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The *Kalevala*’s Languages: Receptions, Myths, and Ideologies

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Abstract

In Finland, the epic *Kalevala* (1835, 1849) and Kalevala-meter poetry, or oral folk poetry more generally, are often seen as nationally significant symbols of Finnishness. The *Kalevala* is a modern literary product constructed by Elias Lönnrot out of Finnic folk poetry especially from Russian Karelia, Finland, and Ingria. Lönnrot, who was himself among the most significant collectors of oral poetry, created the *Kalevala* as a synthetic, organized compendium of (reconstructed) pre-modern “Finnish” culture. Beginning from the publication of the first edition in 1835, the *Kalevala* has been extremely significant in the creation of Finnish national and ethnic identity.

In this article, we discuss the engenderment of Finnishness and Finnish culture in terms of language ideologies by looking closely at the *Kalevala*’s languages, language-specific reception of the epic, Lönnrot’s language ideologies, and politics of language standardization in the contexts of the Grand Duchy of Finland and Russia. We argue that in these processes, Finnish was strongly symbolized and given a mythological charter: it was the language encapsulating ancestral heritage, and it was the language that the

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Finns were obliged to develop, learn, and teach. For the needs of the nation, the language had to be refined and homogenized, made into a standard language. In this process, the Karelian language and culture were implicitly absorbed into Finnish cultural heritage but not recognized and valued as coeval cultural realities: in both Finnish and Russian discourses, Karelia represented the past of the present-day Finnishness, but not the present day of Karelianness.

Keywords: language ideologies, the *Kalevala*, nationalism

Introduction

Myths are narratives that tell us who we are and where we come from; they define the spatial and temporal nexus of human individuals and societies. In contrast to historical research, the study of culture defines myths as meaningful models of the structure of reality. Myths also provide models for the conduct of social life and are thus essentially ideological—they orchestrate values, sanction norms, and legitimate power. Mythic history is a mode of historical knowledge that presents historical time as a continuation of the mythic time of origins and creation; present-day societies are linked to gods and demiurges by genealogy (Siikala and Siikala 2005, 61). The epic is the quintessential genre for mythic history, and, in the case of national epics, the narrative sketches out the emergence of a people and a nation from its origins in the beginning of time up until the present day. Myths of nationhood are essentially ideological in their origins and their uses. They are rooted in the political aims and needs of groups of people, and they offer narratives and symbols for the legitimation of the power relations between these groups.

The *Kalevala* is the national epic of Finland. Although the notion of the national character of this work by Elias Lönnrot emerged gradually (Sarajas 1984, 39–40), and indeed in dialogue with constructions of the national in the Finnish context, a particular quality was recognized immediately and even anticipated. Even before the publication of the first edition of the *Kalevala* in 1835, it was interpreted as a mythic narrative on Finnishness (Honko 1990b, 202–4): it told about the origin and early history of Finns, and it represented values supposedly shared by Finns (P. Anttonen 2005, 145). Even the dominant narrative of the role played by the national epic in the formation of national culture and a nation-state is mythic. This narrative eulogizes the demiurge Elias Lönnrot who, with his heroic deeds, bestowed a founding narrative upon the nation. In the 1835 annual report of the Finnish Literature Society, published in the newspaper *Helsingfors Morgonblad* a couple of months before the publication of the first edition of the *Kalevala* (the *Old Kalevala*), Johan Gabriel Linsén celebrated the epic and its founder:

> The county doctor of Kajana, Mr. Doctor E. Lönnrot [. . .] has, during his many and wide ranging wanderings among the Finns living in the Government of Archangel, recorded a wealth of *Poems* [*Runot*] that the country people there have conserved through tradition and song, and in putting them together he has made the utterly remarkable discovery of a great, complete, mythical national epic [. . .]. Through incredible labor, albeit sweetly rewarded by his success, the clear-sighted discoverer and arranger has dovetailed the broken pieces of this ancient Finnish poem and thus rescued it from near perdition, or rather: brought into daylight something that already lay in shattered fragments, buried in oblivion.[2] [3]

In his speech at the annual meeting of the society, Linsén defined Lönnrot's work as a commodity owned by the nation:

> With these epic poems in one's possession, Finland may, with an elevating self-awareness, learn to rightly understand its ancient times, and along with that, also its future spiritual development. Finland may tell itself: I, too, have a history.[4]

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[2] Provincial-Läkaren i Kajana, Herr Doktor E. Lönnrot [. . .] har, under många och vidsträckta vandringar bland de i Archangelska Gouvernementet boende Finnar, upptecknat ett rikt antal genom tradition och sång hos allmogen der förvarade Runot, och vid dessas sammanställning gjort den högst märkvärdiga upptäckten af ett stort fulländadt mythiskt national-epos [. . .]. Med otrolig möda, men denna af framgången herrligt belönad, har den skarpsynte upptecknarn och ordnarn fogat ihop de brutna stycken af detta Finska Fornqväde, och sålunda räddat det från nära undergång, eller rättare: helt i dagen återbragt, hvad som redan låg i spridda spillror begrafvet af glömskan. (Linsén 1835, 2)

[3] Unless otherwise indicated, the translations in this article from Finnish, Russian, and Swedish are by the authors.

[4] Finland i besittning af dessa episka dikter skall med upplyftande sjelfkänsla lära sig att rätt förstå sin forntid, och med den äfven sin framtida andeutveckling. Det skall kunna säga till sig sjelft: "Äfven jag har en historie!" (SKS KIA 1836, §1)

Linsén saw that with this invaluable resource Finnish culture had attained "an almost European significance" (SKS KIA 1836, §1). Later, the historian Yrjö Koskinen went on to argue that, together with the Finnish language, the epic was "the natural capital of our national spirit" and "an entry ticket to the ballroom of civilized nations" (Koskinen 1878, 284). The existence of a national, vernacular literature was a precondition for the international exchange that established the "great alliance of human progress" (283–84). Although the attribution of the formation of a Finnish nation and an independent nation-state to the *Kalevala* might be an overstatement (see P. Anttonen 2008, 209), the epic had a decisive role in the cultural sphere. As a literary work with many artistic adaptations, political uses, and ritual renderings, it performed Finnishness: it provided the symbols and the narratives to give shape to a national history, ethos, and language.

In this article, we will discuss the engenderment of Finnishness and Finnish culture in terms of language ideologies, or discourses that articulate the meanings, uses, and forms of language in a given community, in a given historical context. The making and the reception of the national epic are grounded in the perceived interconnections between language, culture, history, and nation. This interconnectedness has been discussed mainly in the context of Romantic Nationalism, but here, we will concentrate on the arguments and values attached to language in general and the languages involved in the process of making a national epic and a pioneering literary work in a language that lacked both written literature and a standardized form. The creation and reception of the *Kalevala* are intertwined in what Law (1998) has called language-extrinsic myths: notions and beliefs concerning a language's origin, history, future, and relation to the speakers' national character (see also P. Anttonen 2012, 342). The context for these myths is the Herderian notion of the folk: language, literature, and history formed a mythic whole that was expressed in its purest form in folk poetry (Sulkunen 2004, 25–26). In order to better understand these ideologies and myths, we will look closely at the *Kalevala*'s languages, language-specific reception of the epic, Lönnrot's language ideologies, and the politics of language standardization. Because the story of the reception of the *Kalevala* among the Swedish elite in Finland is better known (e.g., P. Anttonen 2005, 166–67; 2012, 333–38), we will focus on the Russian reception in relation to Lönnrot's ideas.

The Kalevalaic

Ideas, images, and entities that are interpreted as stemming from the *Kalevala*, or as reflecting its aesthetics, values, and language, are often called Kalevalaic (Fin. adj. *kalevalainen*; see, e.g., Siikala 2002). The noun *kalevalaisuus* is built from the name of the epic with the suffix -*laisuus*, which indicates a state or a quality or refers to a cause or an -ism.[5] This "Kalevala-ness" or "Kalevalaicity" is an ideological and biased construct that still filters the public view on the national epic, Finnish mythology, and a purportedly shared national culture. The construct has four facets that steer the implicit and explicit interpretations of the epic. The first bias concerns the epic's authenticity and the second its archaic quality; according to the third biased notion, the *Kalevala* is unequivocally Finnish, and the fourth asserts that this Finnishness refers to a homogenous group of people with cultural consensus.

In the discourse centering on the *Kalevala*'s authenticity, the issue has been to define the extent to which Lönnrot's epic represents a supposed ancient epos or oral poetry in general and how it does this. According to the romantic notion, the ancient epic had no individual maker: the subject behind this expression of the *Volksgeist* was the folk. The notion clearly downplays the role of the compiler of the epic. Lönnrot himself never tried to deny his contribution although he did not print his name on the title page of the *Kalevala*. In his letters, writings, and in the forewords of the *Kalevala*'s editions, he described in detail the ways in which he had reworked and organized the oral sources and written manuscripts at his disposal (see Apo 2004, 273–91). He confessed to having used poetic license—like the singers of the oral sources had (Lönnrot [1849b] 1993, 403). The initial audience—the Swedish-speaking but Finnish-minded gentlefolk in Finland—did not want to hear this: they needed a folk epic, and that is what they saw. As Linsén stated above, Lönnrot had found the remnants of an ancient unified epic and restored its past glory.

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[5] The neutral translation of the adjective *kalevalainen* is, according to the Wictionary, "of pertaining to Kalevala" (*Wiktionary: The Free Dictionary*, s.v. "kalevalainen," accessed February 8, 2018, https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/kalevalainen). The name of the epic, *Kalevala*, is a toponym created by Lönnrot to denote the home region of the epic's heroes. Kaleva, a name or word used in oral poetry for giants, young men, and bridegrooms, was for Lönnrot the name of the forefather of the Finns (Lönnrot 1963, 367–70, 378–79). Lönnrot elaborated on this idea by composing a poem on Kaleva's heroic deeds (see Tarkka 1996, 77–78).

Still haunted by the ghost of Macpherson and the Ossian fraud,[6] Lönnrot wanted to make his sources public—open access to the source material would convince the audience on the authenticity of the *Kalevala* (Apo 2004, 277). The Svecoman intelligentsia was especially eager to mock Lönnrot and express its doubts about the *Kalevala*'s authenticity—in the words of a lampoonist, "The old man has sung it all up himself" (*rallattaa kokoon*) (Ahrenberg 1914, 146; Häggman 2012, 179–80). This primary aspect of authenticity was assessed in the source-critical studies by Kaukonen (1939, 1956), who showed that on the level of single poetic lines, the *Kalevala* consists of verses originating in folk poetry—only 3 percent of the lines were composed by Lönnrot. This, as Kaukonen (1990, 157–65) himself noted, is only one, initial aspect of authenticity. As a whole, the epic is designed and versified by its compiler, Lönnrot: the contents, the personae, and the plot are his making. Honko (1990a, 1990b) has suggested that we should distinguish between different levels of authenticity. To the levels of verse lines, themes, and plots, one should add the level of the epic's national attribution. The authenticity of the national epic rests on the acknowledgement of the epic as belonging to the people and the nation (1990a, 1990b). More precisely this level of authenticity is grounded in the arguments by which its national status is legitimized and the power relations of the people taking part in the appropriation (see also P. Anttonen 2008).

In order to manage the projection from the poems collected in the early nineteenth century to the supposedly original ancient strata of culture, it was necessary to perceive the poems as resistant to change. The poems were essentially archaic, and they carried the past within them as if fossilized: the archaic is not only old, but also bygone. The noun favored by nationalist scholars was *muinaisuus*—a word derived from the adjective *muinainen* 'ancient': it was not only necessary to unveil "ancient poems," but also "ancient beliefs," "ancient time," and other similar "ancient relics" (*muinaisruno*, *-usko*, *-aika*, *-muisto*). Fewster (2006, 97–98) has noted that the invention of these compounds reflects the ideological importance of the distant past and that they can be dated to the years between the publication of the first and the second edition of the *Kalevala* (1835–49). Lönnrot was not only the strategic actor in the formulation of the signifieds of these words by collecting and compiling poetry that was to be understood as ancient and reflecting ancient beliefs and times—he also invented the neologisms for ancient poetry, belief, and time. According to the archaic bias, the people who had sung the poems in Karelia to Lönnrot and his fellow collectors were passive carriers of tradition, and their lives were oriented toward the past. This notion was essential in Karelianism, a cultural movement that emphasized the role of Karelia in the construction of Finnish culture (see Sihvo 1973; Tarkka 1989). In Karelianist terms, Karelia was a channel to bygone days: "In Russian Karelia, there among our eastern brothers, all the way behind Lake Ladoga, you can get hold of such a magnifying glass with which anyone can see centuries to the future and to the past" (Grönqvist 1884, 3). Thus Karelian mores reflected the past in an unproblematic way. The present of the *runo*[7] singers could only blur the vista to the old times.

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[6] James Macpherson published his Ossianic poems between 1760 and 1763 and claimed them to be translations of songs by Gaelic bards from the third century AD. After Macpherson's death the poems were shown to be Macpherson's work based on Scottish ballads, folk narratives, and medieval manuscripts. The publication had a strong impact on Scottish identity, and the denial of the poems' authenticity caused an animated debate in Europe (see, e.g., Apo 2004, 274–77; Honko 1990b, 224–25; Thomson 1990).

The majority of Lönnrot's sources for the *Kalevala* originated in areas outside of Finland, in Russian Karelia. This itself is a strongly symbolic statement, as exemplified by this quote from the homepage of the Information Center of the Kalevala and Karelian culture, Juminkeko: "The roots of Finnish culture are in the Viena Karelian villages surrounded by wilderness. There the folk poetry that gave birth to the *Kalevala* was collected from the illiterate common people" (Juminkeko). The formulation illustrates a transfer of symbolic resources from the periphery to the cultural centers as an outcome of an organic process, the "birth" of the epic (see Tarkka 1989). The eastern periphery was associated with nature and the natural—and thus authentic—but the Finnish culture with its organic roots in this nature was becoming civilized (1989).

The Finnishness of the *Kalevala* is an ideological construct that has been legitimized in various ways. The first of these was the postulated common ethnic origin of the groups that had kept the runo singing tradition alive. The subtitle of the first edition of the *Kalevala* (1835), "Old poems of Karelia from the ancient times of the Finnish people,"[8] highlights this idea: the poems indicated a common past and a common ancestry for Karelians and Finns, and, thus, the poems collected in Karelia were practically Finnish. Similarly, the thirty-four-volume anthology of Kalevala-meter poetry, originally designed to testify to Lönnrot's fidelity to the oral sources, is called *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* (Ancient poems of the Finnish people; SKVR). The "Finnish people" could also refer to other Finnic peoples, or even to the Finno-Ugric "tribes" (see, e.g., P. Anttonen 2012, 347). This particular idea gained political currency in the 1930s and 1940s (Wilson 1976, 138–61).

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[7] In this article we use the term *runo* (runo singer, runo language, etc.) as an attribute of singers or the act of performing or singing poems in the vernacular Finnic poetic meter, the so called Kalevala-meter of Kalevalaic poetry (on the runo language, see, e.g., Kuusi, Bosley, and Branch 1997, 62–65).

Rather than being collected from either Finnish or Karelian areas, the source poems of the *Kalevala* were collected from both Finnish and Karelian areas that were characterized by a multitude of ethnic and linguistic identities.[9] However, the notion of "the Finnish people" stressed homogeneity in terms of language, ethnicity, cultural dispositions, values, and social status. Accordingly, folk poetry reflected a unified mindset and monologic culture: in the end, folk poetry was created in a collective process in which the *Volkgeist* sought to be expressed. The source poems that were richly varied and contextually bound to diverse cultural surroundings and expressive practices were transformed by Lönnrot into a cohesive literary text with a homogenous cultural aura. A decisive aspect of "homogeneism," or "the ideological foundation of the discursive production of national homogeneity" (P. Anttonen 2005, 128, see also 153; Blommaert and Verschueren 1998) is the reconceptualization of linguistic diversity in the source material that will soon be discussed in detail.

Homegeneity also affected the way in which the collective and individual aspects of vernacular creativity were treated. As already stated, the producers of Lönnrot's source material, the runo singers, were treated as potential obstacles in the search for the original. In the context of homogeneism, the perception of the folk was molded into representations that reduced individuals into "types" or "folk types" (*kansantyyppi*). Depending on the context, these types could be subjected to abjection and civilizing enterprises, or be revered and idolized (Knuuttila 1994, 112–13; Tarkka 1989, 252–53). The idolized and idealized folk types were linked to respectable prototypes in classical antiquity (Knuuttila 1994, 112–13; Tarkka 1989, 252–53). At this level, the uncivilized common people could be transformed into paragons for the new national ethos.

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[8] *Kalewala taikka wanhoja Karjalan runoja Suomen kansan muinosista ajoista*.

[9] Väinö Kaukonen's (1939, 1956) source analysis has shown that material from Viena Karelia, Ingria, and Olonets (i.e., the "Russian areas") comprises less than half of the 6,000 folk poems that Lönnrot had at his disposal while compiling the second edition of the *Kalevala* (1849). Although more than half of the poems were collected from Finnish-Karelian areas, the poems of Viena were most influential in the composition and basic plot of the epic.

In the articulation of all four facets of the Kalevalaic ideology, the role played by language was crucial. The authentic and archaic folk epic originating in the ancient history of the Finns was produced by a homogenous people that spoke "Finnish"—at least in principle. The task of Lönnrot was perceived as a reconstructive act, in which the original glory and linguistic purity were restored. This epic was the legitimate cornerstone of the Finnish language, and of literature in this language. The people who spoke this language were the forefathers of Finns, and the mindset of this ancient people could be found in the poems collected in the nineteenth century because the poems were repositories of old wisdom and the people wished to keep their archaic traditions intact. The oral poems provided a link to the mythic past of the nation, and they also showed the way to the future. The rhetoric of the Kalevalaic heritage is rooted in the politics of history and questions of linguistic ideology and praxis (see P. Anttonen 2008; Fewster 2008).

Reception of the *Kalevala* and Finnish Folk Poetry in Russia

Lönnrot's project of compiling the epic and developing Finnish language has to be assessed in the context of political turmoil and language-related tensions. In 1809, Finland passed from Sweden to Russia to become a Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire. This political change did not remove the borders between Russia and Finland, but it changed these borders, making mobility between them more possible as parts of the large geographic and political entity. Finns, regardless of their mother tongue and language skills, had to relate themselves to the Swedish-speaking elite and the new Russian-speaking administration. Lönnrot's epic project was developed in a Finland that was part of the Russian Empire, and thus discussions with the Russian-speaking intelligentsia and in Russian-language discourse present a crucial counterpoint to discourses in Swedish and Finnish.

Lönnrot's primary goal in creating the *Kalevala* was to establish and reinforce Finnish language, literature, and culture, as distinct from Swedish and Russian (see, e.g., Saarelainen 2015, 137–38; Sulkunen 2004, 26–28). Within the environment of Romantic Nationalism, Lönnrot was also in active communication with

Russian scholars. Among these scholars was the famous Russian philologist, Jakov Grot, a Swedish Russian from Saint Petersburg, who was the professor of Russian language, literature, and history at the University of Helsinki from 1841 to 1852. Grot's writings were instrumental to the enthusiastic reception in Russia, especially in Saint Petersburg, of the publication of the *Old Kalevala*.

In 1840, Grot published the long article "About Finns and Their Folk Poetry" in the famous literary journal *Sovremennik* (Contemporary), established by Aleksander Pushkin. In this article, Grot presents an overview of the Finnish people, their nature and national character, their habits and customs, the Finnish language, and their glorious folk poetry. He also presents a quite detailed summary of the plot of the *Old Kalevala* and praises Lönnrot as the discoverer and collector of the epic. Grot observes that the main and perhaps the only monument of the ancient identity of the Finns is their songs and the "wonderful language of these poems, so close to nature, which are often so precious, springing from the depths of the soul" (Grot [1840] 1898, 109). Claims such as this fully conform to the romantic ideas of epic poetry as the voice of the folk. Within a footnote of this work, Grot reveals that he has accepted the view of Russian Karelians as belonging to a unified linguistic and cultural group of "Finns," and thus the folk of Russian Karelia were the folk of the Finns of Finland:

> It is known that in Olonetz and Archangel Governorate the majority of the population are Finns. It is worth mentioning that it was especially there that Lönnrot found poems for the *Kalevala*. [. . .] The language used by these Finns is similar to that spoken in eastern parts of Finland with only minor exceptions. (Grot [1840] 1898, 124–25)

Grot's article is written mostly on the basis of Elias Lönnrot's and J. L. Runeberg's writings, and it includes translations of long quotations, for example, about the language of the folk poems. When Grot moved to Finland in order to be a professor at the University of Helsinki, he befriended Lönnrot and became an enthusiast of Finnish folklore and contemporary literature. Later on, Grot returned to Saint Petersburg and was elected vice president of the Russian Academy of Science. When in that position, he actively promoted and popularized Finnish folklore and the *Kalevala*.

The first Russian translation of the *Kalevala*, by Leonid Petrovic Belsky, appeared late, in 1888, after Lönnrot's death. However, the Russian intelligentsia was already acquainted with the *Kalevala* through its German and French translations. The first complete German translation was made by the German Russian Franz Anton Schiefner in Saint Petersburg in 1852. Lönnrot and his scholarly work were also recognized in Russia: in an article published in honor of Lönnrot's eightieth birthday, he was called "the Finnish Homer" (Jakubov 1882), and, in 1876, he was elected as an honorary member of the Russian Academy of Science in Saint Petersburg.

The Russian translation of the *Kalevala* was long in coming, owing to the fact that L. P. Belsky did not initially know Finnish: he learned it for the sake of the translation, also learning the poetic language and dialectal vocabulary as part of this process. Belsky wished to translate the *Kalevala* in order to fill a gap in Russian literature that did not have an available translation of such an important work of world folk literature (1888, 614). In the preface to the translation, Belsky also compares Lönnrot to Homer (1888, 5). He presents the *Kalevala* and its mythology in the context of other epics and mythologies of the world, stressing that the *Kalevala*'s greatest significance is in bringing together the epic stories of heroes with a cosmogony from primal elements (1888, 5–13). He followed his translation with a discussion of the challenges of translation, in which he addresses the question of what kind of language is the most appropriate for translating a folk epic. In that discussion, he expresses the view that the language of Russian folklore was not suitable for translating the *Kalevala* because it is the idiom of another nation and would not accurately represent the meanings of the Finnish poetry (Belsky 1888, 611–14). Belsky's discussion is embedded in an ideology of the language of the folk that does not waver even though he also translates parts of Lönnrot's preface to the *Kalevala* in which Lönnrot describes how he constructed his epic from the oral poetry. Belsky clearly subscribes to the ideology of "one nation, one language," a theme we will discuss later in detail (P. Anttonen 2005, 157–58; Blommaert and Verschueren 1998, 194–95).

Publications by Grot and Belsky were prominent and authoritative in Russian discussions of the *Kalevala*, but alongside such formalized works there were also ongoing discussions in more popular Russian-language venues in Finland. *Finljandskaja Gazeta* (Finland's newspaper) was the official newspaper of the Russian government in the Grand Duchy of Finland, and it was distributed for free to all Russian administrative officials working in Finland. It was established by Governor-General Nikolai Bobrikov in 1900 and ran until Finland's independence in 1917. The aim of this paper was to bring Finnish and Russian peoples closer together, but it was also intended to facilitate the administrative incorporation of Finland into Russia. It provided a venue for lively discussions of Finland's political and cultural life, and it offered overviews of contemporary discussions and news translated from Swedish and Finnish for the Russian-speaking population of Finland.

Across the years of its publication, contributions to this paper praised and celebrated Lönnrot and the *Kalevala*. When a statue of Lönnrot was erected in Helsinki in 1902, *Finljandskaja Gazeta* published an article that presented Lönnrot from an interesting angle, emphasizing his relationship to Grot, who reportedly called Elias Lönnrot "Ilya Ivanovich" and was said to eulogize him and his work on every possible occasion. The article reviewed Grot's writings about the *Kalevala* and its significance (*Finljandskaja Gazeta*, October 21, 1902, 2). On the other hand, the paper also reported disputes surrounding the *Kalevala*, presenting both sides of the discussions, such as whether the *Kalevala* was a true folk epic or exclusively written by Lönnrot. The political charge of these discussions is evident. The editors expressed their opinion regarding the epic's authenticity:

> In the eyes of a Russian reader, the *Kalevala* does not lose its poetic significance because it appears not to be a folk epic but Lönnrot's creation. However, to characterize local politicians of the Swedish party, their attempts to destroy this poem are significant. When they wanted to establish a deep rift between Russians and Finns, they elevated the *Kalevala* as a pearl of creation: *Look, Finns! Here is your folk epic, equal to our Edda! You surpassed the Russians! Don't pay attention to them; follow us, the representatives of sophisticated Western Europe!* But when it appeared that the Finnish population believed the Swedish Sirens less than traveling Russian merchants, they say: *Don't think too highly of yourselves. You are not sophisticated. You don't even have your own epic. Your* Kalevala *is created by Lönnrot, whose last name immediately reveals that he is a Swede.* Anyway, it is very meaningful that the folk poems of the Finnish tribe were best preserved where the branches of this tribe, Karelians and Estonians, have long been living

> under Russian rule. This means that Russia did not erase, did not destroy the tribal authenticity of Russia's own Finns, like the Swedes succeeded in doing in the former Swedish but currently in—luckily for it—Russian Finland. (*Finljandskaja Gazeta*, June 29, 1901, 3; emphasis added)

This is an illustrative example of the ways in which not only the Finnish and the Swedish elite but also Russian authorities and journalists capitalized on the *Kalevala* as a political tool or lever. Participants in this Russian-language discourse went so far as to claim that the *Kalevala* could only be discovered and collected under Russian governance and would never have been possible under Swedish rule.

Quite different perspectives also emerged in these discussions. A journalist of *Finljandskaja Gazeta* found in the archive of K. I. Jakubov, a late Russian teacher of a gymnasium in Helsinki, a short anonymous article manuscript dated around 1892. The manuscript was entitled "A Letter from Finland" and signed "A Karelian of Russia" (*Finljandskaja Gazeta*, December 30, 1902, 2). The article was probably intended for the paper *Moskowskie Vedomosty* (Moscow News), and thus for a broad audience of the Russian Empire. *Finljandskaja Gazeta* published a Russian translation of this article without commentary. The article criticizes the designation of the *Kalevala* as a national treasure of Finland and as a folk epic of the Finnish people. According to the author, the Finnishness of the *Kalevala* is, for the Finnish folk, beyond question, and if someone were to say that Russian Karelians were participating in the creation of the *Kalevala*, people in Finland would consider it completely absurd. The author reminds his reader that the poems of the *Kalevala* were collected in Russian Karelia and they are "the property of Russian Karelians," and observes that the many translations of the *Kalevala* into different languages never mention its "real origin":

> This kind of appropriation of someone else's property went undiscovered for many decades, probably because the Karelians of Russia did not even notice what kind of treasure was dragged from them across the border. They couldn't understand the greatness and significance of this treasure and therefore didn't think to claim their rights to this property. (*Finljandskaja Gazeta*, December 30, 1902, 2)

This article reveals that the construction of ethnic and national identity and Finnishness was not without controversy. The anonymous author asserts that if the epic is accepted as Finnish, then the original "authors" of the epic, Karelians of Russia, should be considered Finns. Otherwise, he claims that the *Kalevala* should be returned to its original owners and Finland should announce to the world that this epic does not belong to the Finnish people. These accusations of cultural appropriation against Finns and the Finnish nation contest and challenge the general view presented in Russian newspapers across the years. The dominant discourse confirmed and legitimized the ideological notion of the *Kalevala* as the core of an authentic, ancient Finnish heritage. For these newspapers, the *Kalevala* was an emblem of unified cultural identity.

Lönnrot was very open concerning his methods and about the collection of materials from Russian Karelia, but the perception of his work was carried beyond these claims through the ideology of Romanticism. Lönnrot himself participated in this process through advancing his own views that also successfully penetrated into Russian-language discussions, both through personal contacts as with Grot and also more generally through such venues as *Finljandskaja Gazeta*. Beginning with scholarship in the Soviet era, the *Kalevala* ceased being viewed as purely a Finnish epic and is instead addressed as Karelo-Finnish, acknowledging both Karelian and Finnish contributions to the poems (see, e.g., Kagarov 1940, iv–xlii).

Lönnrot and the Standard Language

In this section we will look behind the reception of the *Kalevala* in the context of the Kalevalaic ideology presented above. We will analyze Lönnrot's notions on Finnish language, especially in relation to the ideology of Finnishness, which is understood here as an inherent presumption of understanding Finnishness as a natural, monolingual, and culturally homogeneous entity, or in other words, the ideology of "one nation, one language" (P. Anttonen 2005, 157–58; Blommaert and Verschueren 1998, 194–95; Karkama 2001, 146–71).[10] According to the latest research,

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[10] The Finnish "Yksi kansa, yksi kieli" can be translated as "One nation, one language" or "One people, one language," but, as Pertti Anttonen (2005, 157) has noted, in this context also 'people' implies (potential) nationhood. Zacharias Topelius, the author of *Maamme kirja* (1876; The book of our land), which actually mediated the contents and evaluations of the *Kalevala* to the wider public, advocated the ideology of "one nation, two languages," that is, one Finland and Finnish people with Finnish and Swedish as spoken languages. The third language ideology is the Svecoman "Kaksi kansaa, kaksi kieltä" ("Two peoples, two

Elias Lönnrot's *Kalevala* should be seen as a nationalistic hybrid of history writing, future-building, ethnographic description, and language standardization (Saarelainen 2015). Lönnrot's hybrid and intertwined aims are clearly present in his numerous writings and can be found throughout his texts. He wrote as early as 1831 in the foreword of the *Kantele*[11] that his goal was to make the Finnish nation appreciate their poetry:

> My aim in publishing these Finnish Poems is fair: first of all, I would like the people in common, after having seen that their poems are more valuable than they themselves have used to think, would not, as they have until now, abandon them, or replace them with songs of a Swedish kind; second, I hope that they will not only bring benefit and profit to the Finnish language, but also some sort of additional information on the bygone days of our ancestors.[12]

What did Lönnrot mean when he mentioned "benefit and profit" to the Finnish language? One of Lönnrot's main aims was to give a new perspective on standard Finnish language. To him, folk poetry was a fruitful source for creating a new, modern Finnish, since historical and written sources in Finnish were few. As Saarelainen (2015) notes, folk poetry was considered a nostalgic memory of the past, but at the same time it provided a source for belief in the Finnish future (136). Concretely, folk poetry could be used in this process by adding the poetry's Eastern dialect words and forms in a literary work (Punttila and Issakainen 2003, 227). Before this, the impact of Western Finnish on literary Finnish had been strong, but in the process of making the language suitable for all classes and parts of society, that is, matching the homogenous nationhood, literary Finnish had to be enriched with vocabulary,

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languages"), without an intended plea for two separate nations (see P. Anttonen 2008, 219–23; Mikkola 2008, 180–81).

[11] The *Kantele* is a series of small-scale folk-poetry anthologies, edited and published by Lönnrot between 1829 and 1831 (see Honko 1990b, 197–98).

[12] Aikomukseni näiden Suomalaisten Runoin julistamisella on kohtalainen: ensiksi soisin, että yhteinen kansa, nähtyänsä heidän runonsa olevan suuremmasta arvosta, kuin he ite niitä ovat tottuneet pitämään, ei enää kuin tähän asti on tapahtunna, heittäisi niitä, tahi vaihettaisi Ruotille murtaviin lauluin; toiseksi toivoisin niistä ei ainoastansa jotain voittoa ja etua Suomen kielelle, vaan myöskin jonkunlaista tiedonlisäntöä esivanhempaimme menneistä ajoista [. . .] (Lönnrot [1829a] 1993, 165).

structures, and expressions of Eastern dialects (Nuolijärvi and Vaattovaara 2011, 67).

The aim of creating a standard language was one of the most influential ways of the time to put nationalism into practice (Blommaert and Verschueren 1998; Milroy 2007, 134, 138; Woolard and Schieffelin 1994, 60–61), and Lönnrot's contribution was prominent in this work in Finland. As Saari (2012) puts it, "since he was highly respected by his contemporaries, he had a great impact as a standardizer of the phonology and morphology of literary Finnish" (188). Thus, as a member of the higher social class, Lönnrot was one of the few persons in nineteenth-century Finland who had the authority to impose the rules of language, to be a part of the standardization process: the linguistic forms he used had higher prestige since speakers tend to confer higher prestige on usages that are considered to be those of the elite (Milroy 2007, 134–37). His usage of the Eastern words and forms legitimized them, made them visible and acceptable in contrast to earlier notions about them—especially Karelian words and forms—as vulgar, barbaric, and uncivilized (cf. Harle and Moisio 2000, 108–9; Sihvo 1973, 16, 25).

Lönnrot introduced his principles of textualization very carefully in the foreword of the *New Kalevala*. He explained how he balanced between standard Finnish and vernacular, but the standard Finnish was preferred at the expense of Eastern forms:

> On the spelling of language. In the present edition the spelling has been, when possible, adjusted to ordinary standard language and common grammar. For this reason we will find in writing the forms: *osoittaa* (point at), *tavoittaa* (reach out), *milloin* (when) [. . .], instead of the earlier, Karelian-dialect spellings *osottaa*, *tavottaa*, *millon* [. . .]. If the spelling has not been adjusted to common standard language, it ought to be easily understood as it is.[13]

The idea of an "ordinary" and "common" standard Finnish can be described as an ideology of standard language—with the concept of standard treated here more as a process of making language accessible than as an empirical linguistic fact (Woolard and Schieffelin 1994, 64). During the nineteenth century, the process of language standardization led to a situation in which Finnish was increasingly used in schools and bureaucratic contexts, while the status of Swedish became weaker (Nuolijärvi and Vaattovaara 2011, 67). Lönnrot and the Finnish Literature Society were the central agents in developing the Finnish language for these purposes. The creation of a standard language also implied translation and production of literature of a pragmatic kind, such as dictionaries, floras, medical guides, and law books. These foreign resources had to be "domesticated" in order to keep the Finnish language pure from Swedish and other foreign influences, or "alienisms" (*muukalaisuus*) as phrased by Lönnrot (Koskinen 1878, 283–84; Lönnrot 1844, 159–60).

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[13] Kielen kirjoitustavasta. Kirjoitustapaa nykyisessä laitoksessa on mahdollisuutta myöten mukailtu tavalliseen kirjakieleen ja yhteiseen kielenopin johtoihin.

The hybrid language created by Lönnrot for his folk poetry compilations became the new standard for teaching the Finnish language at school. Even the largely Swedish-speaking intelligentsia sought to familiarize themselves with the Finnish by reading the *Kalevala*. However, even a tentative understanding of the *Kalevala* was a challenge for the educated people familiar with a standard language based on Western dialects (Anttila 1985, 178–80; Häggman 2012, 132). Volmar Schildt, a reformer of the Finnish language and creator of neologisms, confessed in his correspondence with Lönnrot: "I am almost playing blind man's bluff with these poems, often just making guesses at the meanings intended by the minstrel, never fully understanding them" (SKS KIA Schildt 1845). When the sourcebooks for the literary "fancy master's Finnish" (*hieno maisterinsuomi*) were the *Kalevala* and the grammar book, the rural population had difficulties in understanding the gentleman's attempts at communication, for example, while collecting folklore (Laitinen and Mikkola 2013, 435).

In public schools, the *Kalevala* was read beginning in 1843, when the Finnish language became a subject in the curriculum. The epic was not only considered an appropriate guide to language acquisition, but also a means for the upbringing of a new generation of Finns (Fewster 2008, 200). In the words of J. G. Linsén, "Let the youth learn early on the songs that sounded from our forefathers' lips. Let public schools be born in Finland, let the youth be educated in them also by reading the *Kalevala*" (SKS KIA 1836, §1). Linsén's words bear an intertextual relation to the framing lines of the *Kalevala*, in which the book addresses or dedicates itself

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Siitä syystä tavataan nyt kirjoitettuna: osoittaa, tavoittaa, milloin [. . .], jossa entisen, Karjalan-murteisen, kirjoitustavan mukaan oli: osottaa, tavottaa, millon [. . .]. Mikäli kirjoitustapaa ei ole yhteiseen kirjakieleen sovitettu, ymmärtänee sen huokeasti sillänsäki (Lönnrot [1849a] 1993, 413–14).

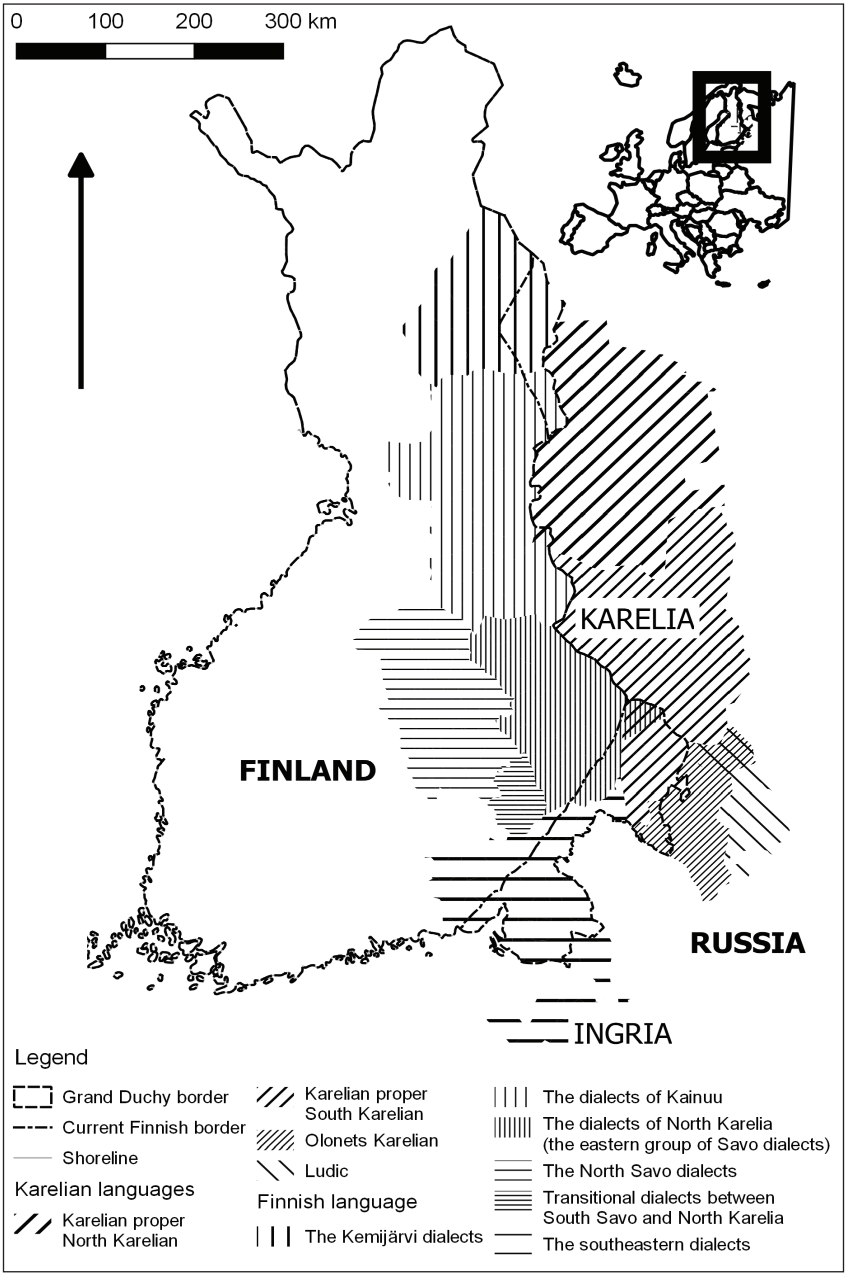
0
100
200
300 km
KARELIA
FINLAND
RUSSIA
INGRIA
Legend
Grand Duchy border
Current Finnish border
Shoreline
Karelian languages
Karelian proper North Karelian
Karelian proper South Karelian
Olonets Karelian
Ludic
Finnish language
The Kemijärvi dialects
The dialects of Kainuu
The dialects of North Karelia (the eastern group of Savo dialects)
The North Savo dialects
Transitional dialects between South Savo and North Karelia
The southeastern dialects

Figure 1. Map of Finnish and Karelian language dialects. Finnish borders in 1860 according to Col. Georg Alftan marked with dotted line, current border with bold line. Sources: Institute for the Languages of Finland, www.vanhakartta.fi (Heikki Rantatupa, University of Jyväskylä), 2017, modified from source. Samppa Mäkelä 2017. CC-BY-SA 4.0.

to "the upcoming youth, the growing people," who are obliged to listen to the tale sung by their forefathers and to continue singing (Lönnrot [1835] 1993, 190, 315). The bond between the ancient, epic timeframe and the future generations was to be continuous.

Although the *Kalevala* was used to promote the Finnish language, most Swedish-speaking people only read it in Swedish translations. The first translations of separate poems from the *Kalevala* appeared in the newspaper *Helsingfors Morgonbladet* even before the first edition of the *Kalevala* was for sale—the translator was Lönnrot himself (Aarnipuu 2012, 85). These very fragments created the anticipatory mood and preconception of a national epic. A year later, the same newspaper published artistically ambitious translations by J. L. Runeberg, the Swedish-speaking national poet of Finland (85–86). The first complete and verbatim translation into Swedish was accomplished by Lönnrot's close collaborator C. N. Keckman, who, in 1836, produced the unpublished translation for the purpose of university lecturing (86–88). In its totality, the first edition of the *Kalevala*, now known as the *Old Kalevala*, appeared for the reading, Swedish-speaking public in 1841, as the translation of M. A. Castrén (88).

As Pertti Anttonen (2005, 166–67) notes, the *Kalevala* became, rather ironically, one of the reasons why standard Finnish overcame the role of the Swedish language, despite the fact that the Swedish-speaking elite—Lönnrot himself among them[14]—was the original agent of Finnish nation-building. This is a ponderable example of the consequences of language standardization: as Milroy (2001) puts it, "many (historians of language in particular) have treated strandardization as though its primary goal was literary—to make great literature available to a wide reading public. In the present account, this is not what we assume. The immediate goals of the process are not literary, but economic, commercial and political" (534–35; cf. Bauman and Briggs 2003). As both Linsén and Lönnrot formulated it, the epic was a "possession," a resource for the "benefit and profit" of the nation. Literariness and literature do not exist in a vacuum: the creation, production, and reception of the literature of any genre and in any language setting is entangled in processes and hierarchies of power and the distribution of scarce resources.

It is often noted that the ideology of standard language leads to a situation where its most salient feature is the suppression of variation of all kinds (Lippi-Green 1994, 166). The "one nation, one language" ideology required suppression of the Swedish and Russian languages in a country that was actually multilingual and socially stratified, with Finnish, Swedish, and Russian as the major languages closely connected to social class. The ideology also required standardization inside the field of Finnish dialects, accents, and variation. Lönnrot, paradoxically, justified the use of Eastern, especially Karelian, words and forms as a part of standard Finnish, but at the same time the justification suppressed the role of the Karelian language itself, even though it did not exist as a construction of "language" in a sense the word is understood today. He wrote in the foreword of the *Kalevala*:

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[14] Elias Lönnrot's mother tongue was Finnish but he learned Swedish in early childhood—albeit with difficulty (Anttila 1985, 40–41).

> The language of these Poems is ordinary Karelian Finnish and does not differ much from the speech of other Finnish provinces. For this reason, a Finn anywhere at all will, with a little practice, understand them easily.[15]

The Karelian language, spoken in Finland and Russia, is the closest linguistic relative to Finnish and must not be mixed up with the Karelian (southeastern) dialects of Finnish (Institute for the Languages of Finland). In Finnish Karelia, the spoken variety is often referred to as North Karelian dialects or the eastern group of Savo dialects and the transitional dialects between the southeastern group and South Savo (Karjala). The Karelian language speakers instead lived, during Lönnrot's times, in small villages in the northern parts of Finnish Karelia, as well as in Russian Karelia near the border of the Grand Duchy of Finland (Karjala; see map above).

However, the poems that Lönnrot published in the *Kalevala* were both from the Karelian-dialect and Karelian-language areas (Lönnrot [1849a] 1993, 409–10),[16] but as it can be seen in the previous quote, these both merged into the category of "ordinary Karelian Finnish." The process of merger or translation had already

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15 Kielenlaatu näissä runoissa on Karjalan tavallista suomea, eikä paljo poikkeava muidenki Suomen maakuntain puheesta, jonka tähden Suomalainen mistä tahansa vähällä tottumisella ne helposti ymmärtää (Lönnrot [1849a] 1993, 412; translated by Magoun [Lönnrot 1963, 379]).

16 Lönnrot mentions pedantically the places he visited during his field trips before the first and second editions of the *Kalevala*. The North Karelian dialect parishes are Kitee, Kesälahti, Tohmajärvi, Ilomantsi, Pielinen, Kajaani, Kuhmo and Suomussalmi, whereas the Karelian language areas are Vuokkiniemi, Paanajärvi, Repola, Kianta, and Kuhmo (Lönnrot [1849a] 1993, 409–10; see also http://neba.finlit.fi/kalevala/kuvat/picture.php?picture=kartta1.jpg&caption=Elias%20

started when Lönnrot made his field notes and transcriptions. As Saarinen (2013) has shown, Lönnrot either did not aim at verbatim transliteration or was incapable of accomplishing it: he molded the sung version into a written text that was understandable for him and for the intended audience. Lönnrot's decision to "translate" the poems was evident already in 1829, when he wrote that the poems should be made available for "Finns of most regions"—although "[t]he linguist engaged in the study of Finnish dialects may have much to say against this procedure." The poems were not the linguists' "private affair," but "a sacred legacy handed down to us, like the kantele, by our forefathers." The poems, wrote Lönnrot, "must, if possible, be made generally comprehensible" (Lönnrot [1829b] 1993, 170; translated in Honko 1990b, 209).

As Harle and Moisio (2000, 108–11) note, Karelia's role changed in public discourses in Finland during the nineteenth century. In the beginning of the century, Karelia and Karelians were regarded as primitive, pagan, even "untidy" and "dishonest," but after the publication of the *Kalevala* the discourse seems to change its direction. Within the Karelianist movement, Karelia became a "lost world," a place of nostalgia, where the "authentic" origin of Finnish culture, history, and poetry existed (see also P. Anttonen 2005, 138–43, 172; Sihvo 1973; Tarkka 1989). Within the frame of the archaicizing ideology of the Kalevalaic, Karelians were given a role in representing Finnish antiquity, but they were still others, different from the "modern" Finns since they had stayed at "the primitive stage" (P. Anttonen 2005, 172; Tarkka 1989). For Lönnrot, this "primitive stage" was necessary since this stage had conserved the Finnish language and kept it in its "original form":

> In these poems one meets the Finnish language and Finnish poetics in perhaps a purer form than in any other book. Many words and phrases appear here and there in their original form or in the same form as one hears them in the mouth of the peasantry. Persons learned in other languages, even though they of course command Finnish, often find it hard not to change the basic nature of the language to conform with other languages. For the peasant population, however, which understands nothing but its mother tongue, this danger is nonexistent.[17]

Lönnrotin%20keruumatkojen%20kartta).

[17] Suomen kieli ja runo näissä ehkä tavataan selvempänä, kuin missänä muussa

The idea of primitiveness and "originality" of the peasant population in the Karelian area gives an interesting perspective on Lönnrot's writings on language: for him, originality meant "sacredness" as well.

The Sacredness of Language

Sacredness could be found especially in the poetry of the folk, and, therefore, Lönnrot made a distinction between the Finnish language and the runo language itself. The poetry as an organic entity seemed to represent the Finnish language and provided a source for making a Finnish history and future. The runo language as a metrically structured and sung phenomenon was, however, something more than "ordinary language." Lönnrot describes this in his famous opening of the foreword of the *Kanteletar*:

> Play and song are for man as if another, more sacred language, with which to tell himself or others about his multifarious desires and thoughts; with which to express better than this ordinary, everyday language, his joy and delight, his sorrow and his worry, his happiness and contentment, hope and yearning, his rest, peace, and constitution.[18]

Echoing the romanticist notion of poetry as an outlet of emotion, Lönnrot describes singing as "another, more sacred language" that is best suited for the announcement of specific feelings and also the human condition (*olento)* as a whole. According to Lönnrot, the act of singing invokes the sacred features of language, and the singing voice is closer to the inner thoughts. In nineteenth-century Karelian contexts, the runo language was a way to create identities and enhance awareness of self, community, culture, and one's place in the world. Sacredness as an attribute of this sung language refers to the fundamental values of the community, which the functions

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kirjassa. Monet sanat ja sanan-parret tulevat tuo tuostaki ilmi alkuluonnossaan eli samalla kannalla, kun niitä rahvaan suusta kuullaan. Muien kielten oppineilla, vaikka kyllä Suomeaki taitavilla, on usiasti vaikea estää kieltä omaluonnostaan toisten mukaseksi vääntymästä, mutta talonpoikasella kansalla, joka muuta ei ymmärrä kun yhtä äitinsä kieltä, siitä ei tule pelkoa (Lönnrot [1835] 1993, 180; translated by Magoun [Lönnrot 1963, 373]).

[18] Soitto ja laulu ihmisellä ovat ikäskun toinen pyhempi kieli, jolla itsellensä eli muille haastelee erinäisiä halujansa ja mielensä vaikutuksia; jolla paremmin, kun tällä tavallisella, jokapäiväisellä kielellä, ilmottaa ilonsa ja riemunsa, surunsa ja huolensa, onnensa ja tyytyväisyytensä, toivonsa ja kaipuunsa, leponsa, rauhansa ja muun olentonsa (Lönnrot [1840] 1997, i).

and the content of the songs represented. However, sacredness made the runo language something Other as well—its connections to the mythic history made it strange and difficult to control. The runo language included many archaisms, formulas, and symbols that were not clear even to the nineteenth-century singers themselves (Tarkka 2005, 328–35; 2016).

Lönnrot's notion of poetry and song as a sacred language amounts not only to a language ideology; it presents a philosophy of language with a psychological and mythic dimension. A language such as this is the prime vehicle for expressing "things of the mind and thought," yet it is for Lönnrot, like any language put into use by humans, incomplete: it seldom expresses all that is intended. The sacred language had evolved gradually from "voiced humming" (äänellinen hyminä) into genres of song and poetry (Lönnrot [1840] 1997, i–ii.), and it was the lyric, not the nationally significant epic, that was the oldest form of poetry. In terms of human expression, then, the mythically and societally resonant epic was not the most authentic. Still, Finnish runo songs were, as a whole, more authentic than their Swedish and Russian counterparts (Lönnrot [1840] 1997, xliii). This notion of the natural, unspoiled character of the Finnish language was articulated repeatedly in the later commentaries and school teaching of the *Kalevala* (Mikkola 2008, 180–81). Within such romanticizing discourses, the natural did not mean something that could be taken for granted: the label of natural was an attribution of value and a claim of legitimacy (see also Bendix 1997, 38–39).

Lönnrot had adopted the modern and protestant idea of language as a transparent system with which one is able to faithfully reveal one's innermost truth (cf. Bauman and Briggs 2003, 59–69; Wilce 2009, 157), but instead of using this idea in the context of standard Finnish, he added it to the runo language. This feature of the runo language becomes tangible and present also in Lönnrot's time through the practice of singing: "It is mostly in the Finnish Karelia where these songs are nowadays sung" (Lönnrot [1840] 1997, iv).

For Lönnrot, who had seen the runo language's life and circulation in the Karelian communities, the power and the recognized otherness of the sung language was an important feature: sacredness as an attribute of the language was in Lönnrot's writings intertwined with the origin of the Finnish nation and its mythic history. Later in the foreword of the *Kanteletar*, the connection between the "ordinary" Finnish language and the "sacred" runo language is made clear: the latter makes the former special, prominent, and superior to many other languages. Sacredness was one of the attributions of the "primary condition" of Finnishness and the Finnish language as well. With this attribute, Lönnrot was able to speak about the value, inviolability, and integrity of the borders with which Finnishness was conformed to a specific being with a substance (cf. V. Anttonen 1993, 34). The attribute of "sacred" implied also an obligation. As formulated in the seal of the Finnish Literature Society, the institutional frame of Lönnrot's literary activities, the future generations were obliged to keep the values of their ancestors: "Stay sacred in Finland" (pysy Suomessa pyhänä).

Conclusion

In this article, the notion of an authentic, archaic, and Finnish epic that spoke and stood for a homogenous people has been discussed as an ideology of the Kalevalaic. As the language that the singers of these poems were supposed to speak, Finnish was strongly symbolized and given a mythological charter: it was the language encapsulating ancestral heritage, and it was the language that the Finns were obliged to develop, learn, and teach. Although sacred and mythicized, the language was also common and routinized—if not for the nation, at least for the folk. For the needs of the nation, the language had to be refined and homogenized, made into a standard language. This standard form was usable for administrative and educational purposes—and this was crucial in the political situation during the time of the Grand Duchy of Finland. The notion of the *Kalevala*'s Finnishness was equally acknowledged in Finnish and Russian academic discourses and Lönnrot was eulogized as the cultural hero of Finnish literature, language, and cultural life. In this process the Karelian language and culture were implicitly absorbed into Finnish cultural heritage but not recognized and valued as coeval cultural realities: in both Finnish and Russian discourses, Karelia represented the past of the present-day Finnishness, but not the present day of Karelianness.

The ideology of the Kalevalaic served the creation of an identity based on common culture, ancestry, language, and history. Finnishness was conceived relationally as something neither Swedish nor Russian—cultural or linguistic identity and ideals were defined against elements defined as "alien" (*muukalainen*). Alterity could also be used as a positive value in the construction of identity. Etymologically, the word for ancient (*muinainen*) has its origins in the word meaning "alien" or "other" (*muu*) (Fewster 2006, 98).

This historical alterity of the past and ancestry was something to be cherished and something that obliged also the future generations. Traditions of song and poetry as well as linguistic practices were to be carried on and renewed. This was the only way to the future and to mature nationhood.

For Finns, the language was to nourish artistic expression and lend Finnish high culture an essence of its own, to create a natural yet noble literary language. The project of articulating all these facets of the Finnish language was, for Lönnrot, an organic part of making and framing the epic *Kalevala* and its lyrical twin anthology, the *Kanteletar*. Editing and recontextualizing oral poetry encapsulates a specific language ideology. This ideology was put into practice in subtle editorial decisions by Lönnrot and surprisingly in the reception of the epic on both sides of the Finnish-Russian border. The notions concerning the historical roots of the tradition linked the present-day speakers of the language to the mythic past and enabled an orientation to the future—as one nation with purportedly one language.

Archival Materials

SKS KIA 1836, §1= Johan Gabriel Linsén's speech at the annual meeting of the Finnish Literature Society, March 16, 1836. SKS KIA Protocoller March 16, 1834–March 7, 1838.

SKS KIA Schildt 1845 = Wolmar Schildt-Kilpinen's letter to Elias Lönnrot, October 28, 1845. SKS KIA Collection of Lönnrot's correspondence 6.

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