

## **The *Kalevala* Received: From Printed Text to Oral Performance**

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jätti kantelon jälille  
soiton Suomelle soeraan  
kansalle ilon ikuisen  
laulut suuret lapsillensa.

He left the kantele behind  
the fine instrument for  
Finland  
unending joy for the people  
great songs for his children.

*Kalevala* 50:507-12

In the closing years of the nineteenth century, in the midst of a revived national interest in the *Kalevala* and a neo-Romantic fascination with the fabled epic “song lands” east of the Finnish border, the lexicographer Kustaa Karjalainen recorded a set of epic songs from the illiterate peasant singer Vihtoori Lesonen. Vihtoori was a native of the Vuokkiniemi district of Viena Karelia—one of the most productive regions for the collection of Baltic-Finnic epic song in the nineteenth century. The combined length of Vihtoori’s songs amounted to 1483 lines, a substantial repertoire by Karelian standards, although nowhere as long or varied as that collected from some singers in the past. Upon returning home to Finland, however, Karjalainen discovered a terrible truth: in examining the content and phrasing of the songs, it became evident that Vihtoori had somehow learned his repertoire from the *Kalevala*. Rather than providing a further example of the oral tradition upon which the *Kalevala* had been based, in other words, Vihtoori’s songs furnished evidence of the profound effect of Lönnrot’s published epic upon local repertoires and understandings, even in the very heart of the song lands.

This paper speaks to a number of salient issues raised in recent scholarship on oral tradition. First, as many scholars have shown,<sup>1</sup> the relation of Elias Lönnrot's *Kalevala* to its oral sources remains a complex and intriguing area of research, indicative not simply of the manner in which one editor/author presented one set of transcribed performances, but also of the way in which editors, folklorists, and ethnographers in general have approached and interpreted others' words (Honko 1993). Second, as John Miles Foley has noted (1991), scholarly attention in oral tradition research has tended to focus on the composition side of the performance transaction, devoting relatively little attention to the reception side—that is, how an audience witnesses, interprets, and evaluates the performance in traditional contexts. Finally, as Stephen Mitchell has argued (1991), few scholars have attempted to examine in detail the “synergism between oral and written literature”—the ways in which printed texts become part of active oral tradition through the mediation of literate community members. For the bulk of the twentieth century, “booklore” and “literary contamination” have functioned essentially as pejorative terms in folklore research, relegating the text under scrutiny to a footnote or appendix and chagrining the scholar or collector too callow to recognize the tell-tale signs of a published source.

But songs such as Vihtoorä's need not be viewed as embarrassing asides, nor do they represent the death knell of a once vigorous oral tradition. Instead, as Kaukonen has maintained (1980) and as I have suggested as well (1995), *Kalevala*-derived songs reflect Karelian peasants' active reception and interpretation of the Finnish national epic in particularly traditional terms. Examining Vihtoorä's works can tell us much about his understandings of Lönnrot's stylistic and editorial choices and much about their relation to his own community's preexisting aesthetic traditions. They can also contribute to an ethnography of literacy in turn-of-the-century Karelia. Far from reflecting the demise of a song tradition, Vihtoorä's print-derived songs demonstrate the responsive, innovative nature of the song tradition and singers immortalized in the *Kalevala*.

In this study, then, I propose to examine one of Vihtoorä Lesonen's *Kalevala*-derived songs with an eye to the interplay of printed text and oral tradition in late nineteenth-century Karelia. In so doing, I hope to reveal both the artistry and the traditionality of Vihtoorä's act of appropriation. By examining literacy in the region and the social contexts in which

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<sup>1</sup> See Kaukonen 1939-45, Anttila 1985, Kuusi and Anttonen 1985, Alphonso-Karkela 1986, Pentikäinen 1989, and DuBois 1993, 1995.

peasants met with Finnish anthologies, I provide a framework for understanding the means by which a text from 1849 could become part of oral tradition in 1894. The paper's stance and content answer an earlier article in the pages of this journal (1993) in which I attempted to show how Elias Lönnrot transformed oral tradition in creating the *Kalevala* in the first place. The back and forth of oral and written art—this synergism—lies at the very heart of Finnish folk poetry at the end of the nineteenth century.

### **Literacy in Turn-of-the-Century Karelia**

Recent research has focused on the culturally variable aspects of literacy in traditional and industrialized societies.<sup>2</sup> A number of studies have also examined the process of literacy development in nineteenth-century Finland, Russia, and Karelia.<sup>3</sup> These studies provide a conceptual framework and historical data for understanding the ways in which printed anthologies of folk poetry made their way into the homes and hearts of peasants east of the Finnish border. It is only once we accept the notion of literacy as a variable phenomenon—one without universal rules or monolithic effects—that we can appreciate the complexities of the folk poem examined here.

In that spirit, I sketch below the broad lines of literacy as a phenomenon and process in late-nineteenth century Karelia. The educational efforts undertaken there, I argue, were determined by two opposed interests: the cultural nationalism of Finland and the territorial concerns of tsarist Russia. The former process led Finns to equate Karelian culture with that of Finland itself, thereby justifying the claim to the *Kalevala* as the indisputably *Finnish* national epic. The latter concerns led Russians to seek continued control of a well forested and geographically important region, lost and regained repeatedly during centuries of armed conflict with Sweden. In language of instruction, alphabet, and administration, Finnish and Russian educational efforts were locked in conflict, a fact that greatly influenced the degree of literacy achieved in the region during the decades prior to the Russian Revolution.

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<sup>2</sup> See Goody 1968, Scribner and Cole 1981, Tannen 1982, Graff 1987, Arnove and Graff 1987, Darnton 1989, and Boyarin 1993.

<sup>3</sup> See Wilson 1976, Brooks 1985, Marker 1990, and Austin 1992.

## Russian Influence

During the nineteenth century, the Baltic-Finnic peoples of Karelia and Ingria lived in the shadow of Slavic language and letters. Russian was the language of state and church authorities, Church Slavonic the language of liturgy, Bible, and Psalter. Efforts to increase rural literacy following the emancipation of the serfs in 1861 focused on Russian as the target language, even in regions where markedly different languages prevailed in daily life. As Eklof has shown (1986, 1987), an Education Statute of 1864 established the framework and curriculum for public schools, eventually administered by local *zemstvo* (municipality) commune governments. At the same time, myriad unofficial schools were also founded throughout the countryside, staffed by literate individuals, retired soldiers, and priests. *Zemstvo* and church-run schools emerged as dominant educational institutions by the 1890s, when they began to receive subsidies from the public treasury. Soldiers were also provided with literacy training in the army (Eklof 1987:124). Schools in Karelia promoted literacy in Russian language and the Cyrillic alphabet and used primers common throughout the Empire. The resultant linguistic hurdle meant that although the overall literacy rate of Russia in 1896 had reached a level of 21 percent (Brooks 1985:4), the rate in Karelia was much lower (10.4 percent overall, three percent among women—Austin 1992:19). It was not until 1887 that a dual-language primer was produced in Russian and Karelian, using the Cyrillic alphabet for both languages and including basic prayers and Gospel readings (Austin 1992:20). The effect of the primer was limited, however, by its infrequent use and the lack of a standardized literary Karelian at the time.

Despite the linguistic difficulties involved in gaining literacy in Karelia, cultural factors common throughout the Russian Empire made it a valued skill. Reading offered peasants greater accuracy in record-keeping and proved of service to persons interested in developing market or trade occupations. Peasant trade with urban centers on both sides of the Finnish border made literacy of immediate practical value. It also helped mobile peasants learn about opportunities elsewhere in the Empire (especially in the cities) and was viewed as a key to upward mobility (Brooks 1985:13). Compulsory male conscription, introduced in 1874, specified a reduced term of duty for literates, adding further incentive to peasant learning efforts (Eklof 1987:124). By 1896, in fact, urban literacy had reached a very high level, even among workers of rural origin. Day laborers in the cities enjoyed a literacy rate of 59 percent; people in more specialized occupations showed even higher rates (e.g., 85 percent for bakers, 90

percent for restaurant workers; Brooks 1985:13). These factors touched the thriving urban centers of Karelia and Ingria—for example, Viipuri, St. Petersburg—as much as they did the industrializing cities of central Russia.

Reading also played important roles in pan-Russian social and religious life. Public reading as a means of entertainment was noted among rural populations across Russia (Brooks 1985:27), and the reading of the Psalter and religious texts was extremely common as well (24). Brooks states that the Psalter was the most popular book owned in the countryside and that its very possession was said to bring a blessing to the household (24). Those who could not themselves read relied on literate children as performers of the text and were known to memorize large portions of the Psalter and canon to perform during church services or elsewhere (23).

The religious sect known as the Old Believers, common in Viena Karelia, also valued literacy highly. The ability to read allowed the faithful to consult old religious texts used prior to the Nikonian reforms of the seventeenth century and ensured that literate community members enjoyed high esteem in the village or household (Brooks 1985:2-26). The importance of Karelian Old Believers in preserving and maintaining the folk poetry tradition has been discussed by Juha Pentikäinen (1989:124-30). Their positive attitude toward print, along with their conservative embrace of things old and traditional, undoubtedly shaped their reception of Finnish collections as well.

The importance of folk poetry in Karelia, both before and after its appearance in print, may have stemmed in part from peasants' view of it as the Baltic-Finnic version of Russian sacred song. Songs associated with particular ritual moments (weddings, planting, cattle blessing, harvest) were viewed as holy and were associated with Christianity as practiced in the region (Salminen 1931:528). In 1829 Jacob Fellman noted the view of a peasant from Vuokkiniemi earlier in the century that explicitly equates pre-Christian mythological songs with Christian doctrine:

kah, pyhä veli, meillä on sama usko kuin teillä. Kokko lenti pohjosesta, pani munan Väinämöisen polven päälle ja loi siitä maailman. Niinhän tekin uskotte.

Well, holy brother [Fellman was a Lutheran priest], we have the same belief

as you. An eagle flew out of the north, laid an egg on Väinämöinen's knee and in that way created the world. You believe that as well. (SKVR I<sub>1</sub>:66)<sup>4</sup>

The events here referred to as Christian actually derive from the *Creation* song as commonly performed in Karelia during the nineteenth century and as reflected in part in Poem 1 of Lönnrot's *Kalevala*. Indeed, the common term for folk poetry in the tradition itself, *virret* ("verses"—used also for psalms), reflects this understanding. A view of the songs as sacred, however, was not universally accepted, as is demonstrated by some informants' strong condemnation of the tradition noted in collectors' diaries. Salminen (1931) observes that although local clergy did not dissuade parishioners from performing the songs in normal contexts, they implored singers not to share the songs with outside collectors (531), apparently wishing to curtail the spread of such pagan survivals. The reticence that some singers showed toward fieldworkers may stem either from such clerical injunctions or from considerations of the sacrality of the songs themselves.<sup>5</sup> In any case, published collections of songs such as the *Kalevala*, appearing in the prestige medium of the society (print) but containing elements variously viewed as sacred or sinful, undoubtedly captured peasant interest all the more for the debate. That such volumes became cherished familial possessions, avidly read aloud in peasant households, is evidenced both by collector notes and by the abundance of print-derived songs in the oral tradition of late nineteenth-century Karelia and Ingria (Kaukonen 1980).

In various ways, then, common cultural features of peasant Russia conditioned Karelian receptiveness to literacy and to printed versions of folk poems. Literacy was positively viewed, as were printed texts in

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<sup>4</sup> SKVR refers to the published anthology of Finnish folk poetry *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* (*The Ancient Songs of the Finnish People*), the first volume of which (I<sub>1</sub>) appeared in 1908. Although Fellman does not specify the identity of his informant in this notation, the singer may have been Vasilius Lesonen, a singer who performed a version of the Sampo song containing this account of the origin of the world for Fellman during that same visit (SKVR I<sub>1</sub>:75). A kinsman of Vihtoori Lesonen (see below), Vasilius' testimony sheds important light on the ways many Karelian peasants understood their songs throughout the nineteenth century. All English translations of Finnish texts are my own.

<sup>5</sup> Länkelä noted a case of the former fear in his 1858 account of a singer who performed several songs while drunk but feared for her soul afterwards, recounting her priest's strong condemnation (Salminen 1931:531). Alava noted a case of the latter fear in his 1892 description of a singer who was afraid to perform a song associated with planting rituals outside of its proper ritual setting, lest she be unable to sleep for five nights in a row (Salminen 1931:630).

general. Reading aloud, both for entertainment and for sacred instruction, was an established part of peasant social life. The ability to decipher Finnish renderings and Gothic script, however, a further task added to the challenges of learning to read Russian and/or Church Slavonic, required a new educational impetus, this time from the west.

### **Finnish Influence**

In late nineteenth-century Finland, school-based literacy programs were relatively new, despite centuries of exceptionally high literacy achieved through familial and parish-centered instruction. Long a Lutheran stronghold and an integrated region of Sweden, Finland and its inhabitants valued the ability to read as a key to pious life. Already in the sixteenth century, the Finnish Lutheran reformer Mikael Agricola had translated portions of the Bible and Luther's Catechism, and had authored a basic primer in the language itself. In keeping with Lutheran theology, fathers—and more broadly, parents and godparents—assumed responsibility for seeing that their children learned to read (Johansson 1987:73). Ministers, too, were charged with this fundamental duty to their flocks. Strong social pressure to learn to read arose in annual parish-wide examinations and through a church law that denied confirmation (and thereby the right to marry, testify in a court of law, or receive Holy Communion) to any person who could not pass an official reading test (69). Finnish peasants learned to read in their own language, in Gothic script. The Finnish census of 1880 counted less than two percent of the adult population incapable of reading (70). Far fewer individuals, however, knew how to write.

This highly successful church- and home-based literacy campaign achieved its results despite the lack of formal schools. In both Sweden and in the now-autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland, however, the nineteenth century saw a new campaign oriented toward practical literacy and general education for a changing world. Laws pertaining to public education were enacted in Finland in 1843 and 1866, stipulating subjects to be taught, teacher preparation, school establishment, and overall curriculum (Nurmi 1964; Melin 1980). Finnish was accepted as an elementary school subject already in 1843 (Kauppinen 1985), although the language was not taught at the university level until 1850 and did not attain equal status with Swedish as a language of state administration until 1863 (Wilson 1976). The first Finnish-language secondary school (lyceum) was opened in Jyväskylä in 1858, and by the 1870s, the fledgling Finnish school system comprised over

four hundred schools and a number of teacher training colleges. Although literacy efforts focused on children (as in Russia as well), adult education was pursued vigorously by organizations such as the bourgeois *Kansanvalistus Seura* (Society for Public Enlightenment; see Wilson 1976:45) and by a proliferating system of workers' associations (Sulkunen 1989). The expansion of popular reading beyond the religious canon is indicated by the strong growth of the newspaper industry, rising from only one Finnish-language paper in 1835 (when the *Kalevala* was first published) to some thirty newspapers by 1885 (Wilson 1976:47).

Throughout the development of education in Finland, the *Kalevala* remained both a source of inspiration and a favored subject of study. Lönnrot himself created a classroom *Kalevala* in 1862, abridging his text carefully and providing detailed explications of obscure terms (Lönnrot 1862; Kauppinen 1985). Even more influential, however, was Zachris Topelius' *Maamme-kirja* (1876)—a general textbook and reader that remained a staple of Finnish education from the 1880s onward. In his section on Finland's pagan past (Part III), Topelius includes a general essay on the Finnish national epic and its significance in the world, synopses of its poems, and extensive excerpts as reading selections. These include direct excerpts of the *Creation* (Poem 1), the *Origin of Iron* (Poems 8-9), and the *Battle for the Light* (Poems 47-49). Synopses include the *Origin of Agriculture* (Poem 2), the *Origin of Fire* (Poems 47-48), the *Song Contest* (Poem 3), *Väinämöinen's First Expedition to Pohjola* (Poems 6-8), the *Creation of the Sampo* (Poem 10), *Lemminkäinen's Adventures* (Poems 11-15), the *Journey to Tuonela* (Poem 16), *Ilmarinen's Courtship of the Maiden of Pohjola* (Poems 18-25), the *Kullervo Cycle* (Poems 31-36), the *Raid of the Sampo* (Poems 39-43), and *Väinämöinen's Singing* (Poems 41 and 44). Predictably, the final poem of the epic (50), in which Väinämöinen sails away, leaving his songs and kantele to Finland, enjoys a prominent position in Topelius' text. Students taught through such primers came to view the *Kalevala* as the ancient heritage of the Finnish people. Writes Topelius (214):

[The *Kalevala*] has awakened great interest not only in Finland but in many other parts of Europe as well, and even in America. It has been translated into Swedish and into dozens of other foreign languages. . . . Everywhere the opinion prevails that the *Kalevala* is one of the most significant products of folklore ever created, and Finland is considered fortunate to be in its possession. For such a collection of folklore as the *Kalevala* is unequalled in all the world. It depicts the characteristics of the Finnish people and although it contains much that seems pagan and strange to us today, it

expresses nonetheless a deep wisdom, a simple beauty, and a stirring love of native land.

The extension of formal education in the Finnish Grand Duchy thus worked both to inform students of the contents of the national epic and to instill in them an attitude of pride and respect for the national heritage. Literacy and the ancient oral tradition were viewed not as opposed forces but as a single cultural achievement.

An outgrowth of this enthusiasm was the strong desire to extend education to Karelians as well. Particularly in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, cultural nationalists called for the establishment of Finnish schools east of the border, recompensing the people who had preserved the ancient traditions of the Baltic-Finnic peoples with one of the most valued skills of the Lutheran ethos—the ability to read (Wilson 1976). Karelians could learn to read Finnish, the language most closely related to their own, rather than struggling with the very different Russian language of the Empire. Significant efforts in this area began with the founding of a teachers' college at Sortavala in 1880. Located near the border itself, the school trained teachers who would subsequently establish primary schools of their own in the Karelian countryside and villages. Like its counterparts to the west, the Sortavala college made strong use of Topelius' reader (Nurmi 1964, II:29) and prepared teachers to run Finnish-language schools. Soon after the establishment of the Sortavala college, Finland's Greek Orthodox bishop A. V. Antonin (1892-98) replaced Russian and Old Slavonic with Finnish in the state-funded parochial schools under his direction, recognizing the detrimental effect of the Slavic languages on Karelian literacy (Melin 1980, II:112). Although both trends were halted by the Russification policies of the turn of the century, this embrace of Finnish-language schooling in Karelia had profound effects on the reading interests and abilities of the local populace (Austin 1992). By 1896, when the Russian teacher I. V. Olenov visited Karelia, he found the inhabitants literate in Finnish rather than in Russian and often possessed of a Finnish rather than a Russian Bible (Heikkinen 1982-83:83).

The rapid influx of Finnish thought and publications to the east, combined with positive peasant attitudes toward literacy and customs of reading aloud, created an ideal context for the spread of Finnish works such as the *Kalevala*. Kaukonen (1980:224) cites an elderly singer in the village of Vuokkiniemi in the 1940s who recalled reading both the *Kalevala* and the *Kanteletar* (Lönnrot's lyric anthology of 1840) over and over again to his maternal grandmother at the turn of the century. The continued importance of the folk poetry tradition in many villages and farmsteads

made published collections both approachable and valued. Finnish esteem for the tradition—demonstrated in curriculum, continued fieldwork efforts, and published materials—meshed well with the native esteem for the tradition as ancient, sacred, and expressive. The performance of folk poetry thus became a privileged act of cultural maintenance on two complementary planes.

### **Literacy, Song Performance, and the Institutionalization of Tradition**

Both literacy and the ready availability of printed collections complemented native modes of entertainment and edification. As noted in the above discussion, reading aloud played important roles both in passing the time and in conveying moral or sacred thought throughout peasant Russia. Illiterates depended on literate community members to perform texts that could then be committed to memory. In such cases, printed collections could reach a much larger audience than might at first be assumed on the basis of actual literacy rates alone. And when printed folk poetry was performed aloud, as we shall see, it necessarily (re)entered the interpretive and experiential frameworks of local tradition.

It is important to understand the performance traditions of epic songs in nineteenth-century Karelia. Songs tended to be performed and preserved in the familial context, with male singers figuring as the most revered performers. Collection throughout the nineteenth century reveals a remarkable degree of conservatism in the repertoires and song contents of Karelian “song families,” such as the Perttunen, Malinen, and Lesonen clans. Songs were also performed in work contexts (such as during sowing or fishing) as well as on certain ritual occasions (for example, weddings and funerals). Although a strong notion of the primacy of the local version prevailed, new songs or song details did make their way into the communal tradition and were accepted, especially if introduced by prestigious male performers. Thus, male singers could learn new songs while traveling, bringing these back to the community on their return home. Print-derived songs, acquired either first- or secondhand, could thus easily seep into local tradition. Such appears to be the case with Vihtoori Lesonen’s repertoire.

The development and institutionalization of the folkloristic enterprise also affected singers’ attitudes toward printed collections in Karelia. From the very first appearance of Lönnrot’s *Kalevala*, fieldworkers brought the collection with them into the field as a kind of item-inventory for prompting singer recall. By reading portions of the poems aloud to peasants, collectors hoped to jog singers’ memories and elicit otherwise

forgotten songs. As later collections appeared, such as Lönnrot's primarily South Karelian collection of lyric songs *Kanteletar* (1840) and D. E. D. Europaeus' Ingrian collection *Pieni Runonseppä* (1847), these too were brought into the field. By the turn of the century, even scholarly dissertations were being used as checklists. Räikkönen describes his use of Väinö Salminen's dissertation on wedding songs as a prompt in 1917 (quoted from Salminen 1931:568):

Because there were a lot of people in the house, middle-aged persons as well, I sat down to chat a bit about songs. I read little snatches from Dr. V. Salminen's collection of wedding songs, which appeared to entertain the residents greatly. The result was that Mari Kuparinen (Kähäri), a 44-year-old, remembered seven old songs.

Such practices, while intended merely as a means of eliciting songs, could convey the notion of printed collections as authoritative, weighty, and esteemed. Regardless of whether or not singers viewed printed collections as superior to their own (usually shorter) renditions, they did acquire such publications for themselves, reading them or having them read aloud by literate community members.

Not only did Finnish folklore enthusiasts bring the printed collection to the folk, however, they also brought the singing folk to the salon and stage. Anneli Asplund's discussion of the development of a market niche for traditional singers deserves quotation here (1994:345):

Teaching at the seminary in the little town of Sortavala on the shores of Lake Ladoga in the 1880s was a man by the name of O. A. Forsström-Hainari—an ardent admirer of ancient Finnish folk culture. It was his custom to invite to his home *rune* singers and *kantele* players from among his acquaintances to entertain his guests. These were only too pleased to oblige, since they were thankful for the small sums of money which their performances earned them. It was also a pleasure to bask in the glow of the gentlefolk's admiration. Some of Hainari's friends began to follow his example by inviting singers to their homes or by arranging opportunities for them to perform. As a result, players and singers began to make their way to Sortavala from farther and farther afield.

Performance opportunities of this nature were further expanded by the development of formal folk festivals in places such as Sortavala from the 1890s onward. The prospect of monetary gain—through nominal fees paid

by collectors in the field, small wages for an evening's entertainment, or larger amounts paid for performance at elite song festivals—provided economic incentives for both using (and eventually also possibly concealing the use of) printed collections. The monetary aspects of such exchange were also strongly seconded by the prestige accruing from elite approval. Karjalainen notes the prestige which Miihkali Perttunen enjoyed in his home district thanks to the stipend he received from the Finnish Literature Society. Miihkali instructed the collector to convey his thanks to the board of the Society not so much for the economic assistance they afforded but for the honor they conferred (Laaksonen 1990:95).

By the late nineteenth century, then, the relation of singer and collector becomes fraught with tension, bound up as it is in notions of self-worth, reputation, and economic success. Increasingly, both singer and collector needed each other, and their interactions—as reflected at least by fieldnotes—often became covertly adversarial, each carefully monitoring the claims and intentions of the other. Sometimes a peasant informant appears unaware of fieldworkers' dislike of literary sources and mentions them unequivocally. Räikkönen notes the enthusiasm with which villagers spoke of local copies of the *Kalevala*, *Kanteletar*, and *Pieni Runonseppä* in 1917 (quoted from Salminen 1931:572):

The old woman [Anni Lappalainen, then 74 years old] explained that her verses had slipped her mind by now, but that her daughter even had a proper songbook: “There you’ll get verses aplenty,” explained the farmwife. I thought it best to leave that house with its song treasury intact and continue my journey onward.

The fieldworker's reticence even to listen to songs that may have been contaminated by print influence betrays the prevalent views of a “pure” oral tradition and the insidious effects of published collections among collectors of the day. Peasant informants did not fail to note such views with time, and occasionally downplayed the importance of print in the creation of their repertoires. Such claims are implicit in the notes of F. Kärki regarding the possible inauthenticity of a song collected in 1907 (*SKVR* IV<sub>3</sub>:3776):

Juhana Peipponen, 65 years old. He spoke of having heard the song in his youth from a man living at a neighboring farm, but I doubted him since at that same neighbor's [Kivikkola] there was a copy of Europaeus' *Pieni Runonseppä*, from which the following song may derive.

Literacy—originally extolled as Finland’s gift and recompense to the treasured songlands—was now responsible for the development of an insidious literary “contamination” of the oral tradition itself.

We have seen, then, that reading as a customary act had long and well established roots in Karelia. Literacy was prized as a skill and shared through the act of reading aloud. The reading of sacred materials in particular was viewed as proper and propitious, both in Old Believer and standard Orthodox communities. Printed collections of folk poetry, further, fit native modes of edification, entertainment, and status manipulation. The advent of Finnish schools and materials in the area, replete with positive images and quoted examples of traditional song, prevented the growth of literacy from having immediate negative effects on local oral tradition. Adoption of printed materials into oral repertoires became possible as soon as even a minimal proportion of the populace had acquired the skills necessary for reading Finnish texts. Only collector disapproval, expressed through polite refusals to record certain songs or certain singers, stood in opposition to the active and creative incorporation of printed songs into performed tradition.

### **A Karelian Singer’s Adaptations**

It is clear from examining Vihtoorä Lesonen’s repertoire that it derives from Lönnrot’s published epic. For one thing, the songs collected by Karjalainen all correspond to poems printed in near succession in the epic itself, implying that Vihtoorä heard only sections of the work through another person’s reading aloud. Further, many of the songs contain details or events uncharacteristic of Vihtoorä’s home region (the Vuokkiniemi and Latvajärvi districts of Viena Karelia). Vihtoorä’s song *SKVR* I<sub>2</sub>:1023, for instance, relates the hero Väinämöinen’s desperate search for someone to heal his bleeding knee, an event covered in Poems 8 and 9 of Lönnrot’s 1849 *Kalevala*. Although this song finds plentiful counterparts in local oral tradition (e.g., *SKVR* I<sub>1</sub>:295-307), its second half—relating the incantations used in the actual healing—derives entirely from Lönnrot’s text (see below). Similarly, only the second half of Vihtoorä’s *SKVR* I<sub>2</sub>:1026—in which Väinämöinen attempts to gain entrance into the land of the dead (Tuonela)—finds close echoes in the local song tradition (*SKVR* I<sub>1</sub>:362-69); the first half of Vihtoorä’s song contains narrative events and lines that closely match Lönnrot’s Poem 16 but differ substantially from the songs of Vihtoorä’s community. Lönnrot’s Poems 10, 11, 12, and 26 find direct

adaptations in Vihtoorä's *SKVR* I<sub>2</sub>:1022, 1024, 1025, and 1027, each containing narrative events and characters (for example, Lemminkäinen's marriage to Kyllikki) otherwise unattested in the Latvajärvi and Vuokkiniemi districts. Indeed, because Lönnrot's 1849 *Kalevala* is based on texts collected across the entirety of Karelia and differs so significantly from the oral tradition of any single locale, literary influence of the kind evident in Vihtoorä's repertoire is seldom difficult to recognize.

In an earlier study (1995), I tried to show that although Vihtoorä's version of one song (*SKVR* I<sub>2</sub>:1023) closely follows Lönnrot's text in many respects, it also betrays a strong and pervasive reliance on local oral tradition and immanent understandings of the narrated events. The ethnopoetic structure of Vihtoorä's performance closely matches that of a song collected from Vihtoorä's kinsman Varahvontta Lesonen (*SKVR* I<sub>1</sub>:306) in terms of stanza length, use of repeated lines, and other stylistic features. These similarities give way only once the song broaches subjects normally outside of the local song tradition—for instance, the healing incantation of the song's second half, a detail in keeping with local understandings of the song's plot but normally not included in the song itself. Such closeness in form indicates that although Vihtoorä clearly borrows from Lönnrot's text, he does so from within the framework of aesthetics and plot expectations characteristic of his community's song tradition. Lönnrot's epic does not displace local understandings and stylistic norms; rather it is fit into them by native audience members and performers.

These observations may be extended by examining Vihtoorä's account of the creation of the sampo (*SKVR* I<sub>2</sub>:1022). The source of Vihtoorä's song, Lönnrot's Poem 10, differs greatly from the accounts of the sampo's creation current in Vihtoorä's home tract, as we shall see. We may thus examine how the singer confronted, interpreted, and reperformed a song entirely outside of the local repertoire. Again, as with Vihtoorä's 1025, this performed *Forging of the Sampo* proves a reinterpretation rather than a mere imitation of Lönnrot's material. Vihtoorä seems to read Lönnrot's elision of two distinct songs—the *Sampo Epic* and the *Golden Bride*—as a clear metonymic allusion to the moral implications of each. His resultant song heightens this allusion and spotlights the moral judgment at the core of the song in a manner consistent with techniques of allusion and intertextuality described for Karelian epic (Tarkka 1994) and for many oral traditions in general (Foley 1991).

Lönnrot's *Forging of the Sampo* (Poem 10) represents for many modern readers one of the most vivid and memorable moments in the entire

fifty poems of the *Kalevala*. The Sampo Cycle as a whole forms the narrative backbone of Lönnrot's epic and it is thus natural that the author seeks to dramatize and extend the moment of the sampo's creation in Poem 10. In doing so, however, he must depart from folk versions of the sampo song—the same versions that were familiar to Vihtoori from local oral tradition. The typical sampo song of Viena Karelia covers the actual creation of the sampo virtually in passing. Versions focus most usually on Väinämöinen's floating in the sea, possible role in the creation of the world, miserable experiences at Pohjola, sending of Ilmarinen, Ilmarinen's marriage negotiations with the farmwife, and the heroes' eventual theft and destruction of the sampo itself—events redistributed by Lönnrot across the expanse of his literary text. Within these broad, multi-episodic songs, the creation of the sampo receives relatively little attention. Consider, in contrast to Lönnrot's long account of the forging process (10:281-416), Arhippa Perttunen's more typical rendering, collected by Lönnrot in 1834 (*SKVR* I<sub>1</sub>:54:49-164):

Pohjolahan mentyöön Pohjon akka harvahammas pani sammon laaintaan kirjo kannen kirjantaan yhen joukosen sulasta yhen otrasen jyvästä yhen villan kylkyöstä maiosta mahovan lehmän yhen värttinän murusta.	After he got to Pohjola Pohjo's old woman, gap-toothed one set him to making the sampo to carving the mottled lid from one swan's molting from one grain of barley from one strand of wool from the milk of a dry cow from the shard of a distaff.
Sillon seppo Ilmorinen päivät sampuo rakenti yöt neittä lepyttelöopi.	Then craftsman Ilmarinen by day built the sampo by night soothed the maiden.
Sillon seppo Ilmorinen saapi sammon valmihiksi kirjokannen kirjatuksi ei neittä lepytetyksi.	Then craftsman Ilmarinen got the sampo finished the mottled lid carved the maiden was not soothed.

Here, in a song performed by one of Lönnrot's greatest informants who was also one of the principal contributors to the *Kalevala*, we find none of the suspense or drama that characterize Lönnrot's Poem 10. The sampo itself receives little attention here beyond the details of its original elements and final creation.

In order to create the memorable moment of the sampo's forging, then, a necessity born in part of the immensity of the sampo's symbolic role

in the long literary epic, Lönnrot must adapt a different song as the basis of his depiction. The song that Lönnrot chooses for this purpose—the *Forging of the Golden Bride* (*Kultaneidon taonta*)—figures as a later portion of the epic as well (Poem 37). In traditional versions of this song collected in Viena Karelia, Ilmarinen seeks out workers and a forge and sets to work creating a metal bride for himself. He creates a series of imperfect items, returning each to the forge in turn. At last, however, the hero succeeds, creating an ersatz wife who, however, proves dissatisfying both as a companion and as a bedfellow. Lönnrot borrows the *Golden Bride's* narrative framework, particularly its images of repeated attempts at forging, in order to lengthen and enliven an otherwise brief moment in the Karelian epic songs. Images of Ilmarinen ordering workers, fanning flames, and pulling out flawed items derive entirely from this latter source. The resulting fusion constitutes a poem unparalleled in the oral tradition. Given the uniqueness of Lönnrot's poem, then, any oral appropriation of it offers insights into traditional means of adapting and understanding new songs. As we shall see, Vihtoorä contextualizes Lönnrot's poem within larger communal understandings of its individual source poems and characters.

Vihtoorä's 64-line song (included in the Appendix at the end of this article) follows the core plot of Lönnrot's Poem 10. Vihtoorä's adaptation opens with the farmwife's bidding Ilmarinen to make the sampo. The hero forges a bow, a horse, and finally the sampo, an act that causes the community no joy but pleases Ilmarinen himself. In line and in detail, Vihtoorä's song shows clear dependence on Lönnrot's epic. At the same time, however, the song contains lines not included in Lönnrot's poem and reveals as well both Vihtoorä's traditional oral aesthetic and his apparent interpretation of Lönnrot's editorial decisions.

Vihtoorä does not reproduce in his song the entirety of Lönnrot's Poem 10. Lönnrot's long stage setting (1-250), involving Väinämöinen's trickery, Ilmarinen's arrival, and the farmwife of Pohjola's welcoming speech, finds no counterpart in Vihtoorä's song. Instead, the singer begins, seemingly abruptly, with the farmwife's challenge to Ilmarinen and the latter's modestly confident answer (1-18). Gone with this performative decision are Lönnrot's carefully constructed details of character motivation and feelings—for example, the hero's unwillingness to journey to Pohjola, Väinämöinen's ulterior motives, and the existence of the Maiden of Pohjola as the possible reward. As in his other *Kalevala*-derived songs, Vihtoorä chooses to rely on his audience's general understanding of the narrative and characters to situate his scene. Simply by mentioning the farmwife and Ilmorini (Ilmarinen) by name and quoting their exchange, the entirety of

the epic moment is metonymically evoked and assumed (Foley 1991).<sup>6</sup> A more explicit depiction of the narrative situation, its motivation, or outcome is unnecessary for an audience already familiar with the story. It is significant that Vihtoorä can rely on a system of traditional referentiality here even when the song he sings depicts a scene unfamiliar in his community's usual repertoire.

Broad aspects of structure and detail change in Vihtoorä's adaptation as well. Vihtoorä's song reduces the hero's attempts at forging from Lönnrot's five to a terser series of three, characteristic of local versions of the *Golden Bride* song. Whereas Lönnrot's hero creates a bow, boat, heifer (*hieho*), and plow before attaining the sampo, Vihtoorä's Ilmorini creates only a bow and horse (*hehvo*) before achieving the magic object. This three-part structure is characteristic of local versions of the *Golden Bride*, where the hero generally creates a sword, horse (*orih*), and maiden (e.g., *SKVR* I<sub>1</sub>:530, 533, 534, 535, 537, 538). This series of paralleled actions is subtly intensified by the figures manning the bellows in Vihtoorä's song: first serfs, then the wind, and finally Ilmorini himself. Vihtoorä thus builds mounting significance into his series in a way unparalleled in Lönnrot's text. In the *Kalevala*, the bellows are operated by serfs up to the final fanning, when the winds take over.

Vihtoorä's independent control of his song's form and contents contrasts with the closeness of the lines actually borrowed from Lönnrot. As an illustration of the similarities between Vihtoorä's song and its textual source, consider the words with which Ilmarinen answers the farmwife's challenge in each:

Silloin seppo Imarinen	Then craftsman Ilmarinen
itse tuon sanoiksi virkki:	himself put into words:
“Saattanen takoa Sammon	“I may be able to forge the Sampo
kirjokannen kalkutella	to hammer the mottled lid
joutsenen kynän nenästä	from the bottom tip of a swan's feather
maholehmän maitosesta	from a barren cow's milk
ohran pienestä jyvästä	from a little grain of barley
kesäuhuen untuvasta	from a summer ewe's wool
kun olen taivoa takonut	since I have made the heavens
ilman kantta kalkuttanut	pounded out the lid of air
ilman alkusen alutta	without any prior plan
riporihman tehtyisettä.	without even a guide string.”

(*Kalevala* 10:269-80)

<sup>6</sup> For a general discussion of traditional metonymy of this kind, see Foley 1991.

Sanou seppo Ilmorini:	Craftsman Ilmorini says:
“Taijanhan mie takuo Sampon kirjoalla kirjokannen joutsenen kynän nenästä osran pienestä jyvästä kesäuuhen untuvasta mahon lehmän maitosesta; kun mie olen taivahan takonun aivan ainehien alutta, ei tunnu vasaran jälki eikä pihtien pitämät.”	“I know perhaps how to forge the Sampo carve the mottled lid from the bottom tip of a swan’s feather from a little grain of barley from a summer ewe’s wool from a barren cow’s milk; since I have made the heavens quite without any basis, it doesn’t seem beyond the hammer nor held by the tongs.”

(*SKVR* I<sub>2</sub>:1022:8-18)

Here, Vihtoorä’s changes are limited to a few telling whole-line substitutions at the end of the passage (drawn from other songs common in the local oral tradition) and a partial translation of the Lönnrot’s lines from his Finnicized literary Karelian into the normal Karelian of the song tradition. Lönnrot’s *ohran* (“barley,” 275) becomes Vihtoorä’s *osran* (12); his *taivoa* (“heavens,” 277) becomes the more typical Karelian *taivahan* (15); his descriptive verb form *kalkutella* (“to hammer,” 272) is replaced with the *kirjoalla* (“to carve,” 10) used elsewhere in Lönnrot’s poem (e.g., 10:261). Where Lönnrot makes use of the somewhat archaic potential mood in his line 271 (“Saattanen takoa Sammon”—“I may be able to forge the Sampo”), Vihtoorä uses the more common particle *-han* to express this same uncertainty (9): “Taijanhan mie takuo Sampon”—“I know, perhaps, how to forge the Sampo.” This last substituted line is by no means Vihtoorä’s own singular creation, however; in fact, it occurs a number of times in the local oral tradition as an alternative to the line used by Lönnrot (e.g., *SKVR* I<sub>1</sub>:64:166). Vihtoorä’s rendition thus hints at his familiarity with oral versions of the sampo song.

At other junctures in Vihtoorä’s song, however, Lönnrot’s text seems a distant model indeed, as lines and refrains appear in the oral performance that find no counterpart in the printed epic. Consider, for instance, Vihtoorä’s description of the first attempt at forging (19-28), a passage more or less equivalent to Lönnrot’s 10:307-22:

Siitä seppo Ilmarinen takoja iän-ikuinen tunki ainehet tulehen takehensa alle ahjon. Otti orjan lietsomahan väkipuolet vääntämähän.	At that craftsman Ilmarinen age-old smith thrust the items in the fire to the bottom of his forge. He set a serf to fan servants to pump.
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Orjat lietsoi löyhytteli  
 väkipuolet väännätteli  
 kolme päiveä kesäistä  
 ja kolme kesäistä yötä  
 kivet kasvoi kantapäihin  
 vahat varvasten sijoille.

The serfs fanned the heat to steam  
 the servants kept pumping  
 three summer days  
 and three summer nights  
 stones ground into their heels  
 boulders where their toes were.

Niin päivänä ensimmäisnä  
 itse seppo Ilmarinen  
 kallistihe katsomahan  
 ahjonsa alaista puolta....

Thus on the first day  
 craftsman Ilmarinen himself  
 stoops down to look  
 at the forge's lower end....

(*Kalevala* 10:307-22)

Se seppo Ilmorini  
 tunki ainehet tuleh  
 pani orjat lietsomah  
 palkkalaiset painamah.

That craftsman Ilmorini  
 thrust the items in the fire  
 set the serfs to fanning  
 the hirelings to pressing.

Orjat lietso löyhytteli  
 palkkalaiset painatteli.  
 Lietso päivän  
 lietso toisen  
 jo päivänä kolmantena  
 kyyristih heän katsomah  
 ahjonsa alaista puolta:

The serfs fan the heat to steaming  
 the hirelings keep pressing.  
 They fan a day  
 they fan a second  
 already on the third day  
 he bent down to look  
 at the forge's lower end:

(*SKVR I*<sub>2</sub>:1022:19-28)

Here, the first three quoted lines find nearly exact counterparts in Lönnrot's text; line 22, in contrast ("palkkalaiset painamah;" "the hirelings to pressing"), "replaces" a line with similar meaning but different form in the printed text (line 312, "väkipuolet vääntämähän;" "the servants to pumping"). Such seemingly new lines derive, in fact, from neither the *Kalevala* nor local versions of the sampo song, but rather, from local renderings of the *Forging of the Golden Bride*. The Vuokkiniemi singer Okahvie Matvenna Remsujeff used lines nearly identical to Vihtoorä's for describing the workers in her rendition of the *Forging of the Golden Bride* (1894). Compare their lines:

Pani orjat lietsomah  
 palkkalaiset painamah.

He set the serfs to fanning  
 the hirelings to pressing.

(V. Lesonen; *SKVR I*<sub>2</sub>: 1022:21-22)

Pani orjat lietsomahe  
palkkalaiset painamahe

He set the serfs to fanning  
the servants to pressing.

(O. Matvenna; *SKVR I*<sub>1</sub>: 530:7-8)

So, too, Ohvo Homanen performed lines that resemble the latter part of Vihtoorä's stanza in his version of the *Forging of the Golden Bride* from 1872, helping account for these details of Vihtoorä's reworking. Compare the lines in Vihtoorä's song with those of Ohvo's *Golden Bride*:

Lietso päivän  
lietso toisen  
jo päivänä kolmantena  
kyyristih heän katsomah  
ahjonsa alaista puolta:

They fan a day  
they fan a second  
already on the third day  
he bent down to look  
at the forge's lower end:

(V. Lesonen; *SKVR I*<sub>2</sub>: 1022:21-28)

Lietto päivän,  
lietto toisen  
jo päivänä kolmantena  
katto hän ahjonsa aluksen  
kohotteli kuumokses'ta.

He fans a day,  
fans a second  
already on the third day  
he looks at the base of his forge  
lifts out of the flames.

(O. Homanen; *SKVR I*<sub>1</sub>:534:41-44)

Vihtoorä's most striking borrowing from the local versions of the *Forging of the Golden Bride*, however, is not the inclusion of stray lines but the happy/unhappy refrain that closes each of the three attempts at forging. Where Lönnrot's poem concentrates on Ilmarinen's appraisal of the attempted tools alone, Vihtoorä creates a repeated juxtaposition of the views of Ilmorini and his workers. Compare the five moments in Lönnrot's text with their three counterparts in Vihtoorä's song:

Itse seppo Ilmarinen  
ei tuota kovin ihastu

Himself craftsman Ilmarinen  
doesn't rejoice much at that

Se on seppo Ilmarinen  
ei ihastu tuotakana

That craftsman Ilmarinen  
doesn't rejoice at that either

Se on seppo Ilmarinen  
ei ihastu tuotakana

That craftsman Ilmarinen  
doesn't rejoice at that either

Se on seppo Ilmarinen

That craftsman Ilmarinen

ei ihastu tuotakana	doesn't rejoice at that either
Niin ihastui Pohjan akka	Then the farmwife of Pohja rejoiced
( <i>Kalevala</i> 10:333-34, 352-53, 369-70, 387-88, 423)	
Siitäpä orjat ihastu vain ei ihastun Ilmorini	At that the slaves rejoice only Ilmorini did not rejoice
Muut ihastu kaikki kansa vain ei ihastun Ilmorini	The entire people rejoices only Ilmorini did not rejoice
Ei ihastu muu kansa vain ihastu Ilmorini	The rest of the people do not rejoice only Ilmorini rejoices
( <i>SKVR I</i> <sub>2</sub> :1022:31-32, 50-51, 63-64)	

Vihtoorä's marked departure from the epic's text finds close parallels, however, in local versions of the *Forging of the Golden Bride*, as, for example, in Ohvo Homanen's version (cited above):

Señ seppä pahoim pahastu muu miero hyvin hyvästy	The craftsman was sad at that the rest of the world was very glad
Señ seppä pahoin pahastu muu miero hyvin hyvästy	The craftsman was sad at that the rest of the world was very glad
Señ seppä hyvin hyvästy muu miero pahoim pahastu	The craftsman was glad at that the rest of the world was horribly sad
( <i>SKVR I</i> <sub>1</sub> :534:47-48, 66-67, 83-84; 1872)	

It is clear from such comparisons, then, that Vihtoorä draws not only on Lönnrot's Poem 10, but on local equivalents of the same songs that Lönnrot had mined originally for his literary epic's structure and lines. In this sense, Vihtoorä's version of the *Forging of the Sampo* reveals a remarkably sophisticated process of oral reception. Vihtoorä accepted Lönnrot's song in its theme and details, even though it found no local counterpart. Recognizing the source poetry that had served as Lönnrot's model (the *Sampo Epic* and the *Forging of the Golden Bride*), however, Vihtoorä then recreated the song on his own terms, combining lines adopted from the *Kalevala* with the overall framework and refrains drawn from local versions of the *Forging of the Golden Bride*. Further, the entire song was performed in accordance with local ethnopoetic norms—a stress on

groupings of three, parallelism between refrain-like closing scenes, and reliance on metonymic understandings of character and situation. One could scarcely imagine a more active or independent reception of a written work, or a more traditional approach to a new song.

### **Reperformance as Interpretation**

Given the fact that Vihtoorä recognized Lönnrot's textual alteration, then, the question becomes why Vihtoorä chose to learn the song itself and extend Lönnrot's editorial strategy even farther. In examining this question of *why*, I believe we must focus on *how* Vihtoorä understood Lönnrot's text and the emendations that he noted there. I suggest that Vihtoorä, as a traditional audience member, viewed Lönnrot's textual reworking not as random or meaningless alteration for the sake of suspense alone, but as a powerful immanent allusion: an imagistic linking of the story of the sampo and the lesson of the golden bride. By superimposing these two moral tales through the hybrid union of lines and structures from each, both Lönnrot and (perhaps more consciously) Vihtoorä create new resonances in the oral tradition. We can sense the meaning of this allusion, then, only by examining the sampo and golden bride as they exist in Vihtoorä's local oral tradition.

Vihtoorä's understanding of the sampo song undoubtedly contrasted with that of Lönnrot or that of historical-geographic researchers who followed. Setting aside questions of Ur-form and redaction analysis, however, we may note a fairly consistent form and interpretation of the sampo cycle in nineteenth-century Viena Karelia, particularly in the region in which Vihtoorä resided (Latvajärvi and Vuokkiniemi).<sup>7</sup> The song, ritually performed during spring and fall plantings (cf. note, *SKVR* I<sub>1</sub>:88b) propitiated a successful harvest. Its power in assuring a productive agricultural year and in forestalling the frost (associated with the farmwife of Pohjola) must be understood not as an intrusive scholarly myth-ritualist reading but as the native view among nineteenth-century Christian Karelian peasants. The song's recurrent cosmogonic elements are linked by the theme of useful creation arising out of seemingly destructive or injurious

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<sup>7</sup> The question of the "original" or "core" meaning of the sampo has occupied myriad folklorists in Finland for a century and a half. It has been compared to motifs in Scandinavian saga, Finno-Ugric religion, north Eurasian cosmology, and other cultural complexes. My intent in this discussion is not to delve into the sampo's pre-Christian significance, but only to suggest its meaning to Christian peasants of the nineteenth century.

acts. Most local versions (e.g., *SKVR* I<sub>1</sub>:54, 58, 60, 62, 63, 64, 73, 74, 75) begin with an enemy's wounding of Väinämöinen and the latter's protracted floating on the sea. During this time, the hero becomes a nesting place for a bird but unavoidably destroys its eggs, leading to the creation of the earth and sky.<sup>8</sup> In other versions, Väinämöinen's courtship of the Maiden of Pohjola and resultant conflict with Ilmarinen opens the song instead (e.g., *SKVR* I<sub>1</sub>:53). In any case, the hero then arrives at Pohjola, negotiates with the farmwife there and eventually creates—or has Ilmarinen create—the sampo, an object capable of limitless, effortless production. Avarice leads to its theft, however, and in the end, the sampo (and sometimes also the Maiden of Pohjola; *SKVR* I<sub>1</sub>:64) is lost into the sea.<sup>9</sup> Singers noted extratextually that this fate explains the saltiness of the ocean, its unsuitability as drinking water. As one informant clarified:

Mereh jauhomah s'ai ijäks'eh, tuoho Valkieh mereh; s'uoloo jauho viimeseks', ta s'ielä on meress'ä s'uolan jauhonnass'a. Ei voia i vettä juua, n'iin on s'uolan'i meri.

It ended up in the sea to grind forever, into the White Sea; it was grinding salt last, so there in the sea it's grinding salt. One cannot drink the water, because the sea is salty.

(N'ekka-Jyrin leski; *SKVR* I<sub>1</sub>:73; 1872; cf. also *SKVR* I<sub>1</sub>:64, 1825)

Yet another informant viewed the sampo not simply as the source of the sea's salt, but also the entity responsible for its strange creatures, such as shellfish (Maksima Martiskainen, *SKVR* I<sub>1</sub>:99; 1872). Moral judgments regarding greed, either for the sampo or for the Maiden of Pohjola or for both, and its destructive effect on human and cosmic order were consciously identified by singers. Through its performance during the planting process, further, the song comes to express the importance of cooperation and toil as the outcomes and remedies of primordial avarice and sloth.

Local versions of the *Forging of the Golden Bride*, for their part (e.g. *SKVR* I<sub>1</sub>:526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531), combine occasionally with other songs related to the courtship attempts of Väinämöinen or Ilmarinen. In any case, they end nearly without exception in a strong moral pronouncement against turning silver and gold into substitutes for living

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<sup>8</sup> Lönnrot divides this portion of the typical Viena Karelian sampo song into two parts, placing the account of creation from an egg at the outset of the 1849 *Kalevala* (Poem 1), while the enemy's attempted assassination occurs in the figure of Joukahainen (Poem 6).

<sup>9</sup> The latter part of this song is used as the base for the 1849 *Kalevala*'s Poem 42.

affection, as in the following summation performed for Karjalainen by Maura Marttinen in 1894:

<p>Itse noin sanoikse virkki:          “Elköh nainehet urohot              Elköh miehet naimattomat          valakko vasesta naista              naista kullasta kuvakko          vilun huohi vaipan alta              kylmän kylkehe panouve.”</p>	<p>Thus he put into words:          “Do not, married men              do not, men unmarried          craft a woman of copper              adorn a woman of gold          cold will chill beneath the blanket              when touching the icy rib.”          (SKVR I<sub>1</sub>:526b:74-80)</p>
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This moral occurs even in songs that do not explicitly recount Ilmarinen’s tribulations in bed with his metal companion (as, for example the above song SKVR I<sub>1</sub>:526b). Clearly the song’s plot was familiar enough that it could be invoked metonymically in performance. The song’s moral, on the other hand, appears to have been stressed through its unfailing inclusion at the culminating moment of the performance.

When we consider these narrative frameworks, then, it becomes easy to see why Vihtoorä would have welcomed Lönnrot’s elision of the sampo song and the account of the golden bride. Both songs hinge on strong moral pronouncements regarding both greed and unnatural acquisitions. Both stress the destructive potential of such acts for the entire community and call for proper conduct. Thus, whereas Lönnrot can create a moment of misguided euphoria at the creation of the sampo—an image of illusory joy dashed immediately by the farmwife’s unsuspected avarice and treachery (*Kalevala* 10:423-62)—Vihtoorä expects no such gullibility from his audience. The very mention of the sampo, now further bolstered by the imagistic invocation of the golden bride as well, would signal the seriousness and error of the creation at once. It is for this reason, perhaps, that Vihtoorä allows the audience inside his song—like the traditional audience outside it—to recoil in immediate disapproval at the creation of the sampo. By adopting the refrain common to the *Forging of the Golden Bride* as locally performed, Vihtoorä accentuates the metonymic significance of the sampo itself:

<p>Ei ihastu muu kansa              vain ihastu Ilmorini.</p>	<p>The rest of the people do not rejoice              only Ilmorini rejoices.</p>
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(SKVR I<sub>2</sub>:1022:63-64)

In a competent and nuanced manner, then, Vihtoori Lesonen assimilates a printed poem into his community's meaningful ambient framework of performance, interpretation, and variation. His knowledge of the traditional oral epics of the region allowed him to recognize Lönnrot's nontraditional fusion of two formerly distinct narrative themes. His understanding of the moral bases of these source poems may have allowed him to interpret Lönnrot's reworking as a metonymic invocation. Vihtoori's own new song reflects the immanent significance of both the sampo and the golden bride and interrelates the two in a powerful depiction not of suspense but of foreboding. The singer brings his competence in the oral tradition to bear upon the printed text, receiving it first as a traditional audience member and then as an active performer.

In terms of Vihtoori's performance, then, the ability to read—or to listen to others read—played an important yet not destructive role. Literacy made songs published in the 1840s readily available to a singer half a century later. The resilience and power of the oral tradition, for its part, ensured that the experience of those songs occurred along lines inherent in and supportive of the tradition itself. The resulting song provides evidence not of the destruction of a genre (as late nineteenth-century collectors feared) but of the continued shaping influence of tradition in the artistic lives of its performers.<sup>10</sup>

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## Appendix

*Sammon taonta* [*Forging of the Sampo*]

-Vihtoori Lesonen's version (*SKVR* I<sub>2</sub>:1022)

(collected by K. Karjalainen, 1894)

Sano Pohjolan emäntä:  
 "Taijatko takuo Sampon  
 kirjokannen kirjoalla  
 joutsenen kynän nenästä  
 osran pienestä jyvästä  
 mahon lehmän maitosesta  
 kesä uuhun untuvasta?"

The farmwife of Pohjola says:  
 "Do you know how to forge the Sampo  
 shape the mottled lid  
 from the bottom tip of a swan's feather  
 from a little grain of barley  
 from a barren cow's milk  
 from a summer ewe's wool?"

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<sup>10</sup> A draft of this paper was written for the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar on "The Oral Tradition and Literature," held at the University of Missouri in 1994. Many thanks go to the seminar's director John Miles Foley for his useful suggestions and to the NEH for its generous assistance.

Sanou seppo Ilmorini:  
 “Tajjanhan mie takuo Sampon  
 kirjoalla kirjokannen  
 joutsenen kynän nenästä  
 osran pienestä jyvästä  
 kesäuuhen untuvasta  
 mahon lehmän maitosesta;

kun mie olen taivahan takonun  
 aivan ainehien alutta,  
 ei tunnu vasaran jälki  
 eikä pihtien pitämät.”

Se seppo Ilmorini  
 tunki ainehet tuleh  
 pani orjat lietsomah  
 palkkalaiset painamah.

Orjat lietso löyhytteli  
 palkkalaiset painatteli.  
 Lietso päivän  
 lietso toisen  
 jo päivänä kolmantena  
 kyyristih heän katsomah  
 ahjonsa alaista puolta:

jousi tungekse tulesta  
 kirjokoari kuumoksesta.

Siitpä orjat ihastu  
 vain ei ihastun Ilmorini.

Jousi on hyvän näköni  
 vain on pahan tapani:  
 joka päivä peän kysyy  
 toisin päivin kaksi peätä.

Siitä seppo Ilmorini  
 tunki ainehet tuleh  
 pani tuulen lietsomah.

Lietso päivän,  
 lietso toisen  
 jo päivänä kolmantena  
 kyyristih heän katsomah  
 ahjonsa alaista puolta:

Craftsman Ilmorini says:  
 “I know perhaps how to forge the Sampo  
 shape the mottled lid  
 from the bottom tip of a swan’s feather  
 from a little grain of barley  
 from a summer ewe’s wool  
 from a barren cow’s milk;

since I have made the heavens  
 quite without any basis,  
 it doesn’t seem beyond the hammer  
 nor held by the tongs.”

That craftsman Ilmorini  
 thrust the items in the fire  
 set the serfs to fanning  
 the hirelings to pressing.

The serfs fan the heat to steaming  
 the hirelings keep pressing.  
 They fan a day  
 they fan a second  
 already on the third day  
 he bent down to look  
 at the forge’s lower end:

a bow thrust up from the fire  
 a mottled bow from the flames.

At that the slaves rejoice  
 only Ilmorini did not rejoice.

The bow is nice-looking  
 but it is bad-mannered:  
 every day it asks for a head  
 on other days for two heads.

At that craftsman Ilmorini  
 thrust the items in the fire  
 set the wind to fanning.

It fans a day,  
 fans a second  
 already on the third day  
 he bent down to look  
 at the forge’s lower end:

hehvo tungekse tulesta kultasarvi kuumoksesta.	a horse thrusts up from the fire a gold-horn from the flames.
Hehvo ois hyvän näköni vain ompi pahan tapani: Metsässä on makoalija moaha majjon koateliija.	The horse is good-looking but it, indeed, is bad-mannered: in the forest it loafs around it spills its milk onto the ground.
Muut ihastu kaikki kansa vain ei ihastun Ilmorini.	The entire people rejoices only Ilmorini did not rejoice.
Siitä seppo Ilmorini hehvon katkasi kaheksi murteli murenehiksi. Toas tunki ainehet tuleh itse löihe lietsomah.	At that, craftsman Ilmorini broke the horse in two splintered it into pieces. Again he thrust the items in the fire takes up the fanning himself.
Lietso päivän, lietso toisen jo päivänä kolmantena kyyristih heän katsomah ahjonsa alaista puolta:	He fans a day. fans a second already on the third day he bent down to look at the forge's lower end:
Sampo tunkekse tulesta kirjokansi kuumoksesta.	The Sampo thrusts up from the fire the mottled lid from the flames.
Ei ihastu muu kansa vain ihastu Ilmorini.	The rest of the people do not rejoice only Ilmorini rejoices.

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