treats holy sites as natural communities, concentrating primarily on *hiis* as a holy forest. As an important conclusion, he points out that *hiis*-sites, and natural holy places in a wider sense, are such diverse objects that it is not right to create a uniform solution for their protection. By this, *hiis*-sites would be acknowledged as the 'dead' heritage, and they would be treated as separate objects with which a connection to the living community is non-existent.

Auli Kütt, in her article about behavioural norms in holy places, continues the direction of her earlier research. By using the local tradition of the Estonian Folklore Archives, she discusses how indigenous people behaved in their holy sites, and what general and local regulations there were. The main emphasis of the article is on the prohibitions and punishments that accompanied violations of these bans. As a conclusion, Kütt admits that holy places were allowed to develop freely, and as a result, holy sites should be treated in their initial meaning as natural stands similar to primeval forests where an occasional human influence was present.

Mall Hiiemäe, in her article, analyses the genre problematics of the folk tradition, and observes the tradition connected with Estonian holy places in the four-dimensional model created by Ben Amos (1976). With the emphasis on local traditions, in the case of the tradition connected to holiness, the need to study the context, including the contemporary context, is stressed.

Mari-Ann Remmel gives an overview of the folk tradition associated with *hiis*-sites in Estonia. A strong emphasis is put on the reliability of the tradition and the evaluation of its date. In this context, Remmel highlights the shortness and principality of tradition, and points out that we can rarely find *hiis*-lore describing details. Remmel considers this phenomenon to be 'the fossil backbone' of folklore which refers to the old date of tradition, where single details do not play a significant role any more.

Kärt Vaarmari gives an overview of four court cases in the USA and Australia that concerned the protection of natural holy places. Commencing with an outline of the corresponding Estonian legislation, Vaarmari reaches the conclusion that natural holy places fit in neither with present heritage protection nor nature conservation legislation. We are dealing with far too complex phenomena. Vaarmari also analyses several different issues that concern the official protection of natural holy places. It is also important that Vaarmari points out differences between US and Australian cases and the Estonian situation: while in the first cases natural holy sites are characteristic of native ethnic minorities, in Estonia they can be considered intrinsic to the indigenous people of the land, with 'primeval value' as a significant criterion. And again, we come to a question raised in several articles: how can we determine the age of natural holy places?

The article by Marju Kõivupuu discusses a specific kind of natural holy place: cross-trees that are primarily widespread in southern Estonia. The article gives an overview of the tradition of cross-trees associated with the culture of death, and shows analogues in the attachment of the soul of the dead person with a tree elsewhere in the world. An important part of the article is dedicated to the persistence of the tradition of cross-trees and the protective aspects of the trees.

As a conclusion, it is important to note that many articles in the collection do not offer any explicit results, but the prospects for future research. In combining a research group from so many different fields, a strong base has been set for later studies.

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- EVANS, W.A., 1994. Approaches to intelligent information retrieval. *Information processing and management*, 7 (2), 147-168 (reference to an article in a journal).

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в	v	м	m	ч	ch
г	g	н	n	ш	sh
д	d	о	o	щ	shch
е	e	п	p	ъ	”
ё	e	р	r	ы	y
ж	zh	с	s	ь	’
з	z	т	t	э	e
и	i	у	u	ю	iu
й	i	ф	f	я	ia

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ARCHAEOLOGIA BALTICA 15. ARCHAEOLOGY, RELIGION, AND FOLKLORE IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION
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Klaipėda, 2011

SL 1335. 2011 09 20. Apimtis 21,5 sąl. sp. l. Tiražas 350 egz. Klaipėdos universiteto leidykla, Herkaus Manto g. 84, 92294 Klaipėda
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Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.

Fig. 6

Plate I

TIINA ÄIKÄS

FROM FELL TOPS TO STANDING STONES: SACRED LANDSCAPES IN NORTHERN FINLAND

Fig. 3. The island of Ukko in Inari (photograph by the author).

Fig. 4. A *sieidi* stone on the island of Ukko (photograph by the author).

Fig. 5. The island of Ukonsaari in Inari (photograph by the author).

Fig. 6. A fish pillar at Sorsaniemi, Kemijärvi (photograph by the author).

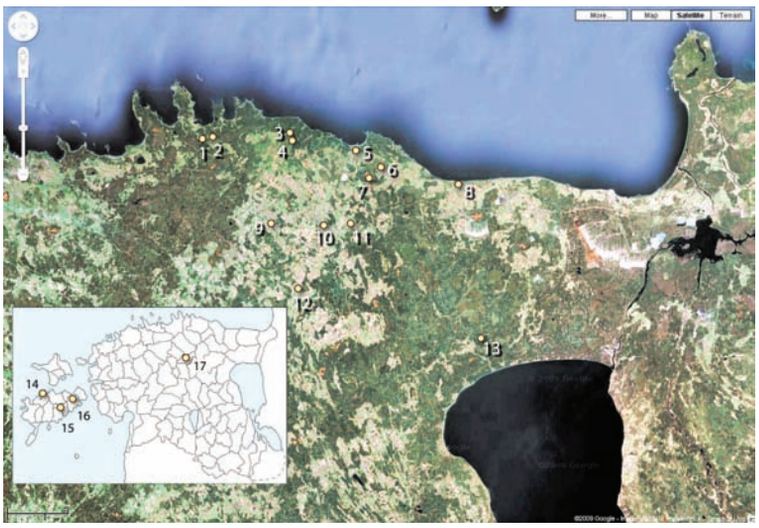

Fig. 1

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

Plate II

TÕNNO JONUKS

HIIS-SITES IN NORTHERN ESTONIA: DISTINCTIVE HILLS AND PLAIN FIELDS

Fig. 1. A map of Estonia and the study area. Places mentioned: 1 Tõugu Hiieväli (*hiis*-field); 2 Tõugu grave field; 3 Karula *hiis*; 4 Karula grave field; 5 Kunda *hiis*-hill; 6 Kongla; 7 Varudi; 8 Purtse; 9 Kadrina church; 10 Tõrma; 11 *Hiis* of Vaeküla, Raudvere and Raudlepa villages; 12 Aburi; 13 Roostoja Iissaar (*hiis*-island); 14 Panga cliff; 15 Valjala church; 16 Pöide church; 17 Järva-Jaani church.

Fig. 2. A map of the Purtse area. A group of stone graves is marked (1–6), together with the Uku spring (7). There is a clint outcrop marked on the northern side of the *hiis*-hill facing towards the sea.

Fig. 3. A map of the Kunda area. Stone graves (1–4) on the northeast part of the *hiis*-hill, an offering spring (5), and a contemporary settlement site (6) are marked. It is possible that a path on the former lake shore, now leading north from the village, could also have been a connecting route during the time the stone graves were built on the hill.

Fig. 1.

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Plate III
JURIS URTĀNS
THE MYTHICAL FLIGHT PATHS OF LAKE SAUKA
Fig. 1. Lake Sauka: a general view.
Fig. 3. The mythological place of origin of Lake Sauka at the Strubenči swamp.
Fig. 4. Sausnēja Piķapurvs.
Fig. 5. Dead trees emerging from the bottom of Lake Sauka.

Fig. 1

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3

Plate IV

JANIS CEPITIS, LILIJA JAKUBENOKA

MYTHICAL CREATURES, THE MAKING OF WEARING APPAREL, AND THE LANDSCAPE

Fig. 1. The tailor-stone in the River Kuja (photograph by L. Jakubenoka).

Fig. 2. The Vaļģu devil-stone (photograph by L. Jakubenoka).

Fig. 3. The tailor-stone by the River Sesava (photograph by L. Jakubenoka).

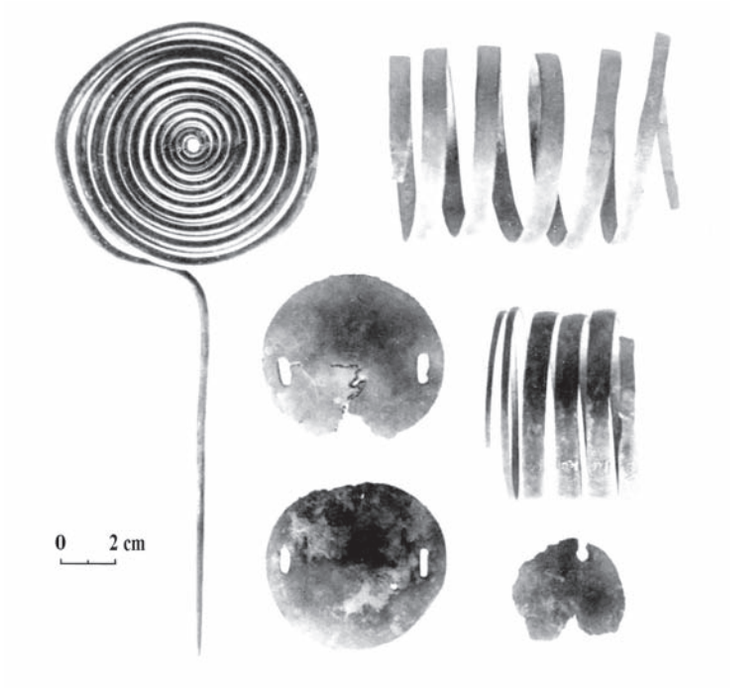

Fig. 3A

Fig. 3B

Plate V

VYKINTAS VAITKEVIČIUS

ANCIENT SACRED PLACES IN LITHUANIA: CROSSROADS OF GEOGRAPHY, ARCHAEOLOGY AND FOLKORE

Fig. 3. (A) The Baudėjos hoard, Prienai district, dating from the Bronze Age. A set of artefacts (a crescent-shaped pendant and three unidentified items are missing from the photograph) was found when digging a pool in 1936 (according to Puzinas 1938, Fig. 21); (B) the site where the Baudėjos hoard was found, looking from the south (photographed by the author in 2008).

Fig. 4.

Fig. 6

Plate VI
VYKINTAS VAITKEVIČIUS
ANCIENT SACRED PLACES IN LITHUANIA: CROSSROADS OF GEOGRAPHY, ARCHAEOLOGY AND FOLKORE
Fig. 4. Stone head-shaped figurines stored in Trakai History Museum (A981, A982). The figurines were found by Kazimieras Kulakas in Lake Galvė in 1923: he discovered artefacts while sailing on a boat in the area of a shoal between Pilis and Pirtis islands; transferred to the museum in 1977 (photograph by the author).
Fig. 6. The Vaikučiai stone, Švenčionys district. It used to serve as a table in the course of the communal feast of Kupolės every year in the period from May to June; it is now removed from its original place (photographed by the author in 1998).

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Plate VII

ULADZIMER LOBACH

THE SACRED LAKES OF THE DVINA REGION (NORTHWEST BELARUS)

Fig. 3. A lake called Sacred next to the village of Borovyye in the Chashniki district (photograph by the author).

Fig. 4. A lake called Sacred next to the village of Mikulino in the Polotsk district (photograph by the author).

Fig. 5. A lake called Sacred next to the village of Slobodka in the Chashniki district (photograph by the author).

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

Plate VIII

DAIVA VAITKEVIČIENĖ

LIBATION IN BALTIC RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

Fig. 1. The stone with a trough-shaped hollow on its top in Antakmenė (near Kazitiškis in the Ignalina district) (photograph by D. Vaitkevičienė, 2009).

Fig. 2. The stone at Laukagalis (in the Kaišiadorys district) with chutes running in the direction of two separate fireplaces (photograph by D. Vaitkevičienė, 2011).

Fig. 3. The chutes on the Laukagalis stone (photograph by D. Vaitkevičienė, 2011).