# All the People's Sorrow:

## Making a Concert of Laments

GLOMAS Final Project
Autumn 2013

Emmi Kuittinen
GLOMAS
Sibelius Academy
University of the Arts Helsinki

## SIBELIUS-ACADEMY

Abstract | Kirjallinen työ

| **Title** | **Number of pages** |
|---|---|
| All the People`s Sorrow. Making a Concert of Laments. | 48+7 |
| **Author(s)** | **Term** |
| Emmi Kuittinen | Spring 2016 |
| **Degree programme** | **Study Line** |
| Glomas | |
| **Department** | |
| Musiikkikasvatuksen, jazzin ja kansanmusiikin osasto | |


**Abstract**

All the People`s Sorrow. Making a Concert of Laments is a final project for the Global Music Master (GLOMAS) studies. It consists of two parts: written work and a concert called Kaikkien kansojen murhe - All the People´s Sorrow, which was held on 2nd of May 2013 in Helsinki.

In the beginning of the written work I introduce the history of the laments and the research of them. Laments are a global phenomenon that can be found all over the world among very different kind of cultures. Already ancient Greeks knew laments. Laments were sung in the parting situations and also in the most important rites of human life like marriage and death. In the Balto-Finnic area there were also laments of conscript and occasional laments. In my work I have concentrated in the Karelian and Ingrian traditions. The language in them is special and the melody and the rhythm vary all the time because of the free meter of the lyrics.

I did not find it always easy to make music of a tradition that has faded. I searched for theories of recovering an old tradition. In the 1960`s the ethnologists defined to term folklorism to describe tradition that was modified for new purposes. Folklorism was seen among the ethnologists as a threat to the real folklore. In 1990 researcher Lauri Honko developed the theory of folklore process. Honko sees that the folklore is always in a process and he divides it in 22 parts. The first 12 parts are part of the first life of folklore and the rest 10 parts are part of the second life of folklore. This theory sees all the parts of the process equal. Anna-Liisa Tenhunen created for her doctoral study also a third life of folklore, and used it in particular with laments.

One part of the written work is to describe my own process with the concert Kaikkien kansojen murhe - All the People`s Sorrow. I tell about my repertoire and how I worked with it. I did not grow up in the environment were laments would have existed so I needed to learn a new culture. In the concert I wanted to approach the laments from different sides: some of them I learned from archive recordings, I composed melody to a lament text, I wrote my own lament and I also improvised laments. Beside Karelia and Ingria I also prepared material from Finland, Persia, Kosovo, Estonia and Russia. I had a group of ten musicians who helped me with the concert. I found a new way to express myself as a musician and also had an experience of a concert that touched both the audience and the performers. In the end of the work I summarize what I have learned and look to the future.



**Keywords**

Laments, Folk Music, Folklorism, Folklore Process, Musicianships, Concerts

**Other Information**

# Contents


**1 Introduction** ..... **3**
- **1.1 Introduction to the Theme** ..... **3**
- **1.2 What Is My Lament Culture?** ..... **4**
- **1.3 Analysis of the Literature** ..... **5**

**2 Laments** ..... **7**
- **2.1 Laments - Poetry of Eternal Parting and Final Passing** ..... **7**
- **2.2 Funerary Laments - Dirges** ..... **8**
- **2.3 Wedding Laments** ..... **10**
- **2.4 Laments for Conscript** ..... **13**
- **2.5 Occasional Laments** ..... **13**
- **2.6 Language of Laments** ..... **13**
- **2.7 Melodies of Laments** ..... **15**
- **2.8 Presentations of Laments** ..... **18**

**3 Challenges** ..... **21**
- **3.1 My Prejudices** ..... **21**
- **3.2 Folklorism** ..... **22**
- **3.3 Folklore Process** ..... **23**
- **3.4 Laments and Folklore Process** ..... **25**

**4 Concert *Kaikkien kansojen murhe—All the People's Sorrow*** ..... **27**
- **4.1 Process** ..... **27**
- **4.2 Concert on 2 May 2013** ..... **28**
- **4.3 Repertoire** ..... **29**
  - 4.3.1 Nämä kerdaset ..... 29
  - 4.3.2 Jos voisin laulaa ..... 31
  - 4.3.3 Sunce mi se ..... 31
  - 4.3.4 The Wedding ..... 32
  - 4.3.5 Shure dard ..... 34
  - 4.3.6 Lament Improvisation ..... 35
  - 4.3.7 Kiitositku sukuni naisille - Thankfulness Lament to the Women of My Family ..... 36
  - 4.3.8 Hiljalle - To Hilja ..... 38
  - 4.3.9 Kuolinitku sodassa 1942 kaatuneelle pojalle ..... 38
  - 4.3.10 Toivo - Hope ..... 39
  - 4.3.11 Elämä - Life ..... 40
- **4.4 Feedback** ..... **41**
- **4.5 Conclusions** ..... **42**

**5 Summary** ..... **44**

**References** ..... **46**

**Appendix** ..... **49**
- **1. Kiitositku sukuni naisille - Thankfulness Lament to the Women of My Family** ..... **49**
- **2. Hiljalle - To Hilja** ..... **50**
- **3. Toivo - Hope** ..... **51**
- **4. Elämä - Life** ..... **52**
- **5. Concert Programme** ..... **53**
- **6. Concert Description in the Touko-Taiga Programme** ..... **55**

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction to the Theme

*All the People's Sorrow: How to Make a Concert of Laments* is the final project for my Global Music Master (GLOMAS) studies. I have had the honour to be one of the first GLOMAS students at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, Finland. I completed my bachelor's degree at the North Karelia University of Applied Sciences as a Music Educator and specialised in Finnish folk music. My main instrument is singing. In the GLOMAS programme I had the opportunity to meet musicians all around the world and make music in a multicultural environment, but I was also always encouraged to specialise in the topics that I find interesting. I kept on focusing on the Finno-Ugric tradition.

*All the People's Sorrow: Making a Concert of Laments* consists of two parts: this written work and a concert called *Kaikkien kansojen murhe—All the People's Sorrow*, which was held on 2 May 2013 in Helsinki. Through my studies I became interested in laments and wanted to research and learn more about them. I wanted to make one concert which would consist of laments. But first I needed to find out what laments are all about. Therefore the art and the research have gone hand in hand in this project; I have needed both of them. The theoretical knowledge that I wrote about in this project helped me to understand what laments are all about and why they have been sung.

The written work talks about what I went through in the process of making the concert. In chapter 2 I introduce laments based on the literature I read. The literature helped me to understand more deeply the stylistic questions of laments and what laments are all about. The challenges that I felt when I was lamenting made me look for researches about the problems that are connected to the recovery of an old tradition, and this is what chapter 3 consists of. It introduces the theories of *folklorism* and the *folklore process*. In chapter 4 I describe my experience with holding a concert—what it was like to learn a new tradition, how I worked with my repertoire and what I learned during the process. In chapter 5 I outline the most important things I learned and also look to the future. In the appendix I provide some of my concert material.

With this work I have started to identify myself as an artistic researcher. I am a musician and a music student, and the fact that I was making a concert gave a practical perspective to this project. But I couldn't have done the concert without the reading the research, and I also acknowledge that my own writing has also helped me during the process. I know that some people consider laments to be therapy, but my perspective was all the time artistic, a musician's perspective. I hope this project can be a starting point to a wider project that I can continue in the future.

## 1.2 What Is My Lament Culture?

At first my idea was to make a concert consisting of laments from all around the world, but soon I found out that I would have to narrow my area somehow. To listen to and research laments from all around the world would have required much more time than I had for the project. I decided to start from areas close to me. There is no clear evidence that there have been Finnish laments (Tenhunen 2006, 47). Aili Nenola says it is possible that there have been laments in Finland, but she also reminds that the Finns of today tend to find evidence that we have a common Balto-Finnic culture (2002, 36). I decided to concentrate on Karelian and Ingrian traditions because it was easy to find literature and archive recordings from those areas and I could also understand the languages. They also felt almost like Finnish tradition, as the languages are close to Finnish and some of the Karelian dialects can even be thought of as Finnish dialects even though Karelia and Ingria are not part of the state of Finland. But it does not even matter; I am simply fascinated by the culture of Karelia and Ingria. If a culture touches me, I want to get to know it better. Can one even own a culture just by having a certain nationality?

The difficulty of being a GLOMAS student is that the global aspect can turn out to be a burden. I also needed to consider whether my work was global enough. There is also a Folk Music Department at the Sibelius Academy, so I had to address how my work differs from the work they do there. I solved this problem by adopting something that I call the GLOMAS attitude: an open mind. In my concert I tried to approach the topic from different angles. Essential for my own artistic work was the co-operation and improvisation with my fellow student, Marouf Majidi. He comes from the Persian and Kurdish lament culture, but together we improvised

our own lament culture (see chapter 4.3.6). There was also music from Finland, Estonia, Kosovo and Russia in my concert, so I didn't strictly limit it to Karelia and Ingria.

In Finland there is an association called *Äänellä itkijät ry*, The Lamenters. It is 'an association which purpose is to treasure, revive, forward and make known the lamenting traditions and Karelian culture'[1] (Äänellä itkijät ry). Unfortunately it was not possible for me in this project to co-operate with the association, but it is important to tell that there is an interest in Finland to develop the lamenting culture. *Äänellä itkijät* is an association not of musicians but of all kinds of people, and I understand that music does not take a big role in their courses. My perspective in the project was always a musician's perspective, so there are different ways to consider the laments.

## 1.3 Analysis of the Literature

I started to do this project outside the academic world. Nenola's book *Inkerin itkuvirre (Ingrian Laments)* (2002) was familiar to me because it contains a wide collection of the Ingrian lament lyrics. I had used the book as a singer. One of the first books I also read was Anna-Liisa Tenhunen's *Itkuvirren kolme elämää,* (Three Lives of the Lament; 2006). Tenhunen views laments through the theory of Lauri Honko, in the sense that the lament tradition has gone through different phases (more in chapter 3.4). She introduces the lives of lamenters Matjoi Plattonen and Klaudia Plattonen and the state of the laments today. I read this research like a novel, and it has given me important perspectives on my own work and art. I started to read the literature backwards; I started with newer research and looked at the references to find the original researchers. The fact that my mother tongue is Finnish made this work easier, since so much of the literature is written in Finnish.

Nenola has written a thorough report of the research on Balto-Finnic laments in her book *Inkerin itkuvirret—Ingrian Laments* (2002, 77–81). I adapted my title *Kaikkien kansojen murhe* from researcher and poet Martti Haavio (Honko 1963, 82) who did lament research in the 1930s. Before him there had been some research about laments, but all together you can say that the researchers were more interested in the Karelian *runo* tradition than laments. The

[1] 'Äänellä itkijät on yhdistys, jonka tarkoituksena on vaalia, elvyttää, edistää ja tehdä tunnetuksi äänellä itkemisen (itkuvirsi) perinteitä sekä karjalaista kulttuuria.'

interest towards laments grew again in the 1960s, especially because of Honko and Pentti and Helmi Virtaranta (Nenola 2002, 77). From the 1960s, two additional important researchers from Petrozavodsk, Russia, were Unelma Konkka and Aleksandra Stepanova (Konkka 1985, 7). Konkka's *Ikuinen ikävä* (Eternal longing; 1985) was my major reference concerning the lament rites. For my own lamenting, a very essential book has been Stepanova's *Karjalaisen itkuvirsikielen sanakirja* (Dictionary of Karelian Lament Language; 2012). In every research it seems that the author points out that there is still little lament research and there remains a lot to research. I am applying myself to the field of research as an artistic researcher; that is, I want to understand the tradition of laments to gain understanding for my own art. I believe only Liisa Matveinen (1989) has had the same kind of approach to laments in her thesis.

# 2 Laments

## 2.1 Laments—Poetry of Eternal Parting and Final Passing[2]

Laments are a global phenomenon that can be found in very different kinds of cultures throughout the world (Honko 1963, 82). The ancient Egyptians lamented, and laments were also used in Southwest Asia, pre-Islamic Arabia, and ancient Greece and Rome (Nenola-Kallio 1981, 44). Laments were sung in parting situations and also in the most important rites of human life, like marriage and death. In the Balto-Finnic area there were also laments of conscript when the boys of the village were taken into the army and occasional laments for everyday life situations to relieve sorrow (Asplund 2006a, 81). Laments were linked to 'death and other experiences of separation and loss. The presentation of laments is one form of ritual grieving which can include various gestures, positions and cries of lamentation' (Nenola 2002, 73).

The oldest laments in Europe were known already in ancient Greece. Laments are present, for example, in the Iliad. In the Middle Ages, the Roman Catholic Church forbid the use of laments in funerals, and therefore laments have existed until the present day only in some parts of Western Europe—in Ireland in Gaelic, in Corsica and Southern Italy, and in some small areas of France, Portugal and Spain. The Greek Orthodox Church has been more tolerant towards the lament tradition, and therefore it is biggest in Eastern Europe. Another explanation is that in the rural areas of Eastern Europe modernisation occurred more slowly, and thus ancient laments were part of the archaic culture (Asplund 2006a, 81–82). This is probably the reason laments have also survived in some parts of Western Europe (Nenola 2002, 73–74). You can draw a line from Greece to Finland and the eastern side of it is the lament area: Greece, the Balkans, Romania, Russian peoples and Finno-Ugric peoples (Asplund 2006a, 82).

[2] 'Ikuisen eron ja lopullisen poislähdön runoutta—' ' Lauri Honko writes (Honko 1974, 115).

In the Balto-Finnic area there have been laments among the Karelians, Ingrians, Vepsians, Votes and Seto (Konkka 1985, 13). Other Finno-Ugric peoples who have laments are the Komi-Zyrians, Mordvians, Mari, Voguls and Hungarians (Nenola 2002, 73).

Laments are a conservative tradition. Most likely the tradition started from the funerals where people shouted and moaned. During the centuries the lament has developed more complexity and come to be used for other situations as well. Laments have kept their place in rituals, though society has changed. Wedding laments were still sung in the 1920s in Karelia, and funeral laments even later. They survived the change from a fishing and hunting culture to an agrarian culture, but the modern society that we live in could not keep them alive (Söderholm 1989, 177–178).

Laments are considered hysterical and uncontrolled, but this is not true. They are controlled by the culture and the situation. When they are performed in rituals like weddings or funerals they have a particular place in the ceremony. Though there is a lot of improvisation, the content comes from the ritual and the situation (Söderholm 1989, 175). There are probably no two laments performed in a very same way two times, but the style and the terminology come strictly from the tradition (Honko 1963, 82).

At least in Europe, mostly women performed laments. There are some descriptions in the history of men performing funeral laments, but all the European laments that have survived until the present day are performed by women. The only exception is Irish tradition. The rural societies in Europe were patriarchal and kin-based. 'As birth-givers and caretakers of children, the sick and dying, women have experienced and alleviated suffering' (Nenola 2002, 74). Public mourning, which showed weakness, was more acceptable for women than for men (Tenhunen 2006, 44).

## 2.2 Funerary Laments – Dirges

Funerary laments, also called dirges, deal with same kinds of issues around the world. Even though they have not been in contact with each other, they have similar ways of mourning and expressions of sorrow and tender (Honko 1963, 82). Tenhunen writes that 'dirges are an ancient ritual tradition. According to many researchers the are the most original and global

type of the laments'[3] (2006, 50). Nenola writes, 'Information regarding funerary laments can be found the world over, from both ancient and modern cultures' (2002, 73). In Ingria and Karelia death was not considered the opposite of life, but the deceased started his path to the other world little by little. Laments helped him to find the way and also gave the opportunity to people of the community to express their sorrow (Tenhunen 2006, 49). According to Martti Haavio, 'the family was together, whether on this or the other side of the underworld'[4] (1959, 223). It was really important to do all the rites correctly; otherwise the deceased would remind people of his neglect by causing a lot of harm in the form of diseases or coming back as a ghost (Konkka 1985, 29). 'Laments are the only way to keep in touch with the inhabitants of the underworld',[5] Konkka writes (1985, 92).

In Karelia it was not possible to bury a person without dirges. If the deceased did not have any female relatives who could lament, the neighbours or someone else from village would do it. 'Every woman who was respected as a good lamenter, considered it a responsibility to lament even a bit to a strange decedent as well',[6] Konkka writes. In the 1880s there was a belief among researchers that some women would have lamented professionally and received money from it, but this was not the case in Karelia. Women lamented because they could, they wanted to do it, and it was their responsibility (Konkka 1985, 33–34).

Konkka (1985) describes the Karelian dirges and rites in detail. When someone was dying it was important that he was not alone. At this point there was silence, and crying and lamenting were not allowed. After the death, the corpse was washed and in some parts of Karelia there was lamenting in this situation. The closest female relative asked the washer to wash all the secular dirt away so the deceased would be as white as a swan. When the corpse was washed and dressed up, the real lamenting started. Often the first one to lament was the washer, who asked the deceased if he was satisfied with the wash. The deceased stayed two days in the house and was buried on the third day. During this time no housework was allowed other than what was absolutely necessary. In the night time there were no laments, but there was

[3] 'Kuolinitkut ovat ikivanhaa riittiperinnettä, monien tutkijoiden mukaan itkuvirsien alkuperäisin ja yleismaailmallisin laji.'

[4] 'Suku pysyy koossa, olivatpa sen jäsenet tällä tai tuolla puolella Tuonelan virran.'

[5] 'Itkuvirsi on ainoa keino pitää yhteyttä manalan asukkaiden kanssa.'

[6] 'Jokainen nainen, jota arvostettiin kylässä hyvänä itkijänä, piti velvollisuutenaan vaikkapa vain vähänkin itkeä vieraallekin vainajalle.'

one particular lament—*huondezvirzi*—when the sun rose and the deceased was asked to wake up and have some tea. There were also laments for the coffin maker and gravedigger. Usually the coffin was ready on the second day after the death, and the deceased was put into it. On the third day was the funeral. Everyone from the village came to see the decedent and apologised for the all the bad things he had said or done. On the way to the graveyard the villagers apologised in laments on behalf of everything: the house, the house steps, the yard, even the air. Lamenters also asked the old decedents to welcome the new one to the underworld. When the coffin was put into the ground the lamenter hugged the person on whose behalf she was lamenting, and many people were lamenting at the same time. In the laments were wishes that the deceased would come back as a bird, a butterfly or a flower. It was also possible to ask the deceased to tell wishes to people who had died before. The laments stopped immediately when the grave was filled with soil. The laments could continue again on the way back to the house but would stop before the memorial meal (Konkka 1985, 41–73).

All around the world there was a designated period of time after the funeral for remembering the deceased. In Karelia this time lasted for six weeks. During this time laments were sung by the grave, and the deceased was remembered in other ways too. People believed that the decedent also visited his home in the night. The six-week period ended with a memorial meal to which the deceased, as well as other deceased people, was invited. In these occasions women lamented, but laments were not as emotional as in the funeral. The decedents were also remembered on other occasions, and some rich houses organised a big celebration even years after the death (Konkka 1985, 75–91).

## 2.3 Wedding Laments

The wedding laments are the most developed and rich among the Balto-Finnic and Northern Russian peoples (Nenola 2002, 29). A wedding in Karelia was something of a play with many phases and set dialogues, songs and laments (Manninen 1932, 447). 'The traditional wedding was filled with the sorrow of the separation and the joy of the new marriage',[7] Konkka writes (1985, 100). The wedding was a ceremony in which the bride moved from her own family into

[7] 'Vanhanaikaiset häät olivat eron murhetta ja uuden liiton solmimisen riemua.'

the groom's family (Tenhunen 2006, 52). For the bride the wedding meant the end of one period in her life, that of being a girl, and a transfer to being a wife. Her family lost a dear family member. The wedding laments dealt with the relationships of the bride's family and they were sung only at the bride's home (Asplund 2006a, 95). The laments depicted the bride's transfer as tragic, but not being married was an even worse option. Girls were prepared to be married from childhood, and nobody wanted to be an 'old maid'; this would have been a shame for the girl and her family (Konkka 1985, 101). The message in the laments was usually that as a girl in her own home the bride was treated well, like a flower, but in her husband's home she was the last person in the hierarchy. In the laments she was prepared for life in the new home. Wedding laments also contained the idea that if the bride did not cry at her wedding she would cry the rest of her life—and if she cried, she would have a joyful life after the wedding (Konkka 1985, 103).

An essential person in the Karelian wedding was the *itkettäjä* (someone who makes you cry). She was an older woman, such as the bride's godmother, who was with the bride at the wedding. It is not clear whether it was the bride or the *itkettäjä* who lamented after the engagement and during the wedding. The ego of the lament is the bride's, but many lamenters have told that even they had an i*tkettäjä* at their weddings. The *itkettäjä* knew all the dozen laments for the bride and knew all the rituals of the wedding, so she was a big help for the bride. Konkka assumes that the Karelian girls did not have to lament at their own weddings, though they would lament otherwise. In Mordovia and Ingria the Izhor girls practised lamenting before the wedding (Konkka 1985, 104–110).

A wedding in Karelia did not only consist of lamenting; there was a lot of singing as well. 'The songs represent the groom's and his family's and the laments the bride's and her family's relationships to the event and bring opposite feelings to the wedding play',[8] Konkka writes (1985, 116). The wedding in Karelia and in Ingria was a complex rite and the manners varied from village to village (Konkka 1985, 116–117). But it was always a two side wedding – some ceremonies at bride's home and some at groom's home (Asplund 2006b, 311).

[8] 'Laulut kuvastavat sulhasen, oikeammin sulhasen suvun, itkut taas antilaan ja hänen sukunsa suhdetta tapahtumaan ja luovat vastakkaista tunnelmaa häänäytelmään'

The wedding rite in Viena Karelia started after the proposal and engagement (Konkka 1985, 118). After this the girl was called the bride and the *itkettäjä* started her job. Usually the first lament was for the mother and the second was for the father. After that the other relatives and guests got their laments as well. The bride hugged and bowed to the person for whom the *itkettäjä* lamented (Konkka 1985, 121). The women could lament back and also give some help to the bride (Konkka 1985, 102). On the days between the engagement and the wedding— sometimes only a couple of days, sometimes a week or longer—the bride and the *itkettäjä* went from house to house and lamented and got gifts for the bride. These visits were for both giving farewells and delivering invitations to the wedding (Konkka 1985, 126–128).

The evening before the wedding was the time for the *antilaskyly*, the sauna for the bride. The bride was washed there, and the bride's friends and the *itkettäjä* joined her; different laments were part of the sauna. The researchers have assumed that the purpose of the sauna was to make the bride clean and strengthen her fertility. In some villages it was important that the sauna was heated with the right kind of wood, and the water and the birch whisk used in the sauna were also special. The fertility was strengthened with certain chants so that the bride would have sexual charm. The atmosphere in the *antilaskyly* was often tragic because for the bride it was the final separation from her family and friends. When the bride came back from the sauna she lamented that the steps to her childhood house had grown higher (Konkka 1985, 128–134).

The last night and wedding morning were accompanied by laments at the bride's home. Both the bride and her mother lamented (Konkka 1985, 136–137). The celebration at the bride's home started when the groom and his male relatives arrived (Asplund 2006b, 312). Even the ceremony at the bride's home had many phases. The groom and his group came and went away several times. Konkka (1985) has written exact descriptions of the Viena Karelia wedding and these are some examples of the customs: The groom's group made sure that the bride was the right one, the bride gave presents and also received presents, the bride changed her clothes, her hair was let down and finally she got a headdress, which was a sign that she was married. There were different laments for all these customs, but the lamenting stopped when the bride left the house. Her mother kept on lamenting, but someone from the groom's side came and gave a little money for her to stop (Konkka 1985, 138–164).

## 2.4 Laments for Conscripts

There were laments for conscripts in both Finno-Ugric and Russian traditions. These laments were a way to say goodbye to husbands and sons when they were sent to war or to the army. They had the same motives as the dirges and wedding laments—moaning and farewells—as well as themes of war and soldiers (Nenola-Kallio 1981, 45). Service in the army lasted for five to twenty years, so it really meant a separation from the family for a boy. The one to sorrow the most was the boy's mother, thus she was the lamenter. The mother described her great sorrow and might have even lamented that she would rather bury her son than send him to the army or to war (Honko 1963, 123–124).

## 2.5 Occasional Laments

Laments were also a way to express feelings in any occasion (Väisänen 1990, 124). 'Not only in the funeral, but in any special occasion in life is the lamenter ready to lament a proper lament. If a collector has arrived in her place, she dedicates to her at the moment of farewell, after having her reward, a thankfulness lament',[9] Väisänen wrote (1990, 127). Occasional laments were not part of the rites; they were part of everyday life. The women could lament the sorrows and tragedies of their own or someone else's (Nenola-Kallio 1981, 45). The theme of lament could also be joyful and consist of congratulations and greetings (Matveinen 2012).

## 2.6 Language of Laments

The language of laments is special. The first dictionary of Karelian laments was published in Finnish in 2012. The dictionary was written by Aleksandra Stepanova, who started her research on laments in 1963 (2012, 6). The Karelian laments don't have a special meter. A melodic phrase gives the rhythmic structure to one lament period. Usually one lament period is repeated with different lyrics from two to seven times. This is a stylistic device called parallelism. One of the most important things in the Karelian lament language is alliteration, which means that the words of one period start with the same letters (see text examples 1 and

[9] 'Ei ainoastaan häissä ja hautajaisissa, vaan voi sanoa kaikissa merkillisissä elämäntiloissa on itkettäjä valmis virittämään niihin soveltuvan virren. Niinpä jos laulunkerääjä on saapunut hänen luokseen, omistaa hän tälle, hyvästijätön hetkellä, palkkion saatuaan, kiitosvirren.'

2). Especially in Viena Karelia the alliteration is highly developed, and the phrases can be very long (Stepanova 2012, 11).

**Text example 1**

An example of alliteration of the vowel *o* from an engagement lament in which the *itkettäjä* asks the father on the behalf of the bride ('*hyvänen*', a little good) why he has lighted the candles in front of the icon (Uhtua, Röhö. Ullana Hoikka. – Anni Leontjeva 1940. KFA 15/11. Konkka 1985, 24).

*Mitä, orhie hyväseni, olet oimun yleksennellyn ottsiseinillä olijien ottsioprasaisien esih,*
*kun ottuumaijah oimun nuoret osramielialaseni,*
*kun ei olei minkänä oimullisien oravatuhansien ottorkuinta-aikset,*
*jotta etkö ottorkuitseksentele oimun nuorie osravaltaisieni esissä ottsiseihillä olijien ottsioprasaisien?*

The Ingrians also used alliteration, though sometimes the phrases were closer to the *runo* meter (Nenola 2002, 72).

**Text example 2**

A dirge on laying the body in the coffin**.** I used this lament in my song *Toivo*; see chapter 4.3.10 (Akulina [Okkuli] Kirillova. From the recording *Itkuja*).

*A veeren veerehees vesin vaalimaiseen*
*a tyen kubehessees kuvvaamaiseen.*
*Ved nyt jo lasemma siun ikisii kottii imeteltyiseen*
*a nyd jo laahin siun ijäksi lautoihisin, lakkiia laukkoilintuiseni.*

The vocabulary of the Karelian and Ingrian laments is also unique. It has a lot of implicatures and diminutives, and often the words are in plural. This is what makes the language of laments difficult to understand for a person who has not heard one before. All kinships as well as some other persons, subjects, concepts and phenomena had their own metaphors. It was thought that the metaphors protected the lamenter from bad and supernatural forces (Stepanova 2012, 12–13). Lamenter Martta Kuikka described that 'the words need to be made sweeter and softer' (Matveinen 2012).

Lamenters grew up in an environment where laments were a natural part of life. They learned the whole lament language by ear—both vocabulary and stylistic matters. They didn't have to learn ready laments, but they knew the language and the formulas and could create their own laments based on that (Stepanova 2012, 13). I suppose some laments were more fixed than

others because of the skills of the lamenters and content of the rite. It is also possible that the lamenter herself considered the different variations of the same lament theme as the same lament, though for us who have grown up in a written culture they look very different.

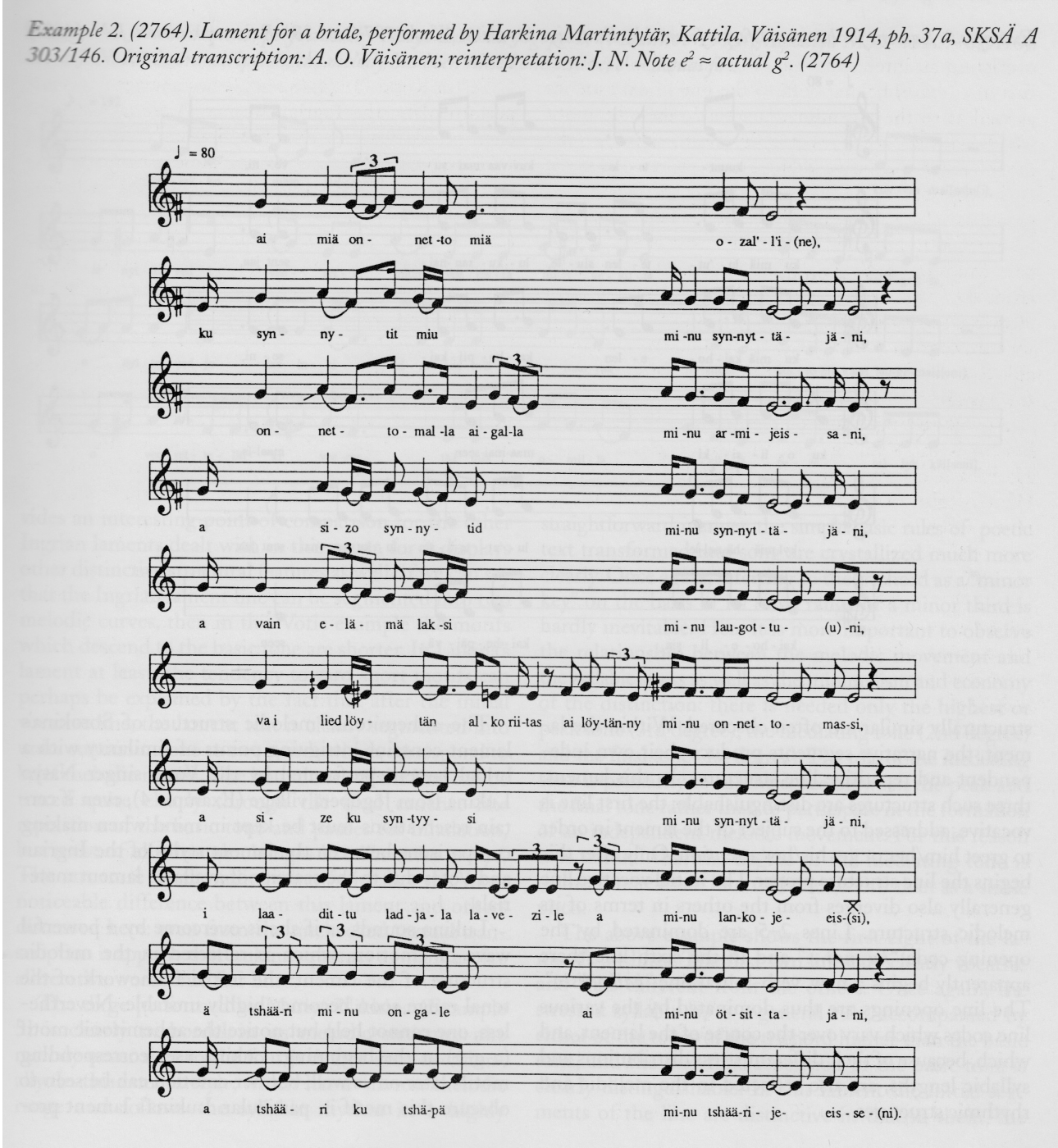
## 2.7 Melodies of Laments

The melody and the rhythm of a lament vary all the time because of the free meter of the lyrics. Still, phrases can be heard. A lamenter usually has her own style, and therefore laments for different occasions might sound the same (Väisänen 1990, 125–126). The melodies are often diatonic, and the scale is usually not more than five tones. Melody is often downward and it ends at the tonic. When the voice gets tired during the lament, the pitches of the tones might change, and therefore a major scale might also turn to a minor scale (Väisänen 1990, 129–130). Improvisation and variation are essential to laments, and it is not possible to have two exact same versions of the melody of the same lament (Väisänen 1990, 128).

Väisänen states that usually the scale of a lament is the minor pentachord (1990, 136), but Jarkko Niemi claims that the variation of the scale and its downwardness are actually results of the tonal speech intonation (2002, 710). Niemi reminds that many laments in the Slavic region and Eastern Europe sound more like songs, which is rare in the Balto-Finnic area. The Setos in Estonia are the only exception (Niemi 2002, 710). Niemi has notated laments with Western notation, and he tries to find phrases in his notation and put them down below (see notation example 1).

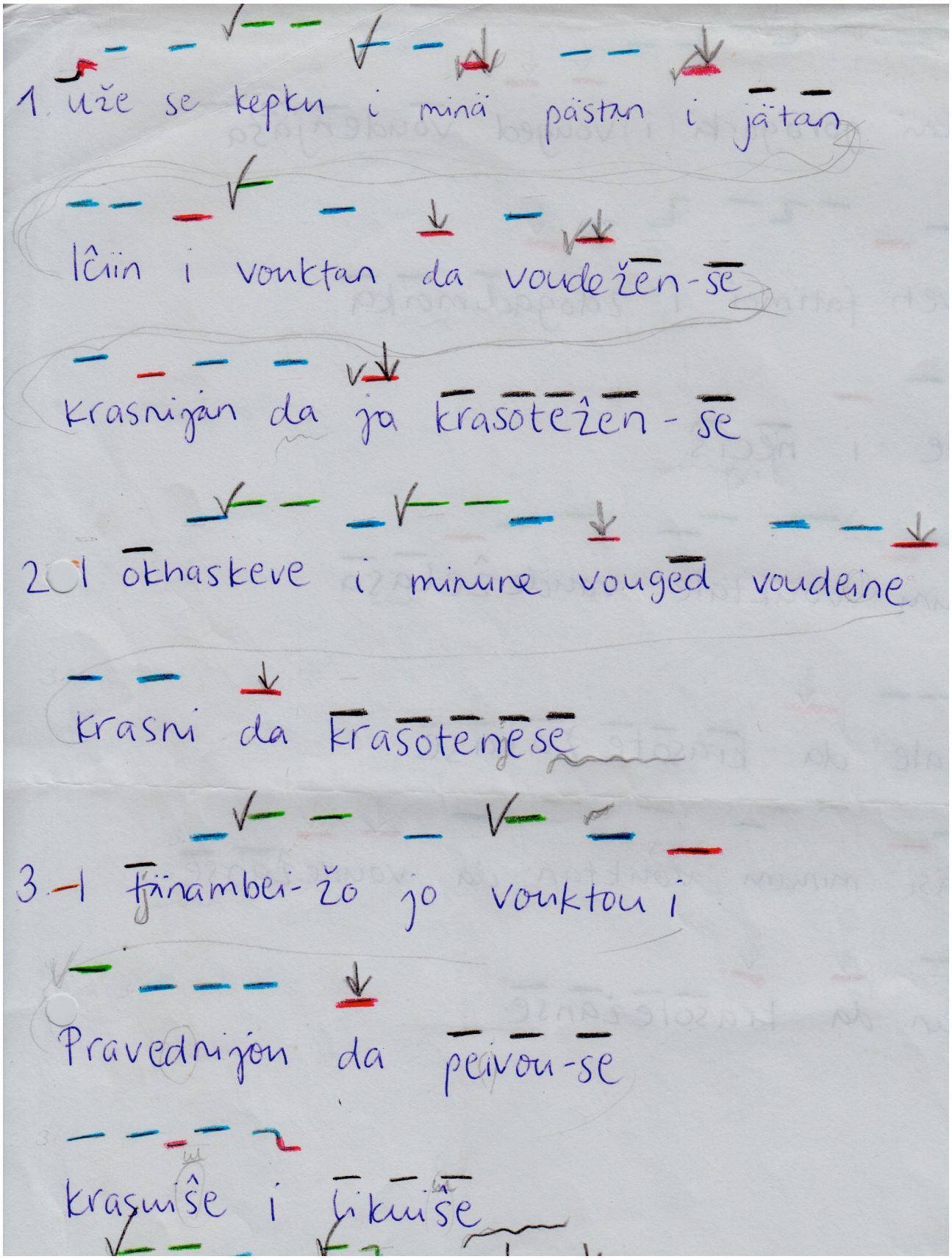
Researcher Ilpo Saastamoinen says that lament melodies are without meter but have a certain AB-structure. A is the pre-verse and B is the post-verse. With this AB structure, Saastamoinen sees laments as relatives to *runo* singing. Usually the A verse starts from the fifth and the B verse from the fourth tone of the scale. Both of the verses are downward. The lyrics define the length of the verse. The structure can be anything; the combination of the A and B verses is always unique (Saastamoinen 2012). Though laments usually have only a few tones, the melodies are actually very complicated and complex. I find them difficult to notate with Western notation, and when I have learned and notated laments from archive recordings, I have used my own system with colours and signs for accents (see notation example 2). This is not a system for academic research of the laments, but it was a good help for learning.

**Notation example 1**




**Lament notation made by Jarkko Niemi (2002, 715). Niemi puts the same kinds of phrases one below another.**

**Notation example 2**




**Example of my lament notation of a Vepsian lament. Different colours and the height of the line show the degree of the tone, black Vs are for accents, the arrow is for lower tone, the wave at the end of a phrase is vibrato.**

## 2.8 Presentations of Laments

The positions for performing laments differ from area to another. There is always a cloth or a corner of a scarf or an apron for covering the eyes and to wipe the tears and the nose (figure 1; Nenola 1989, 172). If you look at the pictures taken of the lamenters in Karelia, you can see that many women are sitting and holding their other hands on their cheeks (figure 2). Honko also describes that 'sometimes the lamenter has a companion, who does not lament or sing, but accompanies it with her sobbing by holding the lamenter from the neck and covering her eyes with the lament scarf in her free hand'[10] (figure 3; Honko 1963, 95). In the pictures from the graveyard you can also see lamenters who lie on the ground on their stomachs (figure 5). In the Seto tradition in Estonia, women also bowed while lamenting (figure 4; Nenola 1989, 168–169). The presentation of laments was often suggestive and ecstatic and was physically hard for the lamenter. This presentation and the lyrics usually made the listeners cry as well (Honko 1963, 95).

**Figure 1. Two lamenters from Soikkola, Ingria.**
**Antti Hämäläinen 1943, Finland's National Board of Antiquities (Nenola 1989, 173).**

[10] 'Toisinaan itkijällä on vieressään kumppani, joka tosin ei osallistu itse laulantaan, vaan tyytyy säestämään sitä nyyhkytyksillään pitäen itkijää kaulasta ja peitellen vapaalla kädellään silmiään itkuliinaan hänkin.'

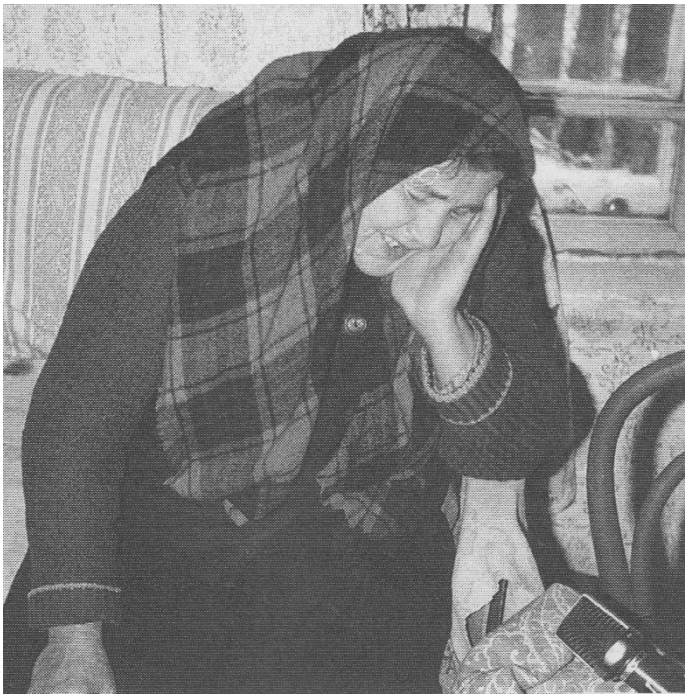


**Figure 2. Anna Andrejevna Sutjajeva from Tver Karelia.**
**Lauri Honko 1977 (Nenola 1989, 173).**

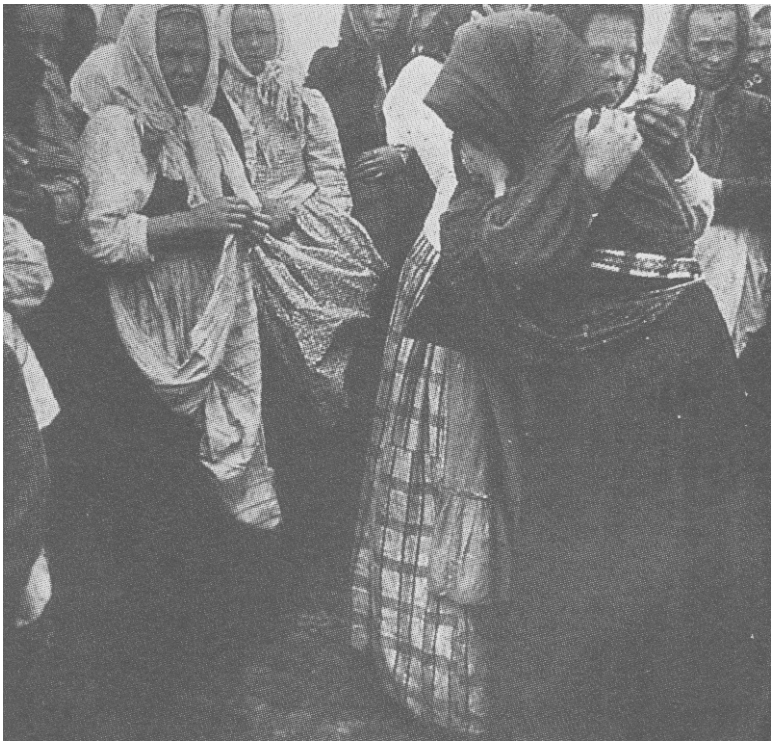


**Figure 3. Fiancè is leaving for the war.**
**A. O. Väisänen 1916, Finland's National Board of Antiquities (Nenola 1989, 168).**

**Figure 4. Seto women from Estonia lamenting at a wedding.**
**A. O. Väisänen 1922, Finland's National Board of Antiquities (Nenola 1989, 168).**

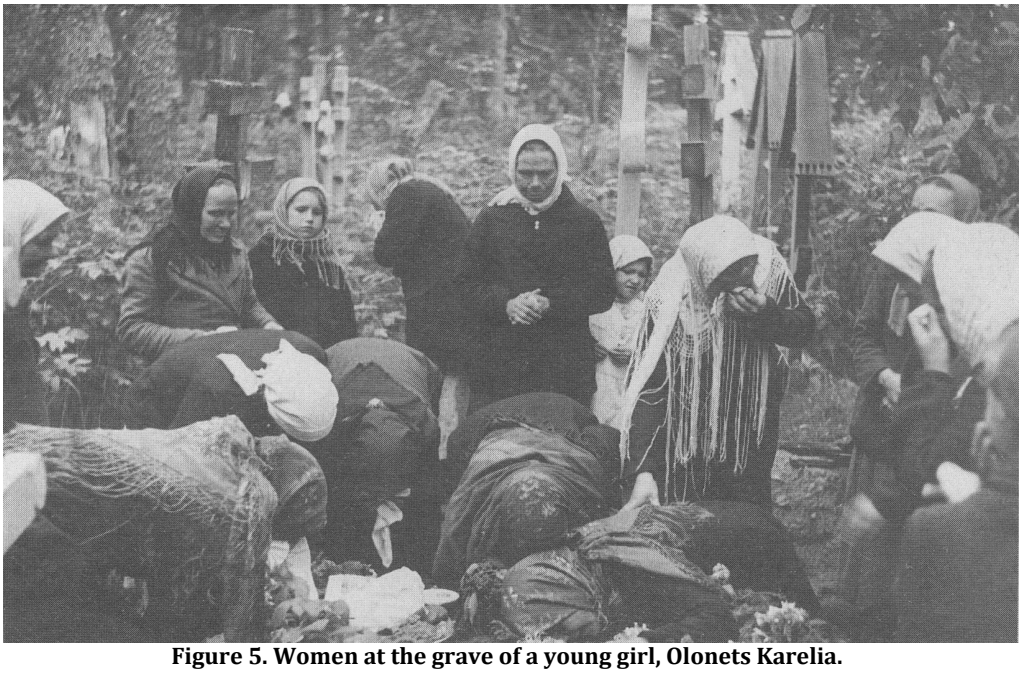


**Figure 5. Women at the grave of a young girl, Olonets Karelia.**
**Sakari Pälsi, Finland's National Board of Antiquities (Nenola 1989, 171).**

# 3 Challenges

## 3.1 My Prejudices

I used to consider laments to be something difficult and outside my world. I have noticed in discussions with other folk singers that the relationship to laments is not always easy. I wanted to know where these complexes come from, and in this chapter I have tried to find literature to give me explanations. Ethnomusicologist Marja Mustakallio (1987) describes well feelings that I can recognise from the time I started to study folk music. She noticed during her own ethnomusicology studies that the folk songs she had learned in school were totally different than the music she heard in archive recordings or at folk music festivals. She wanted to prove that the folk songs she had learned in school were fakes (Mustakallio 1987, 222). I also understood quickly that the versions of the folk songs I had learned in school or seen as sheet music were a reflection of certain values in the history of Finnish education. I wanted to perform real folk music, and I was annoyed that average people didn't know what it was. I just felt laments were weird because the examples I had heard were so emotional and full of crying. I was also suspicious about whether it was even worth learning laments. Although you can learn them exactly the way they are in the recording, the context would not be the same. Laments were usually part of a rite, so the context felt extremely important.

Just as Mustakallio eventually realised that she also had values as a researcher and that there was actually no such thing as a folk song (1987, 222), I realised that music is real only when the performer him or herself believes in it. When I started I imitated everything from the archive recordings and tried to be as authentic as I could. In the beginning of my studies, *authentic* to me meant sounding the same as the archive recordings. This process has given me tools, but it is also important that I didn't stop at this point of just imitating others. Nowadays authentic music means for me that the music is made because of desire and not just because of, for example, money.

If you think too much about authenticity, you may not be able to do anything anymore. Sheldon Posen (1993) describes in his article his struggle with authenticity. He also thought that he was not allowed to perform some music because of his background, and he felt that

music festivals were fake situations for performing certain kinds of folk music. This happened in Canada in the late 1960s. He could not perform anymore, as 'he had authenticized himself out of the folksong business' (Posen 1993, 134). It is not a wonder if you consider the atmosphere among researchers at that time, which also generated the term *folklorism*.

## 3.2 Folklorism

The authentic tradition is called *folklore*. In the 1960s German ethnologists, especially Hans Moser, defined the term *folklorism* to describe a tradition that was modified for new purposes. Traditions were taken away from their original context and were rebuilt 'artificially' or 'artistically'. Folklorism was seen among ethnologists as a threat to real folklore, and therefore it became almost a swear word to researchers. Vilmos Voigt has called this trend the criticism of folklorism (Kurkela 1987, 200–201). Seppo Knuutila writes, 'Folklorism also means those matters that the folklore research has traditionally and systematically rejected: the mental and material folklore that lives today is made public and arranged for new contexts and is chosen from the folklore for ideological, artistic and commercial purposes'[11] (1989, 218).

Researchers Hannes Sihvo (1989) and Knuuttila (1989) tend to consider folklorism from the financial side. Money and business are mentioned often. Sihvo seems to be very critical of traditional performances that are meant for tourists. I cannot help wondering whether he has ever thought of the possibility that folklorism could touch somebody; that maybe these new performers do it because they simply love it. I can see the point that tourists should not be cheated by cheap performances and that the picture of folklorism is not the truth of yesterday or our society today. But I don't think that the researcher should be the one to tell what is real; he should observe and try to understand why folklorism exists. Fortunately this has happened since the year 1989, which can be seen, for example, in the theory of the folklore process.

[11] 'Folklorismilla tarkoitetaan myös niitä seikkoja, joita kansanperinteen tutkimus on vanhastaan järjestelmällisesti vierastanut: nykyisyydessä elävää, julkiseksi tehtyä, yhä uusiin yhteyksiin sovitettua ja sovitettavaa henkistä ja aineellista kansanperinnettä, perinnettä, joka on kansankulttuurin piiristä valikoitu aatteellisen, taiteellisen ja kaupallisen toiminnan materiaaliksi.'

## 3.3 Folklore Process

Honko wrote an article about the folklore process in 1990, and I think this theory allows more space for different forms of folklore than the criticism of folklorism. Honko sees that folklore is always a process, and he divides this process into 22 parts. The first 12 parts are part of the first life of folklore, and the remaining 10 parts are part of the second life of folklore. Honko wanted to create a formula that would work in any culture. 'It (the folklore process) starts from the time before the concept of the tradition is born and it ends with the appraisal of the value of tradition in the culture that is made today',[12] Honko explains (1990, 102–103).

The first life of folklore is in its genuine environment. It starts at a point where tradition is not even noticed yet. It is such a natural part of life that it is not recognised and it has no name or category. Tradition can live without internal or external threats. Honko reminds that this is a 'strongly idealised picture of untouched and harmonic state of a traditional culture'.[13] He also emphasises that this point is just a tool for research, not a real state. Gradually the members of society recognise the tradition themselves and at some point an outsider also finds it and might even record it or save it in same way. It becomes more important to define the tradition. The tradition is idealised. Outsiders, such as researchers, also have a big responsibility in how they describe tradition. The responsibility of tradition itself should be on the community. The researcher should consider his informant a co-researcher. Honko even suggests that the author of the research should be both the researcher and the informant. He emphasises that in the best case there is a deep respect between the academic world and the community of the tradition. The final point of the first life of folklore is research-based analysis (Honko 1990, 104–113).

In the second life of folklore the tradition is recovered from the archives. The context is different than in the first life. The tradition does not live anymore in the community but, for example, on the stage (Honko 1990, 113 – 114). I really like Honko's approbative approach to the different phases of folklore:

[12] 'Se (folkloreprosessi) alkaa ajalta ennen perinnekäsitteen syntymää ja päätyy nykyhetken arvioon perinteen merkityksestä kulttuurissa.'

[13] 'vahvasti idealisoitu kuva koskemattomasta ja harmonisesta perinnekulttuurin tilasta'

> The aim of recycling a tradition has not received enough attention. There is only a pejorative and over-critical attitude towards the 'secondary' life of a tradition. It has not been realised that a certain change is always present, even in the most detailed reproduction and not only in the free variant of the tradition. Nor has it been realised that the message of the tradition can also be passed on in the performances of the second life of the folklore. Most of all there has not been enough value to the phenomenon of the second life of the folklore as research targets nor developers of the tradition with their own terms.[14] (Honko 1990, 114).

In the second life of folklore it is possible that the original community adopts its tradition back. The tradition can be used in the culture politics and may turn out to be commercial. The community may have different opinions on how they should handle these things. Also an important question regarding markets is who gets the money. It might be that the community gets nothing while the record labels, other performers and publishers have the protection of copyright. UNESCO has given recommendations on how to protect traditions, but the question of copyright is difficult. In the second life of folklore, the tradition can be taught in schools as well. Honko reminds that it is important to teach the youth so that they can consider the tradition from their own point of view and discover it again. He also writes about the importance of education of new researchers. This should be as international as possible to bring a wide perspective. An important point in the second life of folklore is support for the performers of folklore (Honko 1990, 114–118). 'There is a creative investment in the performance that needs to be respected, even though it would differ from the perspective of the researcher',[15] Honko writes (Honko 1990, 118). The very last phase in the folklore process is 'assessing the importance of folklore in the modern world' (Honko 1990, 121). Honko offers his model as a tool for anyone to define his own place in the folklore process (1990, 119). He sees 'folklore as a global language and material for cultural exchange' (1990, 121).

[14] 'Tämä perinteen uudestaankierrätyksen omatavoitteisuus ei ole saanut riittävää huomiota osakseen. On syntynyt väheksyvä ja ylikriittinenkin suhtautuminen perinteen 'sekundaariin' elämään. Ei ole tajuttu, että tietty muutos on läsnä jo kaikkein tarkimmassakin reproduktiossa eikä vain vapaissa perinteen mukaelmissa. Ei ole myöskään oivallettu, että perinteen sanottava voi mennä perille myös sen toiseen elämään kuuluvissa performansseissa. Ennen kaikkea ei ole annettu folkloren toisen elämän ilmiöille riittävää arvoa sen paremmin tutkimuskohteina kuin perinteen omaehtoisten muotojen kenttänä.'

[15] 'Esitykseen taas sisältyy luova panos, jota on kunnioitettava, vaikka se poikkeaisi asiantuntijan näkemyksestä.'

## 3.4 Laments and Folklore Process

Tenhunen (2006) used Honko's folklore process in her own doctoral study of laments. She developed the theory further: the first life of folklore was laments in their original context. In the second life the performers learned the laments from people who belonged to the first phase, but they performed the laments on stages and in other contexts. Tenhunen sees that the lament also has a third life in modern society. In Finland there is a movement for people who want to make their own laments, the association *Äänellä itkijät ry*. Tenhunen suggests that the folklore process is not formal or clear, but it helps to understand the different phenomena (Tenhunen 2006, 14).

The folklore process supports my ideology of respect. I don't have to be worried all the time whether there is a point to lamenting without the original context. I was born in a certain society and time, and I can't help that. Still, I am fascinated by laments, and that is enough. I feel that understanding the tradition has given me tools as a musician. I understand that my context is different than the traditional context, but you cannot say which context is better than the other—they are just different. The folklore process doesn't carry the values of folklorism and the major critique of it. I tried to define what stage I would be at in Honko's theory, but I couldn't find any that would have been totally suitable for me. Laments have been recognised and researched already for a long time, and I am not the first person to perform them outside the traditional context. I don't feel that I am reviving an old tradition; I feel I am making my own art based on the tradition. Maybe this is the phase that Tenhunen calls the third life of the lament.

I think Tenhunen found in her study good evidence that there can be respect between the different lives of folklore. Klaudia Vonkkanen, who learned laments from her mother, was excited when she heard new lamenters in a course in 2001. That even inspired her to improvise a new lament (Tenhunen 2006, 262). Klaudia Plattonen, whose grandmother was a well-known lamenter and who lamented herself, said that you have to make your own laments yourself. You cannot lament somebody else's lament; you should put your own feelings in the lament (Tenhunen 2006, 276). Another example is Martta Kuikka, who also said that the lament should start from the person him- or herself. She said that laments can't be taught; you can only listen to other lamenters and be influenced. She also said that it was

not easy for her to start to lament, but with time she got better and better (Tenhunen 2006, 282). I feel these comments are encouraging for the lamenters of today. It is acceptable for each and every one to find his or her own way to lament.

Tenhunen (2006) interviewed professor Heikki Laitinen and folk singer Anna-Kaisa Liedes for her study. Laitinen said that laments don't have the same position as other traditions of folk music. They can have a wider scale regarding how to perform them. Both Laitinen and Liedes suggest that different ways to perform laments can be heard in archive recordings. There shouldn't be only one stereotype way to lament. A lament can be performed by a classical singer or by a choir (Tenhunen 2006, 289). I can concur with Laitinen and Liedes. Though laments have been part of the studies of the folk music department, they are still considered more difficult than, for example, *runo* singing. I feel, though, that the times are changing. There is a bigger interest in laments among my generation. It was not difficult for me to find assistants for my concert; six women were eager to lament with me.

# 4 Concert *Kaikkien kansojen murhe—All the People's Sorrow*

## 4.1 Process

I had heard the word lament (*itkuvirsi* in Finnish) already in my childhood, but I did not know what it meant until I started to study folk music in autumn 2005. I think it was my very first or maybe my second year of study when there was a small seminar of laments at Joensuu University and I went to listen to it. I don't have the notes from the lecture anymore, but when I think of the topic, I am pretty sure that at least Anna-Liisa Tenhunen was talking there about her doctoral study. The lectures were interesting, but the laments themselves felt weird to me. I did not see any point to performing them; they were part of old rites that did not exist anymore. How could I lament a dirge if nobody is dead? Or what was the point of a wedding lament without a wedding? Would anyone even want to have laments at a wedding nowadays? I hadn't heard laments in my childhood, as I was not an orthodox, and it seemed like I had no connection at all with laments. I didn't feel I would have some kind of special gift or sense that I would lament well. So was I even allowed to sing them? I have heard other folk singers saying the same kinds of things, so I believe I was not alone in my thoughts.

Though I thought I didn't like laments, I heard one song on a tape as an exchange student in Petrozavodsk, Russia, in spring 2008. I didn't know what it was, and my teacher told me it was a lament. I was impressed by the beautiful melody and the unique sound of the singer. It sounded more like singing with few notes because the lamenter was not weeping. I learned the lament and performed it in my exam the same spring. The lament was a bride's lament about *vouktan voudaizen*, which means the white will, to lose a bride's own might to a stranger. Later I found out that this is the most common theme in the Vepsian wedding laments. I kept this one lament in my repertoire, but otherwise I was not interested in laments.

When I started singing lessons with Anna-Kaisa Liedes in the autumn 2011, she suggested that I could combine lament lyrics with the Indian ragas because I had taken some Indian singing lessons. I read the book *Inkerin itkuvirret—Ingrian laments* (2002), written by Aili Nenola, and was excited by the beautiful lament language. The wedding laments I found easy

to start with. There were feelings that I could recognise from my own life, but they were not as tragic as the dirges, the funeral laments. At first I thought it would be ok to sing the lyrics but I won't weep. Little by little I went deeper into the world of laments and wanted to learn them the traditional way too, not only mixing the lyrics with Indian ragas or some other melodies. I remembered some laments that I had heard in Petrozavodsk a couple of years earlier and wanted to learn them. An encouraging experience was when we had a visiting singing group from Viena Karelia at the department. I had learned a wedding lament, and Anna-Kaisa had heard it. She asked me to perform the lament for this singing group. There were also older women in the group who might have heard lamenting in their childhood. They were really touched by my lamenting. It gave me trust to go further.

The first step to perform the laments was my solo lament concert, *Hoz mie itken, hoz mie laulan*, at the Seurasaari Soi festival in summer 2012. It was a summary of what I had done in the academic year 2011–2012. The concert was held at the Seurasaari museum in an old Karelian cottage. The small cottage was full of people, including many tourists, who listened to me intensively. This concert was a supportive experience for me. The audience accepted the laments, were even touched by them and didn't consider them too weird, which I was afraid of. I decided first that summer of 2012 that my final project would also deal with laments. My dream was to have a very global lament concert where there would be laments from all around the world. But when I started to look for literature and archive recordings, it was only easy to find Balto-Finnic material. I met researcher Ilpo Saastamoinen in October 2012. He told that he has material from all around the world, but it was not organised. He also convinced me that the laments themselves are global, since the tradition can be found everywhere. I decided to focus on Karelia and Ingria, though the concert ended up using material from Finland, Persia, Kosovo, Estonia and Russia too.

### 4.2 Concert on 2 May 2013

Autumn 2012 was a time for me to collect material and plan the concert. In January 2013 I made the first sketch of the concert programme. In the end the programme didn't change much; there was only one song I needed to drop because of the length of the concert. My concert was named *Kaikkien kansojen murhe—All the People's Sorrow*, and it was part of the Touko-Taiga festival at the Sibelius Academy. The concert was held on 2 May 2013 at the

Chamber Music Hall at the Sibelius Academy. I was happy that there was a large audience. Before the concert I was very nervous. I hadn't had a solo concert for a long time, and this was my final exam. The most exciting thing was to stand in front of the band at the beginning. It would have been so much easier to be one of players in the row. In the beginning of my folk music studies I often got feedback that I have to take the role of a soloist more bravely, and I am proud of myself that I have developed this a lot. I could hear from my voice that I was a little tense, but I think I still did pretty well. After the two first songs I relaxed and could trust in my voice and myself totally. An extra excitement in the concert was that we did not have the opportunity to practise with the sound and light engineer, and since I had so many musicians with me, there were a lot of changes of places on the stage.

All together I was satisfied with the concert. The spring had been physically hard for me, and it was not always easy to sing. I had some mucus in my throat before the concert but luckily I didn't have problems with my voice during the concert. But what was even more important than my voice was the feeling in the concert. It was concentrated and sensitive. I really felt the laments in my heart. I was especially proud of myself that I wasn't afraid to perform the lament of my own, which was really personal.

## 4.3 Repertoire

### 4.3.1 Nämä kerdaset

Sung by Niina Kuikka (b. 1910) from Impilahti, Karelia. Song also includes a wedding lament theme from Leshukonsky, Archangel. Arrangement by Emmi Kuittinen and musicians.

'Nämä kerdaset' is a song that I found as sheet music from the series *Karjalaisia kansanlauluja* (Karelian folksongs) part *Impilahti*. I found the melody fascinating. It is written in 3/4 meter, which sometimes felt a little strange; 5/4 would have been easier for this *runo* song. Niina Kuikka has sung it in a way that breaks the traditional *runo* meter. The melody line is downward, which gives the feeling of a lament. I decided to learn the melody exactly the way it was written, to the note.

When I started to make the arrangement, I first accompanied myself with the jouhikko (Finnish bowed lyre). I could easily play two chords with the open strings, the first and the fourth degree. The melody of the song is minor, but both of the chords I played with the

jouhikko were open chords. I started to hear the fourth degree as a major chord, which gave the feeling of the dorian mode to the song. I also added a theme of a wedding lament from Leshukonsky, Arkangel, which I heard from a recording called *Russian Northern Wedding*. The melody was sung throughout the wedding by the bride, her friends, and the mother of the bride. For the players—Ella Isotalo on the jouhikko, Marouf Majidi on the tanbour, Nathan Thomson on the double bass and Turkka Inkilä on the flute—I gave sheet music with the chords and a riff for the flute and some harmonies. I also decided the structure of the song. Otherwise all the players brought their own influences to the song. I chose *Nämä kerdaset* as an opening number for the concert because of the lyrics: 'I sing now, because I don't have sisters or brothers for whom I could tell my sorrows'. In the lyrics the stylistic manner is parallelism; everything is said twice with different words.

**Text example 3**

*Nämä kerdaset laulelen*
*Da virdeni nyt virutan*
*Miul gu ei ole sitä sisärdä*
*Eikä ni emoni lasta*
*Kel mie huoleni huostasin*
*Mielpahani pagisisin*

(Niina Kuikka, Karjalaisia kansanlauluja Impilahdelta)

**Figure 6. *Nämä kerdaset* with Turkka Inkilä, Marouf Majidi, Ella Isotalo and Nathan Thomson. Jorma Airola 2013.**

### 4.3.2 Jos voisin laulaa

A Finnish folk tune. Arr. EK and musicians

'Jos voisin laulaa' is a Finnish folk tune that I know already from my childhood. I think I learned it in school because it is in all the old school music books. Both the melody and lyrics are romantic and beautiful. I heard some Slavic melancholy in the melody, and I was inspired by another arrangement by the pop group PMMP. They had made a Russian song, known in Finland as the children's song 'Katinka' ('Miska soutaa joella') with the same Slavic feeling. 'Jos voisin laulaa' is not a lament and not even an old song—it must actually be a quite modern folk tune. I felt that the concert would be too heavy if it only consisted of laments, and for me the feeling of longing in the song was a good match with the laments. I felt that that the melodies of 'Jos voisin laulaa' and the next song, 'Sunce mi se', could fit together, though 'Sunce mi se' is much more archaic and does not have such a big scale. The musicians had good ideas for how to build up the song. I had thought this was an easy song, but I think it needed the most consideration from the band.

### 4.3.3 Sunce mi se

A wedding song from Kosovo

To be precise, 'Sunce mi se' is not a song; it is a *glas*. I learned 'Sunce mi se' from a Serbian folk singer, Svetlana Spajic, in February 2011, and she told me that the *glas* (voice or tune in Serbian) is not considered a song, as it is part of a rite. The women who sing wedding *glas* give signals and structures to the rite. Without them it is not a wedding; without the singers the wedding does not exist. I feel that a *glas* is a relative to a lament. In this *glas* the message is that the sun is going down and our girl is going away. 'Sunce mi se' is a good piece for improvisation as well, and I tried to make my own version and still have the feeling of the original one. I first started with the version I learned from Spajic and then had an improvisational part in a higher key. In the end I came back to the melody with my own variations.

### 4.3.4 The Wedding

- *Church bell imitation*, created by the musicians
- *Wedding laments*, based on the traditional laments
- *Mõrsjaikk maamakõsõlõ*, a wedding lament to the mother of the bride from Setomaa, Estonia

The number 'Wedding' I considered one scene. It consisted of three different parts with six singers: Amanda Kauranne, Heidi Haapoja, Charlotta Hagfors, Mari Kalkun, Minna-Liisa Tammela and Sanne Tschirpke. The inspiration to make a wedding scene I got from Petrozavodsk, Russia. I was there as an exchange student for three months in spring 2008, and I saw there the students' final programmes. They did not make concerts but a scene from some tradition. For example, a student could make a small scene from a Vepsian wedding. First I just had the idea of many women lamenting wedding laments at the same time. Though I was inspired by the scenes I had seen in Petrozavodsk, I did not want to make a historical scene where everything would be right, but an artistic scene from the wedding theme, where I could use those impulses that inspire me. In the beginning of the scene I put a scarf on my head to be the bride. Then a church bell imitation started with small bells (everyone except me had one bell), and there begun an improvised dialogue between the lower and higher bells. Though in Karelia a wedding was not a religious festival and church was not part of the wedding, Orthodox church bells are part of the soundscape of Karelia.

In the next part the six singers were all *itkettäjä* (someone who makes you cry) one by one (to know more about *itkettäjä,* see chapter 2.3). The only instruction I gave to the singers was to choose a wedding lament they wanted to lament. Most of them had known some laments before, and it was easy for everyone to have their own individual lament. Ella Isotalo played a lament melody with the jouhikko as well. In the end there were six singers and the jouhikko, everyone having a different lament on top of each other. I was silent under my scarf. I only ended the chaotic lamenting with the same lament melody I had sung at the beginning of the first song, 'Nämä kerdaset'.

**Figure 7. Women lamenting at the wedding scene, Minna-Liisa Tammela's turn to be the *itkettäjä*. Juha Olkkonen 2013.**

The last part was a Seto wedding lament, 'Morsjaikk maamakõsõlõ', that I had learned from the recording *Leiko lauluq*. Setos live in Southeast Estonia, and they are members of the Orthodox Church. The choreography I found out when one singer of the group, Mari Kalkun from Estonia, showed us a video in the Internet of a Seto wedding. The bride and her friends sing to the mother of the bride and bow to her at the same time (Ojamaa, Pärtlas, Kalkun). Mari was a big help for us to find the right pronunciation and style for the song. In this song I wanted us to find the Seto sound and choreography and not to make my own arrangements.

**Figure 8. *Mõrsjaikk maamakõsõlõ*, a Seto wedding lament with bowing choreography. From left Sanne Tschirpke, Mari Kalkun, Minna-Liisa Tammela, Emmi Kuittinen, Amanda Kauranne, Charlotta Hagfors and Heidi Haapoja. Jorma Airola 2013.**

### 4.3.5 Shure dard

Music & lyrics trad. from Western Iran, Finnish lyrics EK, arr. Marouf Majidi & EK

'Shure dard' is a Kurdish song from Western Iran that I sang with Marouf Majidi, who also played the traditional Iranian and Kurdish instrument tanbour. Marouf's origins are in Iran, and he learned this song from his mother. I am studying together with Marouf in GLOMAS, and we have sung together for a couple of years. When I started the project, the conversations with Marouf were important to me, since he had some experience with laments. Therefore it felt also natural that he would join this concert. The lament tradition is still alive in Iran, and Marouf's mother actually laments as well. In Iran both women and men lament. 'Shure dard' tells about the pain that somebody has caused: 'The sorrow that you caused echoes everywhere like a big drum'. Marouf suggested that I could write some lyrics in Finnish as well, and so I did. My lyrics tell about loneliness and big sorrows. The inspiration came from traditional phrases like 'yksinäinen ilman lintu', a lonely bird in the sky.

**Figure 9. 'Shure dard' with Marouf Majidi. Juha Olkkonen 2013.**

### 4.3.6 Lament Improvisation

By Marouf Majidi & EK

Researcher Ilpo Saastamoinen told me that when a tradition lives, it has two sides: a learned one and an improvisational one. When the tradition starts to fade, the first thing that disappears is the improvisation. When the tradition is recovered again, the old material is learned first, and the improvisation comes last (Saastamoinen 2012). This was exactly what I had done. I had already learned laments from the archive recordings or from books, but I could not improvise myself. I decided to just start doing it. I asked my fellow student, Marouf Majidi, to join me. The first session was in January 2013. Though I know Marouf well, it felt a bit awkward. It was not difficult to create the melody, but the lyrics were a challenge. I felt in the beginning that I could get no words out of my mouth. I was jealous of Marouf, who could lament in Persian or in Kurdish, and I understood nothing. But he also admitted that the lyrics were the most difficult thing for him too. I had already known that to have some kind of lament vocabulary is necessary, but these sessions with Marouf showed it to me concretely. You need to have a vocabulary of your own, and you cannot make up everything in the moment. To get a large vocabulary you need lots of time and practise. In optimal circumstances, you would have time and space to concentrate only on that, but since it was not possible I decided to use all the vocabulary that I had from the previous laments and have some terms of my own that I could always use. We agreed how the improvisation would start. Marouf first sang a Persian lullaby that is sung for dead children. We also found one common word that we could use: *maro* or *maroi*. In Ingrian lyrics the word is used as *Maroi, miun silliä siären* (Maroi, my sister), and in Kurdish it means ‘don’t leave’.

### 4.3.7 Kiitositku sukuni naisille— Thankfulness Lament to the Women of my Family

Music & lyrics EK

**Figure 10.** ***Thankfulness Lament to the Women of my Family.*** **Juha Olkkonen 2013.**

I wanted to try different techniques of performing laments: to sing them, to learn them from archives, to improvise them and also to write one beforehand and this number, 'Kiitositku sukuni naisille', was it (for the Finnish lyrics see appendix 1). I had also read old lamenters' opinions that you can't lament somebody else's lament, and you have to make your own (Tenhunen 2006, 282).

I was in folk singer Liisa Matveinen's short course in May 2012. Matveinen started to lament during her folk music studies in the 1980s, and she has taught many courses on lamenting since then and also performed laments. In Matveinen's course I heard her ideas about writing your own lament in your own special language and was inspired by them. Since laments are not part of the everyday life in Finland, we face the question of how to learn the language and

what kind of language we should use. Matveinen said that the language has always been somehow 'holy' because of the special vocabulary and that nothing was said directly. Therefore we should also create our own lament language even though we didn't want to lament in Karelian (Matveinen 2012). I also felt that the nature of laments requires a special language, and laments can't be sung in everyday Finnish. Matveinen had some concrete tips how to start. She encouraged me to think of positive topics because it is also possible to make laments of thankfulness. She also emphasised that the purpose of laments is not self-pity but compassion for other people (Matveinen 2012). Soon after the course I got the idea of a thankfulness lament to the women of my family. I have no brothers but two sisters. Both my mother and grandmother are strong women, and they have been good role models to me. I have never thought that something was not possible for me because I am a woman. I also have a daughter of my own, and I am of course thankful to have her. The ideas for the lament brewed in my mind slowly and finally in February 2013 I wrote them down. Stepanova's *Karjalaisen itkuvirsikielen sanakirja* (2012), Dictionary of Karelian lament language, was a big help and inspiration for me. I wanted to keep the alliteration from the Karelian lament language because it feels natural and beautiful in Finnish too. I also took some Karelian words and some Finnish translations from the dictionary. It was also nice to make up my own words and in the verses for my Karelian grandmother I wanted to use a word I have learned from her: *kaarittaa*. It means to complain, and it's something that she hates and never does though she is quite sick these days. In the lament I thanked all the important women of my family: my grandmother, my mother, both of my sisters and my own daughter. I expressed thanks for having them and all the support they have given me and things they have taught me.

I got advice for the lyrics from Liisa Matveinen via e-mail, and in the beginning of March 2013 I had the first lesson with her. When I lamented my text, I noticed right away which words and impressions worked out and which did not. The complicated language and language full of metaphors felt safe. My topic was personal, but with the implicatures I could leave space for listeners' own interpretations. The melody came with the improvisation. My singing teacher Anna-Kaisa Liedes encouraged me to use a scale with major, minor and neutral third. The melody was never totally settled, and the lyrics also varied a bit from time to time. I had read and heard that the lament melody is usually downward, and it felt natural for me too. The main thing in this lament was the lyrics, and the melody I improvised followed the lyrics.

Though I knew my text by heart, it always varied a bit. I could also repeat some words or phrases.

When I practised the lament, I first had some difficulties bringing feeling to it, but when I finally cried it with tears, it felt much more natural. I also understood the point that you can't lament somebody else's laments—no lament had touched me the way this one touched. It was my own language with my feelings. I couldn't know beforehand whether I was going to cry in the concert or not. But when I heard crying from the audience, it felt natural and good to cry myself too. I still believe that I could keep up the positive feeling I wanted to pass on to the audience.

### 4.3.8 Hiljalle—To Hilja

Music EK, lyrics by Vappu (Valpuri) Orava in 1882, from Kosemkina, Kallivieri, Ingria

'Hiljalle' is a song with lament lyrics, dedicated to my daughter Hilja. The lyrics are from Vappu Orava's lament in the year 1882 (see appendix 2) and are published in Nenola's book *Inkerin itkuvirret—Ingrian laments* (2002). I was touched by the lyrics, in which a mother wants to give a blessing to her daughter, who is getting married, and she encourages her that God will take care of her. I feel it is not my own virtue that I have my lovely daughter; I am simply blessed to have her. I can't do anything else for her than just hope and pray—she needs to go her own path. The melody I composed is actually quite pop, and I accompanied myself with the kalimba. This number was my experiment with how to compose a song to a lament text.

### 4.3.9 Kuolinitku sodassa 1942 kaatuneelle pojalle

*Dirge for a Son Who Has Fallen in a Battle*
Lamented by Natalia Andrejevna Gutskina (b. 1898) from Vasilkova, Tver Karelia
Soundscape by Turkka Inkilä

'Kuolinitku sodassa 1942 kaatuneelle pojalle—Dirge for a Son Who Has Fallen in a Battle' is my statement against the war. I wanted to have the theme in my concert because of the next song, 'Toivo' and because laments for conscripts have existed. Though this lament is a dirge, it has a strong connection to the war. I learned it from the recording *Itkuja*. The whole lament is seven minutes long, and I took only a little piece of it. I added it to my repertoire first in April 2013, only one month before the concert. The more I listened to the lament, the more I started to like it and see the beauty of it. The lyrics were really difficult for me at first since the lament

is from Tver Karelia and the lament language is so special. But then one day in the middle of rehearsing I suddenly understood the lyrics. I could not explain them; I just felt them. Turkka Inkilä played a soundscape of the war with his flute and pedals. Turkka is a great musician who right away tried different things, and it was quite easy for us to get the lament together.

**Figure 11. 'Dirge for a Son Who Has Fallen in a Battle' with Turkka Inkilä. Juha Olkkonen 2013.**

### 4.3.10 Toivo—Hope

Music & lyrics EK, arr. EK & musicians

'Toivo' is my own composition and lyrics that I made in spring 2012 after I had read the novel *Kätilö* by Katja Kettu. I was inspired by the love story of a Finnish woman and a German soldier who did everything to be together. There is no mention of the war in the lyrics, but because of the novel there is a link in my head, and that is why this song comes after the dirge for a son who has died in a battle. All the riffs in the song are written by me, but in the end of the song the players played them in the order they wanted to and improvised on them. On top of this, I lamented a dirge sung by Akulina (Okkuli) Kirillova (born 1906) from Soikkola, Ingria. It is the first dirge I had learnt, and it is from the *Itkuja* recording. I was fascinated by the high pitch that the lamenter has, and I used it as well.

### 4.3.11 Elämä—Life

Music trad. from Leshukonsky, Archangel, Finnish lyrics EK

**Picture 12. 'Elämä—Life' with the whole ensemble. Juha Olkkonen 2013.**

With the song *Elämä* I wanted to praise life and all of its parts. Sorrow and joy are relatives, and we need both of them. Though and maybe because life also has ugly sides, it is beautiful. The melody is a wedding melody that I heard from the recording *Russian Northern Wedding*. The original lyrics probably deal with something totally different, but I feel my lyrics suited it well as an ending number for the concert. I wanted to have an optimistic and hopeful feeling. All the musicians sang in this piece, so we got a powerful choir singing in many octaves. 'Oh life, you beautiful, ugly, dirty, deep, angular, lovely, strict, cruel, tender', say the lyrics (for the sheet music and Finnish lyrics see appendix 4). This message is important to me, because I think the most essential thing in lamenting is compassion for other people. I have had good luck in my own life in many ways, but I know that life has many faces, and it is possible that anything can happen anytime. This idea doesn't make me fearful; I am thankful for all the good, and it also reminds me that I am not better than those people who are suffering.

My inspiration for the lyrics came from the Finnish rock singer Ismo Alanko and his song 'Rakas, rämä elämä' (Dear, broken life). I wanted to put in the last verse all the adjectives I found good to describe life. The first verse of the song, 'Itken ja laulan' (I cry/lament and sing), I took from an Ingrian folk song, 'Hoz mie itken, hoz mie laulan', sung by Mari Vahter and a choir. I felt this was just the right expression for my life and what it was all about, and in the lyrics I ask life to join me in singing and crying.

## 4.4 Feedback

The most direct feedback on my concert I received during the concert. I could hear from the stage that people were crying in the audience. The concert was one entirety, so I got the applause first at the very end of the concert. I didn't know whether the audience had liked it or not, so it was important and also stunning to get a huge applause and shouts from the audience. Maybe the most beautiful feedback I had was from a French woman who was in the audience. She told me that she didn't understand any words, but she understood with her heart what the laments were about because she has two children. A German woman who was filming my concert said she couldn't film the whole time because she needed to cry as well. She understands neither Finnish nor Karelian. I think this is what the laments basically are about: feelings of human beings that we can share no matter what is the cultural context. Many Finnish people said that my own thankfulness lament was the most touching one because they could understand the lyrics, so with the lyrics we can also bring laments closer to the people of today.

I had three members in my jury: researcher Anneli Asplund, folk singer Outi Pulkkinen and the head of the Folk Music Department at the Sibelius Academy, Hannu Saha. The whole jury was happy that I had picked this topic, since there had not been any concert concentrating on laments so widely at the Folk Music Department. They also said that you could notice that I had gone deep to the topic—I think this written work and all the literature I had read made my concert possible. Saha said that this concert was also important as a first final concert of the GLOMAS programme in Helsinki, and thanks to the topic the combining of different cultures was natural.

I appreciated the professional skills of all my jury members, but I was especially happy—and also a bit afraid—to have Anneli Asplund in the jury. I have quoted her in this written project, and she has had such a long career in lament and folk music research. It was amazing that she had even met Niina Kuikka, the singer of my first song, 'Nämä kerdaset'. Asplund told me in the feedback that Kuikka was trying to stay with the lament tradition but was not a good lamenter or singer. Asplund had heard Kuikka herself. In the feedback I also got a critique from folk singer Outi Pulkkinen for learning this song after the notation. She would have

preferred the *runo* meter to be sung in the traditional way because then there would be more rhythmical variation.

The wedding scene had touched the jury. Asplund said that the part of women lamenting at the same time reminded her of the old pictures she had seen from the graveyards. Asplund also thanked us for finding the real Seto sound and said the choreography was just the way she had seen in Setoland. Hannu Saha said that the wedding scene itself could have been longer, and actually that could have been one concert itself. The jury liked my own lament because they could easily follow what it was all about. For Asplund some of my phrases were too modern, but all together she said that all the laments were done with good taste. The whole jury encouraged me to continue further with the laments.

## 4.5 Conclusions

I did not grow up in an environment where folk music or laments were part of everyday life. I heard laments for the first time as an adult and found them weird at first. It took many years before I started to lament myself, and it required a lot of thinking whether this was worth doing or not. Now that I have done this project, it feels funny that I was unsure and that I have not always lamented. Laments have filled my head, sometimes totally, and they feel part of my life.

It was not always easy to throw myself into the feelings of the laments. Though I could recognise the feelings described in the laments, I needed to get the balance of having the control and giving it up. First I didn't even require myself to be emotional; I just wanted to learn the laments as music. It would have been hard to go emotionally deep every time when I practised. I also kept in mind that it is different to lament alone than in front of an audience. Alone it was safe to have any kinds of feelings, but I didn't want to have any self-therapy in front of the audience. I noticed that you cannot hurry too much with understanding of laments—it comes slowly with time and by simply practising them. I learned to be patient and accepted that you can't adapt everything right away.

In Finnish language the words for *to lament* and *to cry* are the same: *itkeä*. When you cry you usually have tears in your eyes, and that was something I needed to consider as well. I

remember well how it felt to cry for the first time when I was practising my own lament. I was thinking of my daughter and how much I love her, and this idea simply made me cry so much that I couldn't pay any attention to the melody or my singing technique. I just needed to get the lament out somehow. After this experience it felt much easier to lament. Though I didn't cry every time, I knew the feeling in my body and in my heart. It also liberated me from thinking about singing technique, and I got a new sound to my voice and started to sound more natural.

When I practised my own lament in front of the other musicians they cried as well, and that made me cry too. I understood how lamenting was part of social life in villages and how important it is to deal with feelings together. I didn't have to be afraid anymore that I could show my feelings only when I practised on my own—and so it happened in my concert as well that both the audience and I were crying. Amusingly, it turned out to be easier for me to show my feelings when other people were present than when I was practising on my own.

During the process I was always annoyed by the romantic image of a Karelian lamenter. I didn't feel I had any special talents for lamenting, and I wanted to believe—and I actually still do believe—that anybody can learn laments. But maybe I have to admit that there is something in me that makes laments natural for me. During one lesson Liisa Matveinen asked me if I get touched easily, and the answer is yes. It doesn't matter whether I am happy or sad: I cry. Especially my daughter makes me cry easily. This is the most natural thing to me because my own mother is just the same (I never look at her when I am performing and she is in the audience, because most likely she is crying). Therefore I was surprised when a German student interviewed me and asked whether it is weird to cry for happy things as I did in my thankfulness lament. I have probably learned from home that it is acceptable to be touched.

# 5 Summary

To combine research and art has felt a natural way to work for me. I want to understand the music that I am making deeply and not just try something on my own. I have also noticed that I enjoy reading researches and also writing myself. For me it was right to learn old laments from archive recordings first and then do my own laments. Thanks to the Sibelius Academy doctoral programmes, it is more and more common to be an artistic researcher. This is how I want to identify myself too, and I hope that I can develop in the future. In my case art and research have affected each other. After reading the researches, I have understood the music better, and after doing the music myself in practise, I have understood what the old lamenters have told about tradition. I really put myself into the laments I performed, but it was no self-therapy for me at any point. I know that there are people who want to lament only privately and in the therapy sense, but my choice from the very beginning was to have a musician's perspective.

I have learned that people might have strange attitudes towards laments, but once they hear them in a proper concert they do not have too much difficulty. For the performer it is important to find the balance between personal feelings and compassion to others. This requires good self-knowledge of your own limits. Though I really felt what I was lamenting in my concert, I never forgot that I was on the stage. That is my technique: I won't go so deep into the lamenting that I can't come back anymore. I think that there is always some magic in the music and in the way it can touch people, but I don't want to mystify the laments more than some other traditional music. I think anybody who is just interested can learn them, and there is not only one way to lament. Therefore I would encourage every folk music student to try laments. You can try to lament melodies with instruments as well; for example, the jouhikko (Finnish bowed lyre) felt the most natural instrument for that purpose.

I have heard theories that women are better lamenters because they are closer to death when they give birth to children, but I would give up cherishing this idea and stop underestimating men. I had a male lamenter, Marouf Majidi, in my concert and it felt very natural. More

important than sex is the fact that we are human beings with common feelings of love, loss, sorrow and compassion.

I feel the concert was good in its entirety and gave a good picture to listeners of what laments can be. It also offered the touching side of laments, and I feel that it touched both the audience and our ensemble. I am happy I had the chance to work with all the wonderful musicians. I felt that they were just the right persons for this project, and as a solo the concert would have been something completely different. I didn't only make music with the musicians; I could also discuss with them what laments are all about and be touched and cry together with them. I am also proud of myself that I wrote so many lyrics for this concert. I have always thought I am not a poet and my lyrics are just silly. But this time I decided to disregard the feeling of shame of my own lyrics and just bravely use them. I was amazed to have positive comments on my lyrics. This was again a lesson to me that with fear you win nothing. The only way to achieve something is to try.

All together I feel that laments are not as weird to people as I had thought before. I got feedback that I should go further with the topic of laments, and I am sure I will do it. My goal in the future is to widen my lament vocabulary—both traditional Karelian and my own vocabulary. With time I hope I also get more familiar with other traditional lamenting cultures. My crazy and probably unrealistic dream would be to get knowledge of all the lament cultures of the world. I don't know if even one lifetime is enough for this goal, but at least I want to see how far I can get.

# References

## Literature


Asplund, Anneli 2006a: Itkuvirsi. *Kansanmusiikki*, p. 80–107. WSOY. Helsinki.

Asplund, Anneli 2006b: Häämusiikki. *Kansanmusiikki*, p. 308–339. WSOY. Helsinki.

Haavio, Martti 1959: Karjalan jumalat. Uskontotieteellinen tutkimus. WSOY. Porvoo.

Honko, Lauri 1963: Itkuvirsirunous. *Suomen kirjallisuus 1,* p. 81–128. Edit Matti Kuusi. Otava. Keuruu.

Honko, Lauri 1974: Itämerensuomalaisen itkuvirsirunouden tutkimus. *Sampo ei sanoja puutu*: *Matti Kuusen juhlakirja*, p. 112–131. Kalevalaseuran vuosikirja 54. Edit Pertti Virtaranta. WSOY. Helsinki.

Honko, Lauri 1990: Folkloreprosessi. *Sananjalka 32*, p. 93–121. Suomen kielen seuran vuosikirja. Suomen kielen seura. Turku.

Knuuttila, Seppo 1989: Perinne-esiintyjiä Pohjois-Karjalassa. *Runon ja rajan teillä. Kalevalaseuran vuosikirja 68*, p. 217–242. Edit Seppo Knuuttila. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. Helsinki.

Konkka, Unelma 1985: Ikuinen ikävä. Karjalaiset riitti-itkut. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran toimituksia 428. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. Helsinki.

Kurkela, Vesa 1987: Aidon kansanlaulun ihanne ja sen viholliset. Kuinka musiikkifolklorismista tuli tiedeyhteisön ongelma? *Etnomusikologian vuosikirja*, p. 200–220. Suomen etnomusikologinen seura. Helsinki.

Manninen, Ilmari 1932: Karjalaisten tavoista. *Karjalan kirja*, p. 446–468. Edit Iivo Härkönen. WSOY. Porvoo.

Matveinen, Liisa 1989: Itkuvirsi-improvisaatioitteni tausta ja kehitys. Unpublished thesis. Sibelius Academy Folk Music Department.

Mustakallio, Marja 1987: Tyyppikansanlaulu – Valistuksen väline. *Etnomusikologian vuosikirja*, p. 221–230. Suomen etnomusikologinen seura. Helsinki.

Nenola-Kallio, Aili 1981: Itämerensuomalaiset itkuvirret. *Kansanmusiikki*, p. 44–52. Edit Anneli Asplund & Matti Hako. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran toimituksia 366. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. Helsinki.

Nenola, Aili 1989: Itkuvirret valokuvissa. *Runon ja rajan teillä. Kalevalaseuran vuosikirja 68*, p. 165–174. Edit Seppo Knuuttila. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. Helsinki.

Nenola, Aili 2002: Inkerin itkuvirret. Ingrian Laments. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran toimituksia 735. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. Helsinki.

Niemi, Jarkko 2002: Inkeriläisten itkuvirsien musiikilliset rakenteet. Musical Structures of Ingrian Laments. *Inkerin itkuvirret. Ingrian Laments*, p. 694–728. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran toimituksia 735. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. Helsinki.

Sheldon, Posen 1993: On Folk Festivals and Kitchens: Questions of Authenticity in the Folksong Revival. *Transforming Tradition*, p. 127–136. Edit Neil V. Rosenberg. Folklore and Society & Music in American Life series. University of Illinois Press. Urbana and Chicago.

Sihvo, Hannes 1989: Paikallisperinnettä ja turismifolklorea Pohjois-Karjalassa. *Runon ja rajan teillä. Kalevalaseuran vuosikirja 68*, p. 258–267. Edit Seppo Knuuttila. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. Helsinki.

Stepanova, Aleksandra 2012: Karjalaisen itkuvirsikielen sanakirja. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran toimituksia 1366. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. Helsinki.

Söderholm, Stig 1989: Itkuvirsiperinne ja Suomen Pohjois-Karjala. Rituaali-itkennästä folklorismiin. *Runon ja rajan teillä. Kalevalaseuran vuosikirja 68*, p. 175–187. Edit Seppo Knuuttila. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. Helsinki.

Tenhunen, Anna-Liisa 2006: Itkuvirren kolme elämää. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran toimituksia 1051. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. Helsinki.

Väisänen, Armas Otto 1990 (1926): Karjalainen itkettäjä ja hänen virtensä. *Hiljainen haltioituminen. A. O. Väisäsen tutkielmia kansanmusiikista,* p. 126–131. Edit Erkki Pekkilä. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran toimituksia 527. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. Helsinki.

Väisänen, Armas Otto 1990 (1940–1941): Itkuvirsi karjalaisten kohtalosta. *Hiljainen haltioituminen. A. O. Väisäsen tutkielmia kansanmusiikista,* p. 132–137. Edit Erkki Pekkilä. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran toimituksia 527. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. Helsinki.

Väisänen, Armas Otto 1990 (1941): Karjalaisista itkuvirsistä. *Hiljainen haltioituminen. A. O. Väisäsen tutkielmia kansanmusiikista,* p. 124–126. Edit Erkki Pekkilä. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran toimituksia 527. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. Helsinki.

## Internet

Ojamaa, Triinu, Pärtlas, Zanna & Kalkun, Andreas. No date. http://laul.setomaa.ee/artiklid/seto_laulud (read on 25th March 2013)

Äänellä itkijät ry. No date. www.itkuvirsi.net (read on 11th Sep. 2013)

## Recordings

Itkuja Karjalasta, Inkeristä, Suomesta. Laments from Karelia, Ingria, Finland. SKSCD 3. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. Helsinki 2000.

Leiko lauluq. Eesti Kirjandusmuuseum, Seto Talumuuseum. Tartu 2004.

Russian Northern Wedding. SUCD11-00325. Melodija. USSR 1991.

## Sheet music

Karjalaisia kansanlauluja Impilahdelta. Edit. Simo Härkönen. Karjalaisen Kulttuurin Edistämissäätiö. Pieksämäki 1967.

## Other

Matveinen, Liisa (2012): Short course of laments. Kallio-Kuninkala, Järvenpää. 5.5.2012.

Saastamoinen, Ilpo (2012): Private lesson. Music Centre, Helsinki. 25.10.2012.

## My inspirations

Alanko, Ismo: Rakas, rämä elämä. From the recording *Kun Suomi putos puusta*. VELVECD3. Unitor. Tampere 1990.

Kettu, Katja: Kätilö. WSOY. Helsinki 2011.

PMMP: Katinka (Miska soutaa joella). From the recording *Puuhevonen*. 88697179712. Sony Music (BMG) Entertainment (Finland) 2007.

Vahter, Mari & the choir: Hoz mie itken, hoz mie laulan. From the recording *The Kalevala Heritage*. ODE 849-2. Ondine Inc. Helsinki 1995.

# Appendix

## Appendix 1

### Kiitositku sukuni naisille—Thankfulness Lament to the Women of My Family

Passibot kaikille kultaisilleni kukkahuiset kuvuajaiseni, vesselän vereni vierittelijät, narotakuntani naiseni keralla kasvaneet kanaset
Heittelitte hyväseni hykertävän hymyn höyhenilleni, varren verevää vahvuutta vartuelleni

Passibot esiemoseni, esimerkkini
Ilolintuimpisenä sua ihailin, ikuisen ilon ihmetyksen itseeni imin
Olet riuska rakas raatajainen
Et koskaan kaarita kauheuksiasi, kantajaiseni kantajainen kaunoinen
Soisin sulle voimia vielä viime virstoillesi

Passibot kaunihit kallis kantajaiseni, mun sylkkysykeröinen synnyttelijäinen, maammoni maalletuojaseni
Passibot parahat ehtymättömän empatian esittelijälle, turvalle tietäväiselle, ilon itkettelijälle
Haluamme hanhiparven hautojaisestamme helevästi huolehtia huomenesvalkevuisilla

Passibot suloiset siityinen sisärkanaseni, kikattava kasvinkumppanini, vanhempi vaalijani, esikoinen esikuvani
Passibot tukijaisestasi, oi tarmokas ja tietäväinen tiaiseni
Oi omenainen oimulliseni, olkapuoluseni on omasi kun kaipaat kanssakulkijaa

Passibot parahat pikkuinen paimennettava, saman suvun sulattelija, kaunis kanssakasvajani, herkkä hätäinen hienohelmaseni
Kanamarjaisena vielä kaklatat kaukana
Tuisahtele ja tuumaile vielä tulisesti tuntien itsesi ihania ilmasia

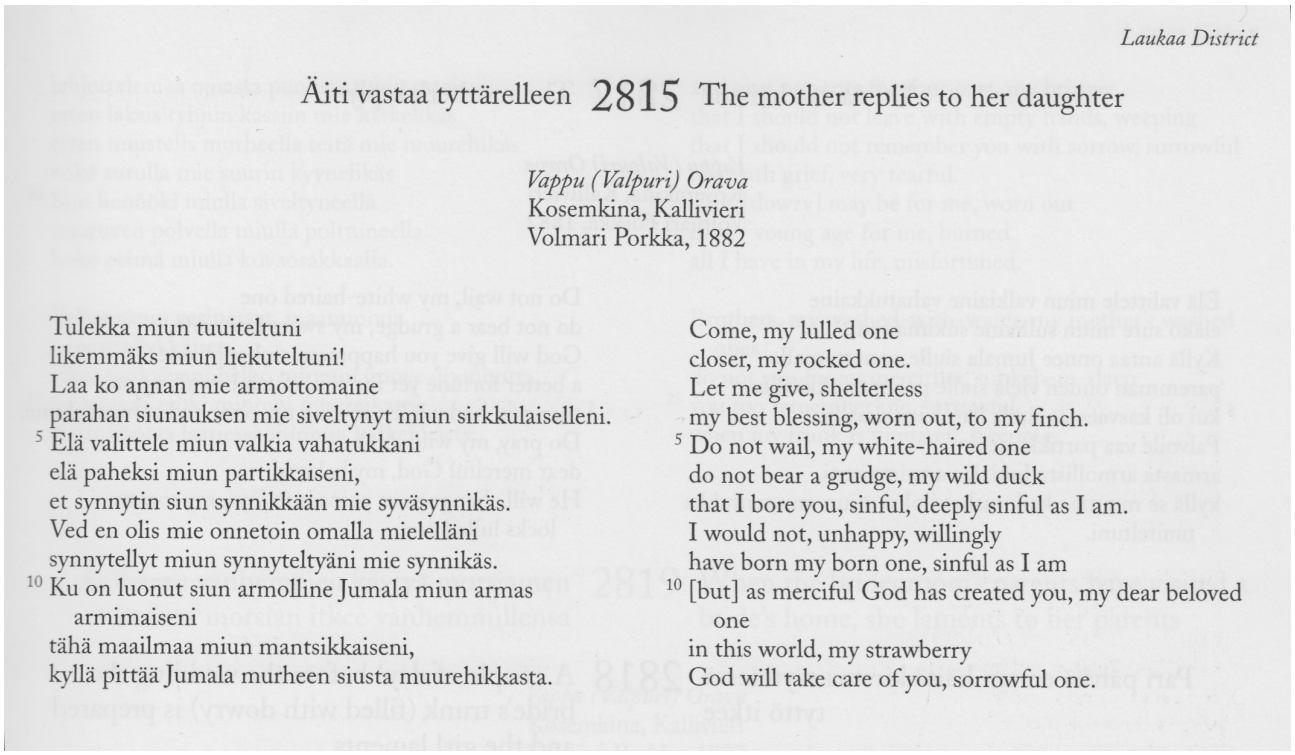
Passibot erityiset elämälle, kun annoit arvokkaimman armaan alliseni
Hienoinen hipsuttelevainen hillaseni heleästi hersyy helvomaissanni
Sydämeni suuri sulattelija on sulkenut minut suojiinsa
Oi imeteltyiseni ihme isoin ja ihanin

Passibot suuret saman suvun sulattelijoille
Saan olla oma itseni omien omenaisteni ottamana
Kanaisena käydä koko kauniilla kaarella

Passibot parahat siis esiemoseni, kaunis kantajaiseni, siityiset sisärkanaseni, armas allimarjaseni!

## Appendix 2

### Hiljalle—To Hilja



*Laukaa District*

Äiti vastaa tyttärelleen **2815** The mother replies to her daughter

*Vappu (Valpuri) Orava*
Kosemkina, Kallivieri
Volmari Porkka, 1882

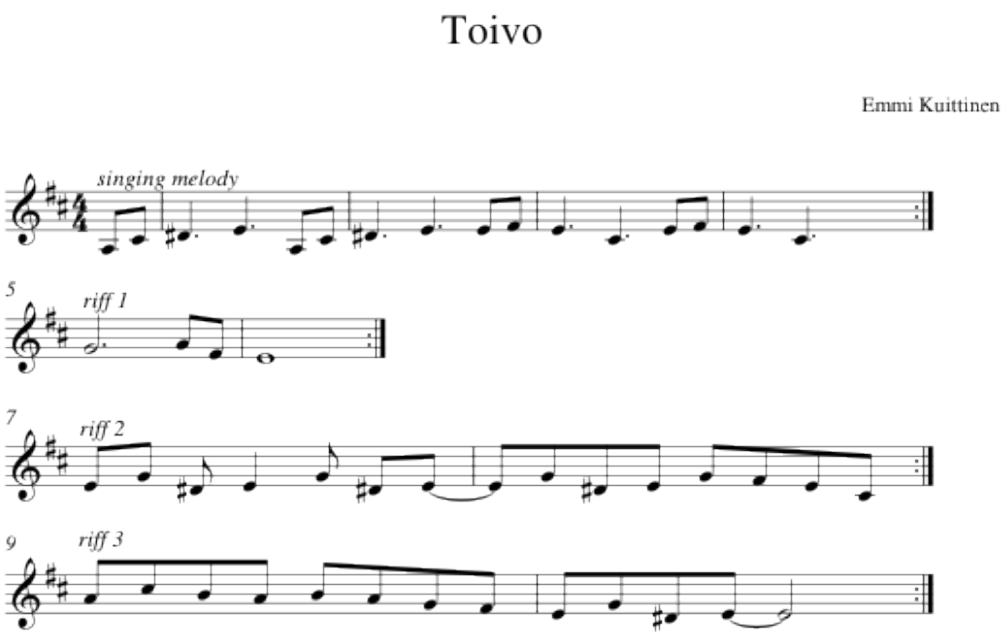
Tulekka miun tuuiteltuni
likemmäks miun liekuteltuni!
Laa ko annan mie armottomaine
parahan siunauksen mie siveltynyt miun sirkkulaiselleni.
Elä valittele miun valkia vahatukkani
elä paheksi miun partikkaiseni,
et synnytin siun synnikkään mie syväsynnikäs.
Ved en olis mie onnetoin omalla mielelläni
synnytellyt miun synnyteltyäni mie synnikäs.
Ku on luonut siun armolline Jumala miun armas armimaiseni
tähä maailmaa miun mantsikkaiseni,
kyllä pittää Jumala murheen siusta muurehikkasta.

Come, my lulled one
closer, my rocked one.
Let me give, shelterless
my best blessing, worn out, to my finch.
Do not wail, my white-haired one
do not bear a grudge, my wild duck
that I bore you, sinful, deeply sinful as I am.
I would not, unhappy, willingly
have born my born one, sinful as I am
[but] as merciful God has created you, my dear beloved one
in this world, my strawberry
God will take care of you, sorrowful one.

**Scanned from Aili Nenola (2002): Inkerin itkuvirret. Ingrian Laments, p. 499.**

## Appendix 3

## Toivo—Hope




Lyrics:

1. Putos taivas, meri kuivu
   tuuli lakkas lentämästä
   Suli vuoret, sammu tähdet
   sinä lähdit, sinä lähdit

*Riff 1*

2. Meni kevät, meni kesä
   sua ootin, sua ootin
   Linnutkin jo pois ne lähtee
   yksin jään mä laulamaan

*Riff 2*

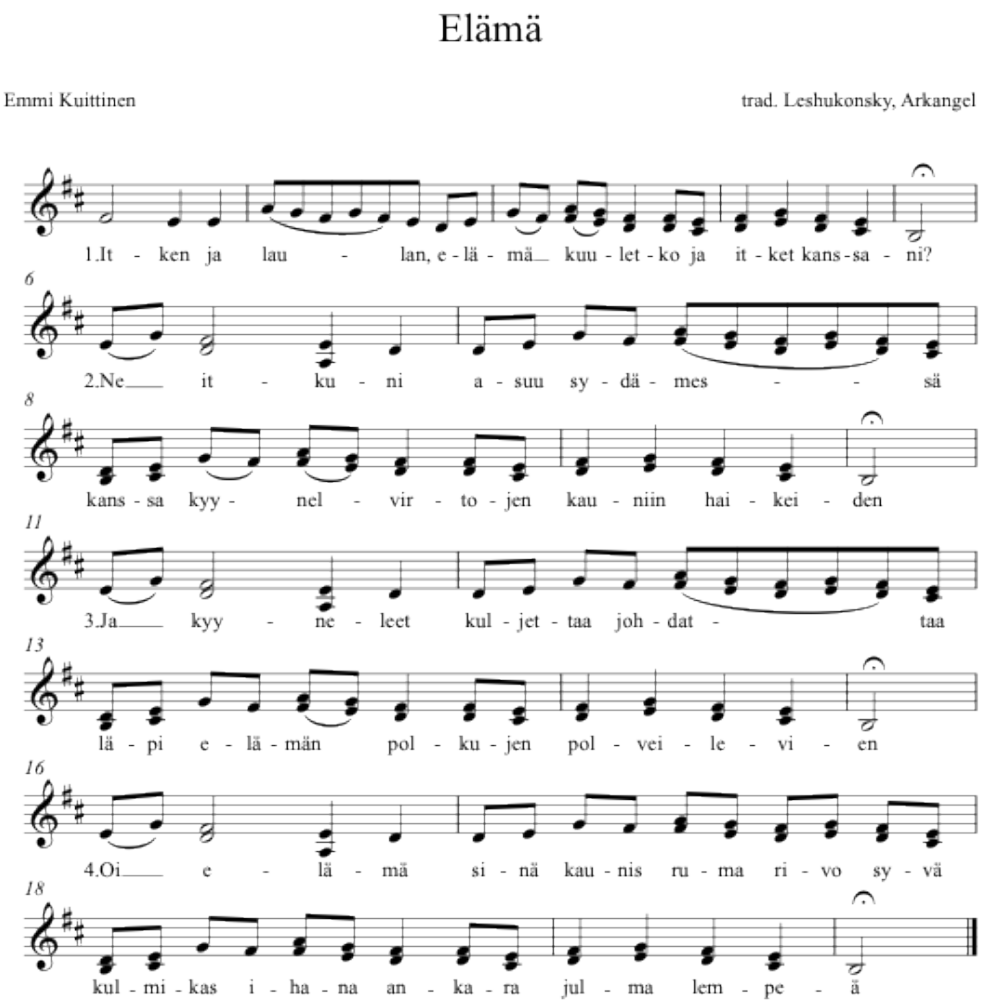
3. Meni syksy, meni talvi
   sua ootin, yhä ootin
   Linnutkin jo takaisin tulee
   ei ne silti enää laula

*Riff 3*

4. Mutta silti minä täällä
   en kai lakkaa toivomasta
   Koskaan sammu ei mun rakkaus
   tässä ootan vaik maailman ääriin

## Appendix 4

### Elämä—Life



## Appendix 5

### Concert Programme

**KAIKKIEN KANSOJEN MURHE – ALL THE PEOPLE'S SORROW**
Emmi Kuittinen's final concert

**Nämä kerdaset**
Sung by Niina Kuikka (b. 1910) from Impilahti, Karelia. Song also includes a wedding lament theme from Leshukonsky, Archangel. Arrangement by EK & musicians.
*'I sing because I don't have anyone to tell about my worries'*

**Jos voisin laulaa**
A Finnish folk tune. Arr. EK and musicians
*'If I could sing like a bird, I would sing to my sweetheart and take his sorrows away'*

**Sunce mi se**
A wedding song from Kosovo
*'The sun is going down and the girl is going away'*

**The Wedding**
- *Church bell imitation*, created by the musicians
- *Wedding laments*, based on the tradition
- *Mõrsjaikk maamakõsõlõ*, a wedding lament to the mother of the bride from Setomaa, Estonia

**Shure dard**
Music & lyrics trad. from Western Iran, Finnish lyrics EK, arr. Marouf Majidi & EK
*'The sorrow that you caused echoes everywhere'*

**Lament improvisation**
By Marouf Majidi & EK

**Kiitositku sukuni naisille**
*Thankfulness lament to the women of my family*
Music & lyrics EK

**Hiljalle**
*Lament from a mother to the daughter*
Music EK, lyrics by Vappu (Valpuri) Orava in 1882, from Kosemkina, Kallivieri, Ingria

**Kuolinitku sodassa 1942 kaatuneelle pojalle**
*Dirge for a son who has fallen in a battle*
Lamented by Natalia Andrejevna Gutskina (b. 1898) from Vasilkova, Tver Karelia
Sound scape by Turkka Inkilä

**Toivo**
*Hope*
Music & lyrics EK, arr. EK & musicians

**Elämä**
*Life*
Music trad. from Leshukonsky, Archangel, Finnish lyrics EK

**Musicians**
Emmi Kuittinen – vocals, kalimba
Ella Isotalo – jouhikko, fiddle
Marouf Majidi – tar & tanbour, vocals
Nathan Riki Thomson – contra bass
Turkka Inkilä – flute
Amanda Kauranne – vocals, bells
Heidi Haapoja – vocals, bells
Lotta Hagfors – vocals, bells
Mari Kalkun – vocals, bells
Minna-Liisa Tammela – vocals, bells
Sanne Tschirpke – vocals, bells

**Directional teacher**: Anna-Kaisa Liedes

**Thanks to**: All the musicians, Anna-Kaisa, Liisa Matveinen, Touko-Taiga crew, Glomas programme, Juha – I couldn't have done it without all of you

# Appendix 6

## Concert Description in the Touko-Taiga Programme

### Kaikkien kansojen murhe—All the People's Sorrow

Emmi Kuittinen's final concert at Touko-Taiga

*Kaikkien kansojen murhe – All the People's Sorrow* is a journey to the music of the lament tradition. 'Kaikkien kansojen murhe' was a phrase by the researcher and poet Martti Haavio to describe the laments. The laments, in Finnish *itkuvirret*, can be found all around the world. Though there are local differences in the music, the feelings they are dealing with are global – sorrow, loss, love. Lauri Honko (1974) describes laments as poetry of eternal loss and separation. Laments were sung in parting situations and also in the most important rites of human life like marriage and death. Women could also lament in any everyday life situation to relieve sorrow or when boys were taken to the army. In the Balto-Finnic area laments were in particular women's tradition, but there are traditions where men lament as well. I have mostly concentrated in the Karelian and Ingrian traditions, but you can hear spices from other cultures too.

*Kaikkien kansojen murhe* is the final concert for my Global Music Master (Glomas) studies. I have had the honour to be one the first Glomas students at the Sibelius Academy. During these three years I have met people all around the world, heard and learned amazing music and tried to find my own music. Glomas has been an important part for me to develop as a musician and get to know myself better.

I got interested in laments when I started singing lessons with Anna-Kaisa Liedes in autumn 2011. I had been afraid to lament before because laments were part of rites that do not exist anymore. What is the point to lament a wedding lament when there is no traditional wedding? And the dirges, the funeral laments, felt even more awkward. But when I read the lament lyrics I understood the beauty and the feelings in them. Though the society and the rites had changed, the feelings that people had were the same: love to parents and children and other dear ones; sorrow at the loss of someone you loved. I also started to hear the music behind the sobbing and mourning: beautiful archaic melodies and skilful rhythms.

This concert is the point where I am now with laments. I have tried to find different approaches to them. In some traditions laments sound like any other songs. In my concert as well I have considered some of them more like songs and some of them more like pure laments. Sometimes it is hard to draw a line between them. I have learned some laments from archive recordings but also tried to write and improvise my own lyrics and melodies. I try to see the tradition as rich as it can be. I am at the beginning of my journey, and I am happy to be here. This beautiful tradition can give so much also to a person living in modern society, and I will keep on searching and wondering about the secrets of laments.