

BALTO-FINNIC PROVERB LORE AS A MIRROR OF FOLKLORIC, ETHNIC AND LINGUISTIC RELATIONSHIPS

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Based on the handout of the paper presented in the Colloquium

Balto-Finnic peoples – where do they live and how large are the communities that speak Balto-Finnic languages?



Saami – 35 000

Finnic

Estonian – 1 000 000

Finnish – 5 000 000

Ingrian – 300

Karelian (and Lude) – 35 000 / 5000

Livonian – < 20

Livvi (Olonetsian) – 25 000

Vepsian – 6000

Votian – 50

The map on the left is based on the original located at the address:

http://www.helsinki.fi/~sugl_smi/kuvat/Kartat/Kielet/Fenno-Ugrian_languages.jpg

Introductory

In the period 1964–1985, a team of Finnish and Estonian paremiologists headed by Matti Kuusi prepared a comparative edition of the most common proverbs of the Balto-Finnic peoples. The first output of the collaborative project, *Proverbia septentrionalia: 900 Balto-Finnic Proverb Types with Russian, Baltic, German and Scandinavian Parallels* (FF Communications No. 236, Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia; hereinafter PS), was issued in 1985. Its introductory writings also included a statistical analysis entitled “The connections between the Balto-Finnic and non-Balto-Finnic materials” (PS, pp. 29–36; cf. also a more extensive version of the analysis: Arvo Krikmann, *Some Statistics on Balto-Finnic Proverbs* (Preprint KKI-36, Tallinn, 1985)).

The PS did not embrace the whole shared proverb lore of the Balto-Finnic peoples, but only about a third of it; moreover, it covered only the most productive, most stereotypical, most “common-North-European” part, leaving out the less productive layers, which would be particularly interesting for a purely Balto-Finnic field of studies. After the PS was published, Matti Kuusi unfortunately terminated his participation in the project, so it came to a standstill for about ten years. Fortunately, with the aid of the welcome and precious funding that our team received from the Open Estonia Foundation, the Finnish Cultural Foundation and later from the Academy of Finland, it was possible to revive the project in 1994, to continue the work and to complete it (though not yet to publish the two follow-up volumes of the PS) by the end of the century.

I shall offer an updated version of the geographical distribution and other statistics, based on the full data of shared Balto-Finnic proverbs.

Some recalculations

Two simple parameters were used as estimates of the ethno-geographic density of the connection between the involved Balto-Finnic and non-Balto-Finnic materials:

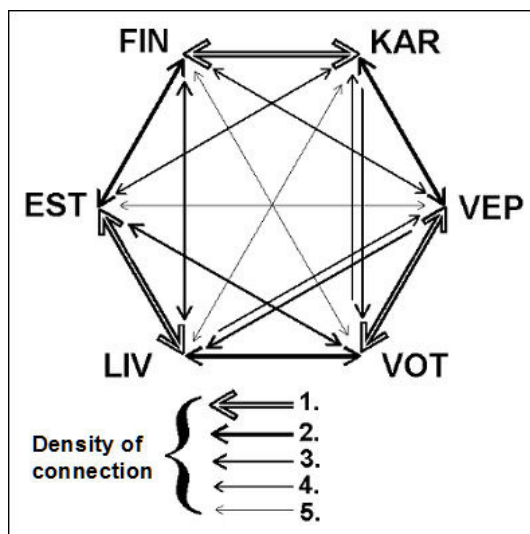
- 1) the values of the residuals of linear regression fields;
- 2) the so-called colligation coefficients (or “bivariate percentages”) that are calculated from the formula

$$\lambda_{AB} = \frac{A \cap B \times \Sigma_{tab}}{\Sigma A \times \Sigma B}$$

where $A \cap B$ is the number of “meetings” (intersections) of events A and B ,

ΣA and ΣB are the summary frequencies of these events in the given collection and

Σ_{tab} is the sum total of all numerical data in the table through all of its rows and columns.

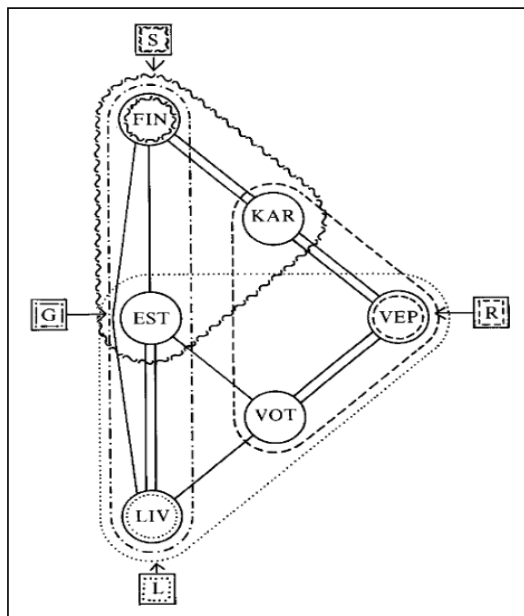


In 1985 I found that the hexagonal model can be used to illustrate the density of internal connections between the 6 involved BF materials: here the strongest positive connections are represented by the sides of the hexagon, the graphs of the weakest (largest negative) connections – by the diametric chords, and the graphs of the intermediate connections by the remaining chords.

Thus the strongest connections hold between the FIN and KAR, VOT and VEP, and EST and LIV.

Respectively, the connections KAR–LIV, EST–VEP and FIN–VOT are the weakest ~ most strongly negative.

From the viewpoint of “ethno-geographic logic”, such a configuration seems quite predictable.



In 1985 I also found that, considering the whole field of BF/BF and BF/non-BF relations, the involved BF peoples can be grouped, on the one hand, into western (FIN, EST, LIV) and eastern (KAR, VOT, VEP) groups and, on the other hand, into northern (FIN, KAR) and non-northern groups (the rest of the BF peoples).

The eastern sub-group (especially VEP) has closer relations with RUS, the non-northern sub-group (especially LIV) with LAT, and the western group with GER. The northern sub-group (especially FIN) is more closely connected with SCN (mainly Swedish).

GER has no clearly preferred BF partner and EST has no clearly preferred non-BF partner.

My early calculations were, of course, based only on the materials of the *Proverbia septentrionalia* ‘proper’, i.e. the book published in 1985 in the FFC series, no. 236.

In the intervening 23 years, the situation has changed substantially:

- * the number of Balto-Finnic proverb types that are ready to be analyzed has increased from 900 to at least 4170;
- * in 1992 Vaina Mälk published her academic edition of Vepsian proverbs with Estonian, Votic, Livonian, Karelian and Russian counterparts;
- * Karelian parallels to Estonian proverbs were provided;
- * Latvian (and Lithuanian), German and Swedish (and Scandinavian in general) parallels to the whole unpublished corpus of Balto-Finnic proverbs were found, etc.

Thus it would be intriguing to know what statistical changes the new added information – and perhaps also new noises – might have brought about.

In the tables below we see some results of the updated λ -calculations.

LAT	125								
GER	112	116							
SCN	100	109	140						
FIN	101	98	112	120					
KAR	108	91	98	103	161				
EST	115	115	116	113	142	116			
VOT	118	108	91	89	99	109	103		
VEP	140	109	93	81	84	127	100	141	
LIV	113	149	116	108	84	74	115	106	97
	RUS	LAT	GER	SCN	FIN	KAR	EST	VOT	VEP

KAR	160								
EST	157	122							
VOT	100	104	109						
VEP	88	125	110	140					
LIV	98	82	141	118	112				
	FIN	KAR	EST	VOT	VEP				

	RUS	LAT	GER	SCN	
FIN	91	92	105	112	
KAR	105	92	99	104	
EST	97	101	103	100	
VOT	113	108	90	88	
VEP	128	104	89	77	
LIV	90	125	97	90	

Compared with my preliminary models, the configuration of relationships has not substantially changed.

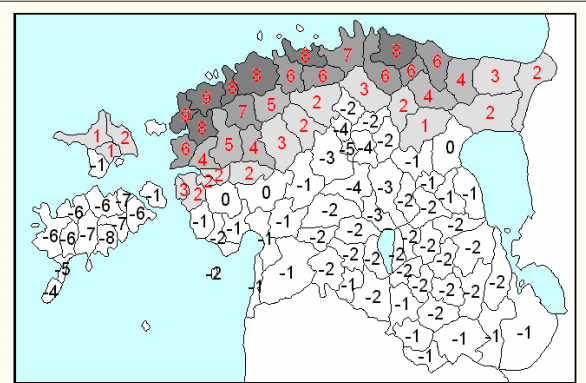
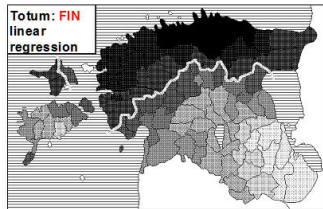
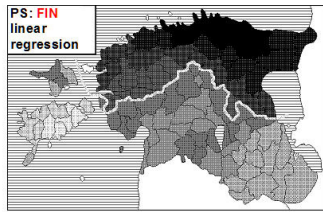
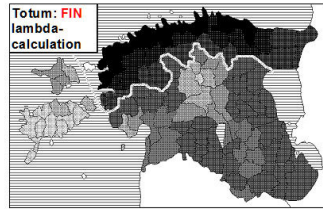
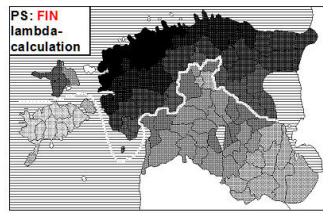
It is, however, noteworthy that some positive estimates for VEP, KAR and also GER, have become counterintuitively high – this is apparently due to the inordinately diligent work of some participants on some objects, like Vaina Mälk in compiling her Vepsian issue, Rein Saukas in seeking EST-KAR parallels, myself in searching for proverbs on the contemporary Russian Internet, and perhaps also Outi Lauhakangas in identifying some too loose GER counterparts, etc.

For the 1996 spring school in Joensuu I also made a preliminary attempt to evaluate one by one the closeness of the connection (degree of similarity ~ relative share) between the non-Estonian BF and non-BF proverb materials and the material of each Estonian parish in particular.

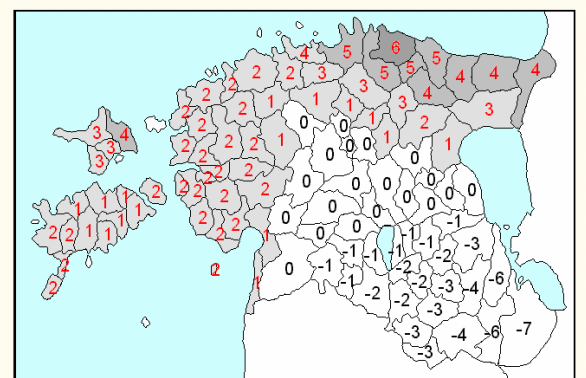
At that time we already had the bulk of BF follow-up materials in an almost updated condition, but we did not yet have any non-BF, or Karelian, parallels for the follow-up part of the BF data.

In the following series of cartograms the (hitherto practically unpublished) results of these earlier calculations are represented with small black-and-white maps, and the updated versions of the same (lambda- and linear regression) recalculations are represented with coloured maps.

FIN

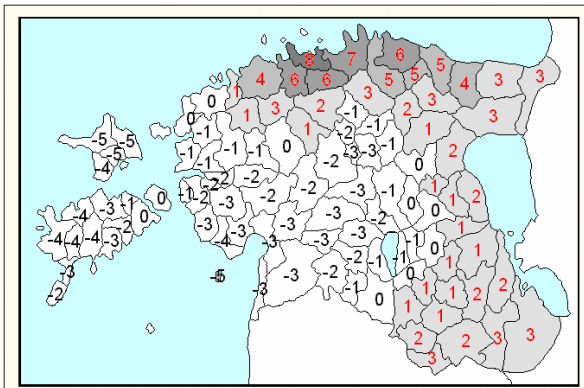


FIN lam

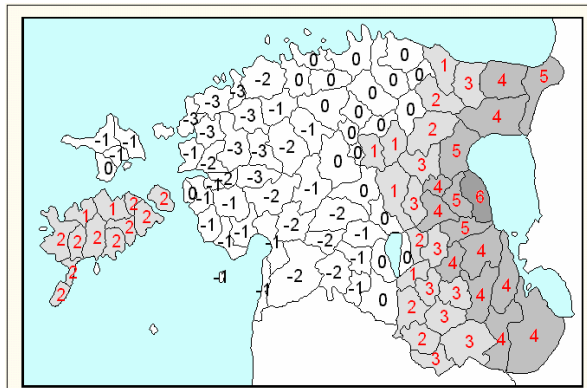


FIN linregr

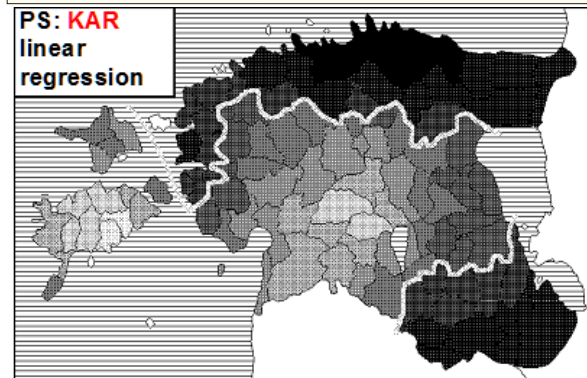
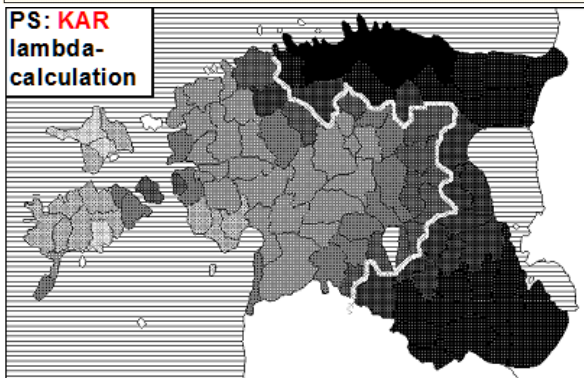
KAR



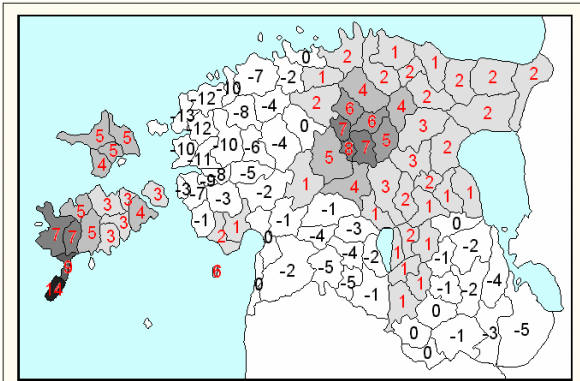
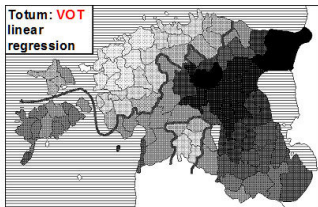
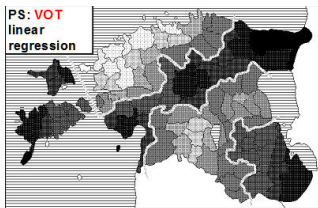
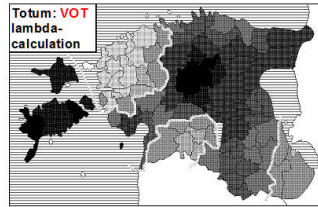
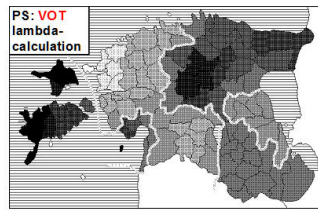
KAR lam



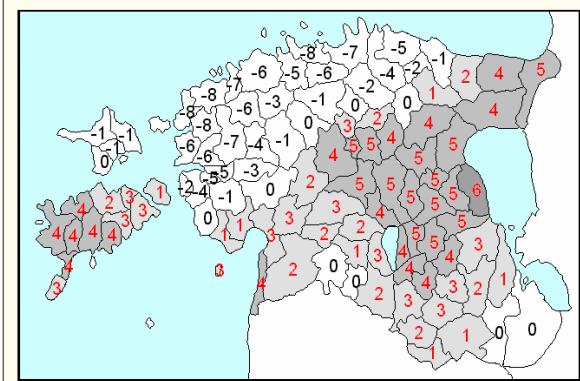
KAR linregr



VOT

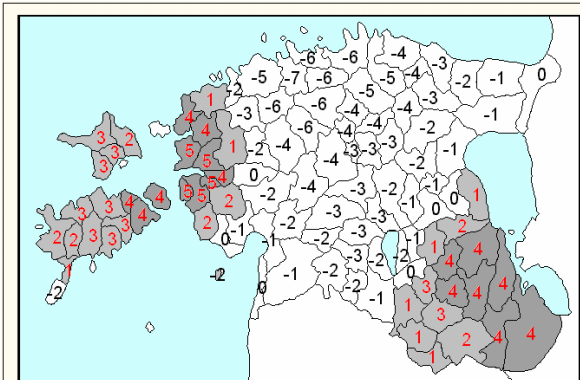
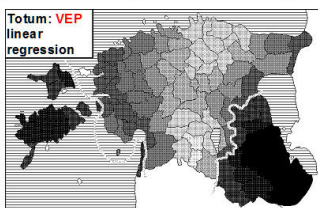
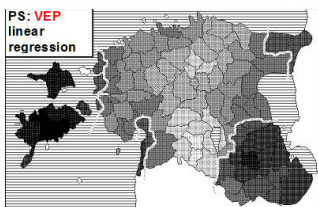
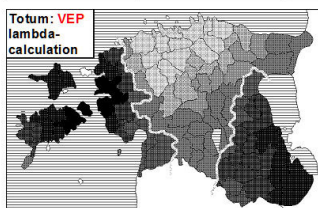
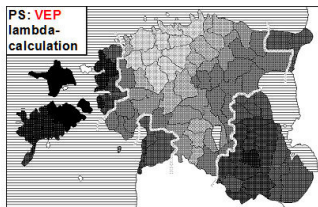


VOT lam

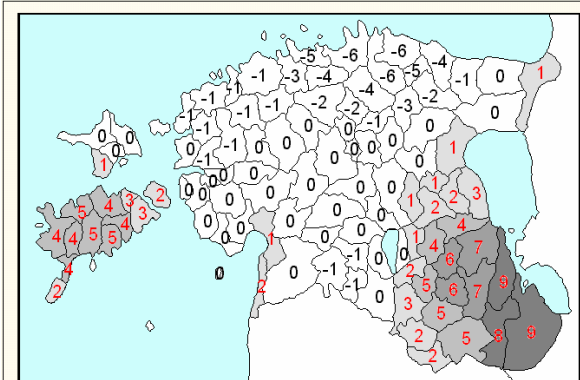


VOT linreg

VEP

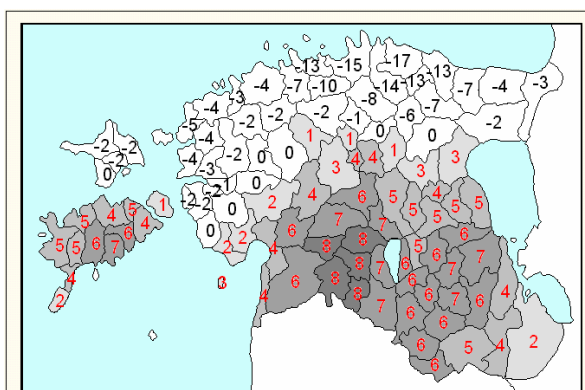
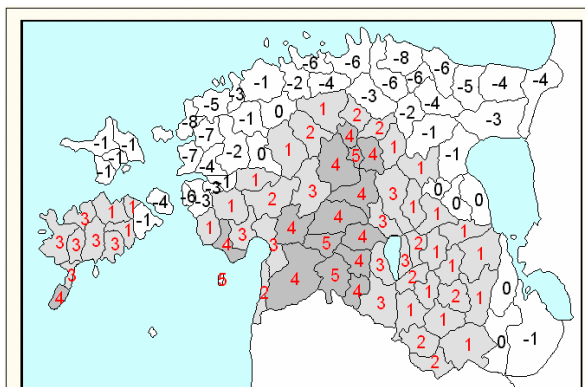
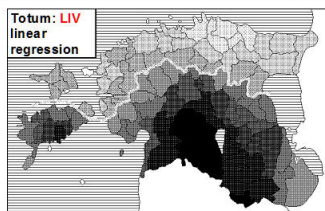
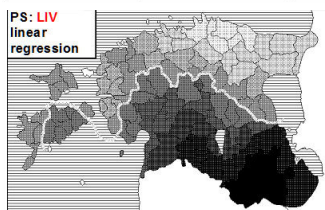
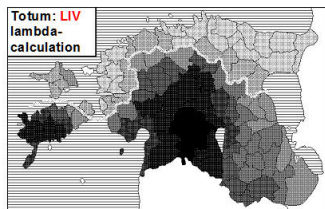
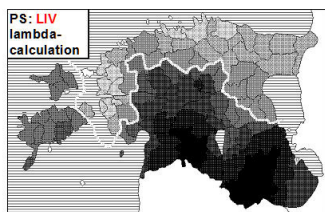


VEP lam

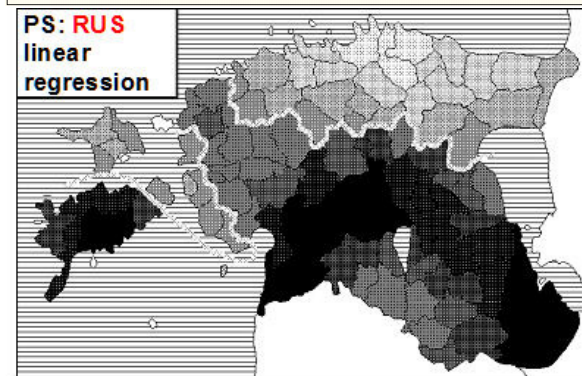
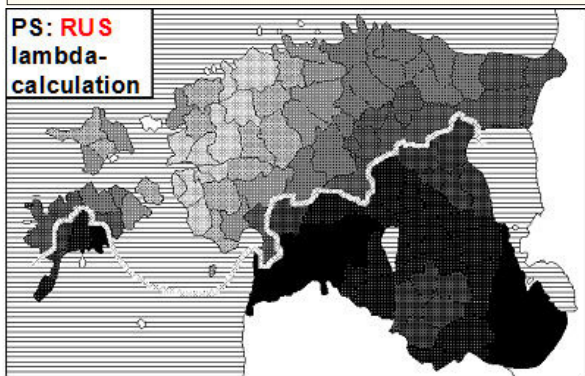
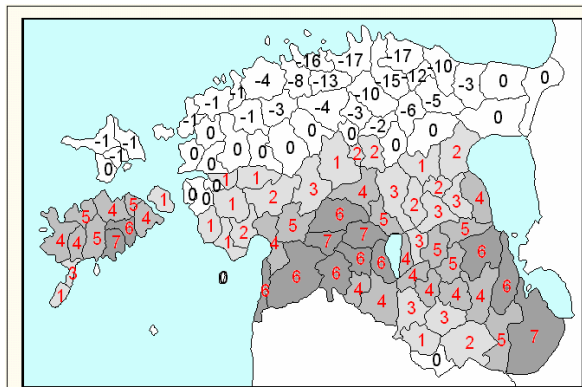
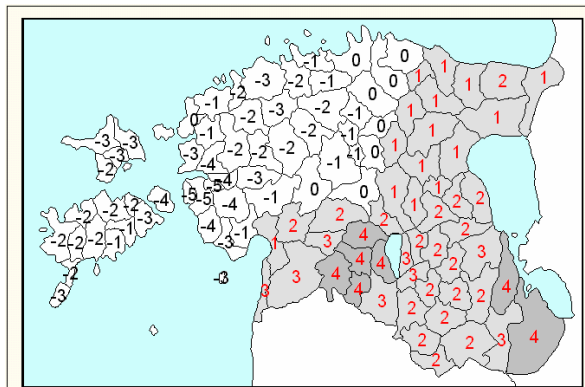


VEP linreg

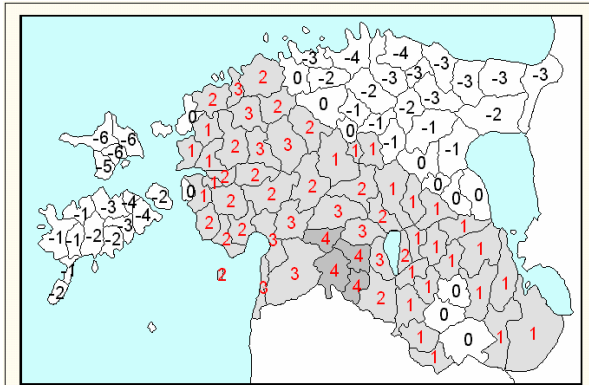
LIV



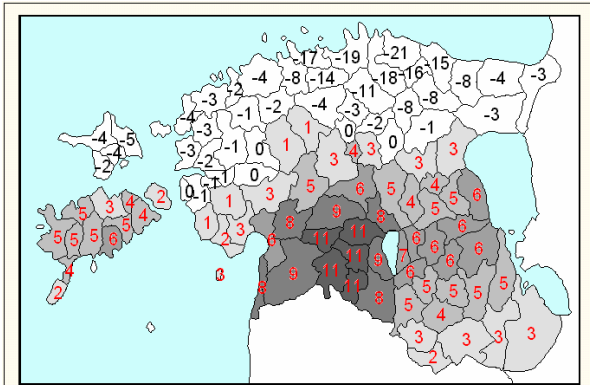
RUS



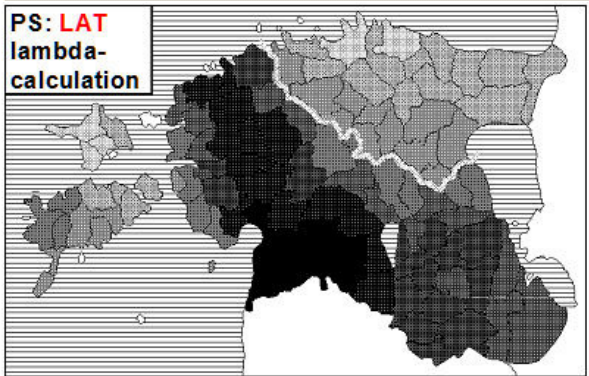
LAT



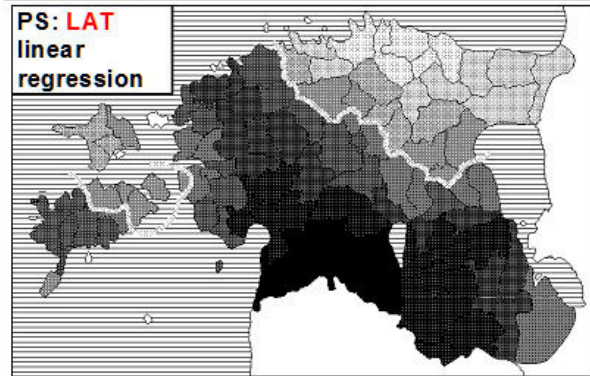
LAT lam



LAT linregr

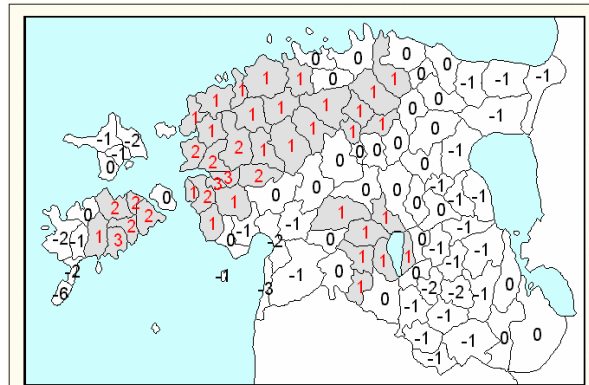


PS: LAT
lambda-
calculation

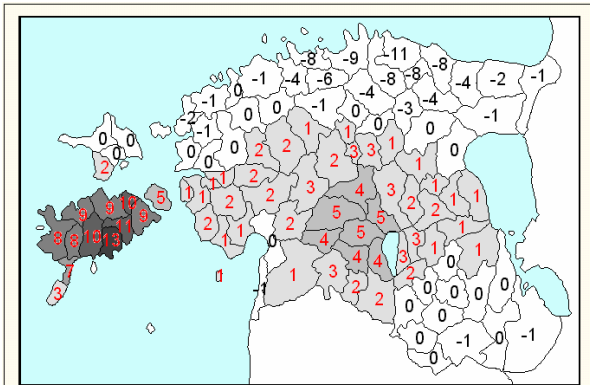


PS: LAT
linear
regression

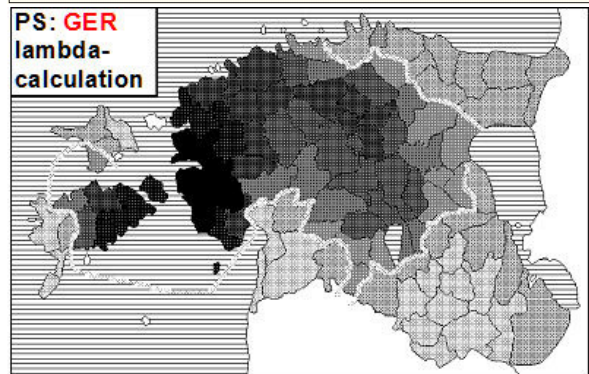
GER



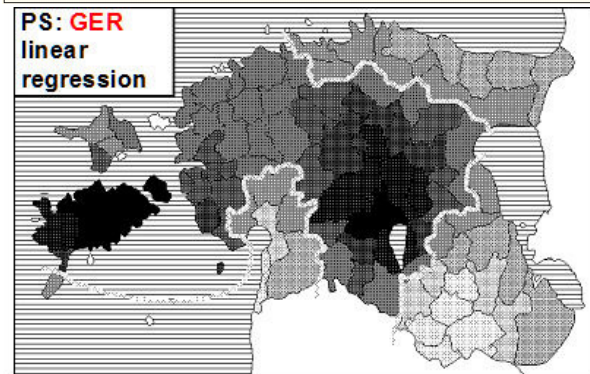
GER lam



GER linregr

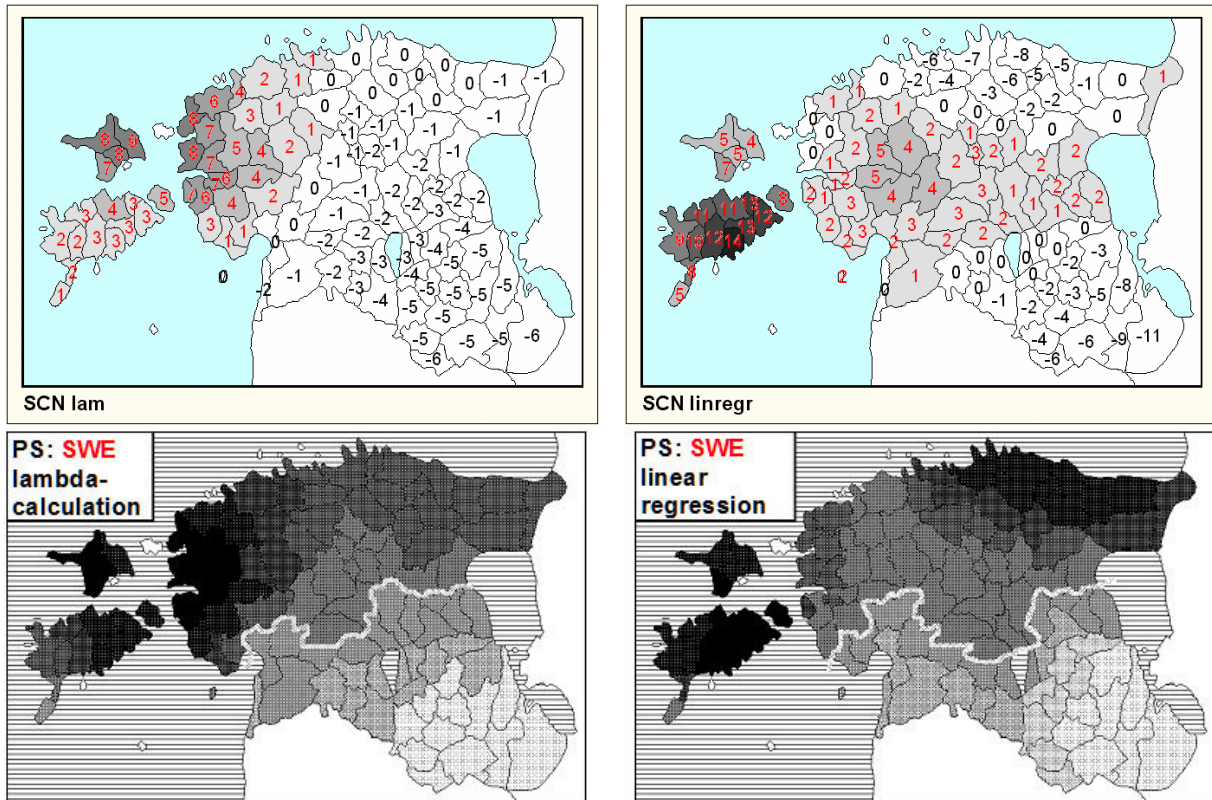


PS: GER
lambda-
calculation



PS: GER
linear
regression

SCN



The general configuration of relationships remained nearly the same as in the 1996 calculations. However...

★ In the results based on the sum total of the data, the relief of distribution is generally sharper and the areas of positive connections narrower than in those based on the 900 types of the published part of *Proverbia septentrionalia*.

★ In most calculations, Estonian parishes (i.e. smoothed areas corresponding to them) behave quite predictably towards the majority of foreign materials, but there are also some unexpected and hitherto unexplained outcomes (e.g. the surprisingly strong positive connections between the VOT and VEP and the Estonian islands and western Estonia in general).

The following research will eventually explain which of these noises are caused by the unevenness and fragmentarity of the source material itself (and are thus irreparable), and which can be ascribed to inadequate methods of calculation.

“The golden reserve paradox”

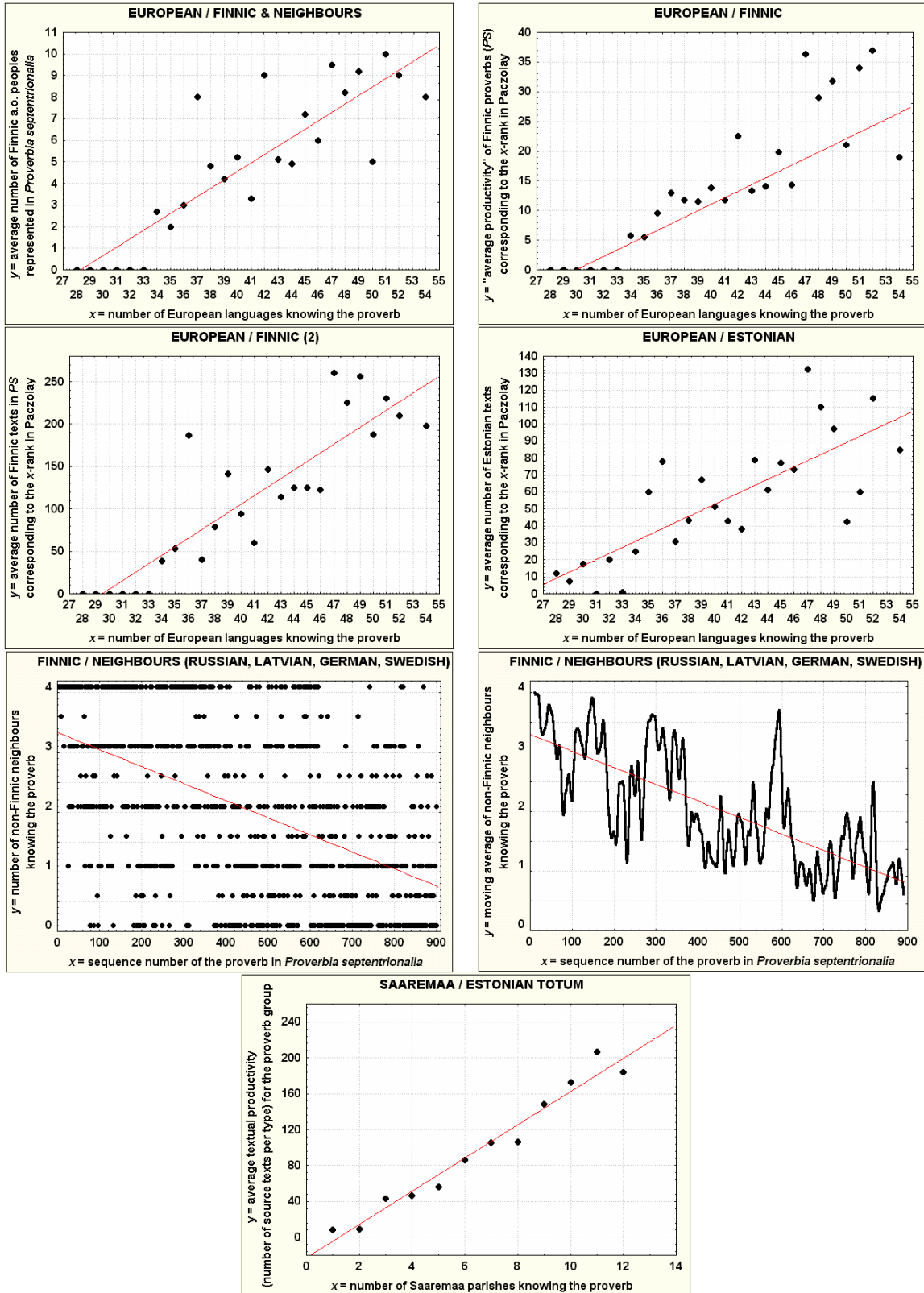
Matti Kuusi has noted the regularity that in a somewhat generalized form could be referred to as “the golden reserve paradox”. Kuusi argues that there are a number of extremely potent proverbs that, thanks to their content, the beauty of their images and/or other virtues, easily spread over linguistic and cultural borders. Such proverbs do not merely become known by many different peoples, but have generally become among the most popular ones in the repertoire of most of these peoples.

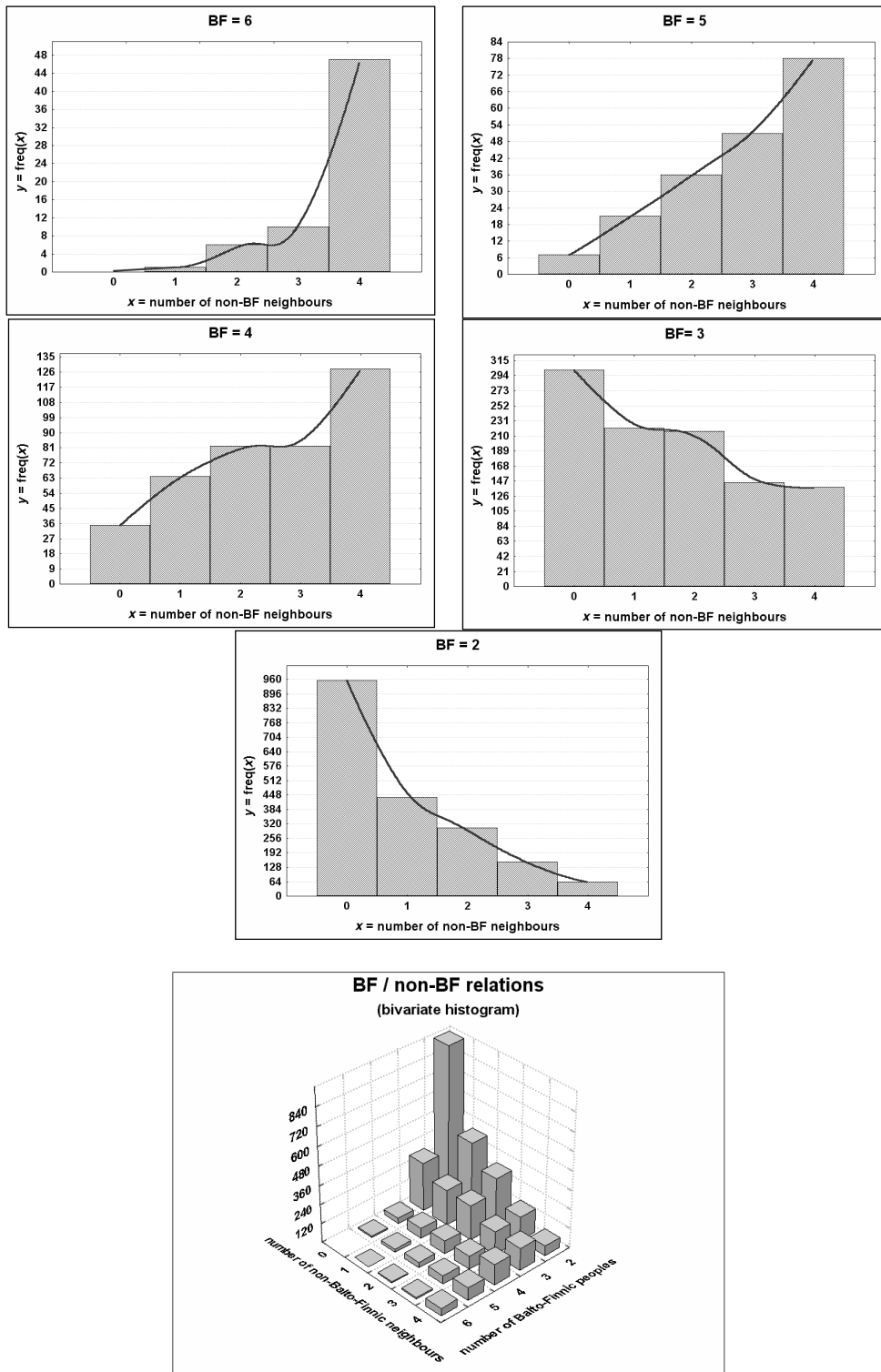
As the result, international proverb lore appears to be divided very sharply into the frequent and familiar / the infrequent and unknown, and a paradoxical effect occurs when the sometimes globally known “golden reserve” items appear to be the utmost “own” and vernacular, and supersede items that are actually of local origin.

All of the empirical data available to me confirms the existence of such a connection. The following series of cartograms aims to demonstrate this correlation between several materials of different geographic scope:

★ between *European Proverbs* (1997) by Gyula Paczolay and *Proverbia septentrionalia*;

- ✱ between *Proverbia septentrionalia* and Estonian proverbs;
- ✱ between proverbs of the island of Saaremaa and the Estonian sum total;
- ✱ and last but not least – some ultimately conspicuous histograms demonstrating the same binding between the BF and non-BF “axes” on the updated data of the sum total of the published and as yet unpublished parts of *Proverbia septentrionalia*.





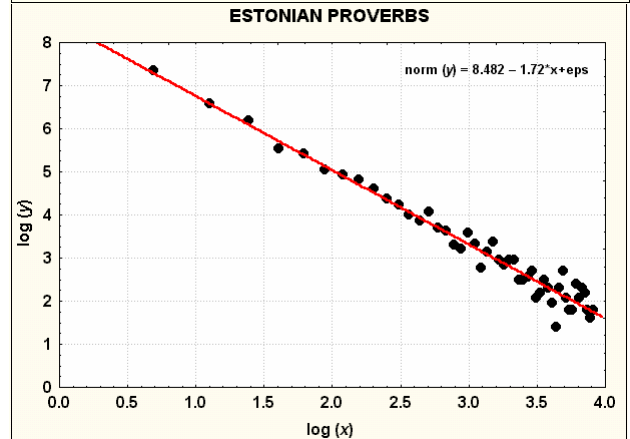
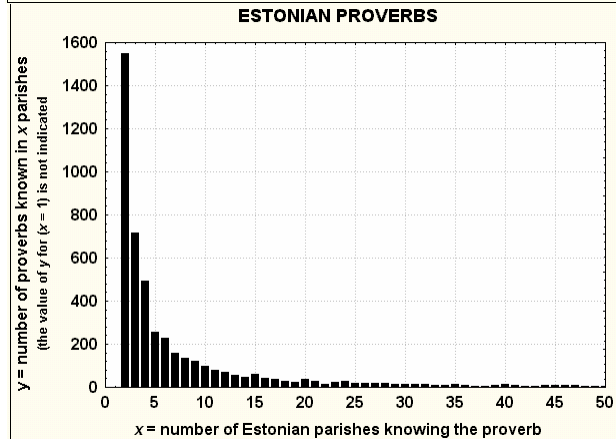
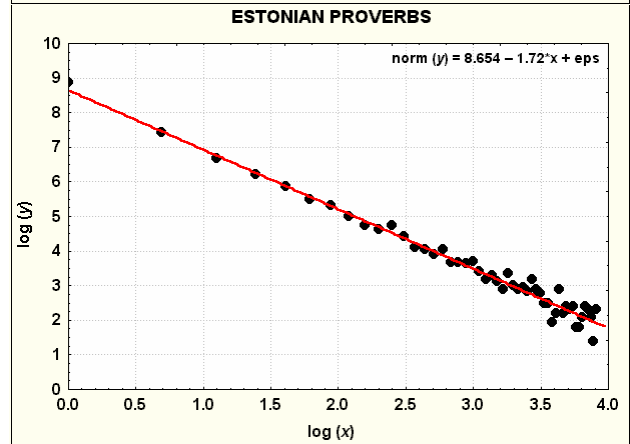
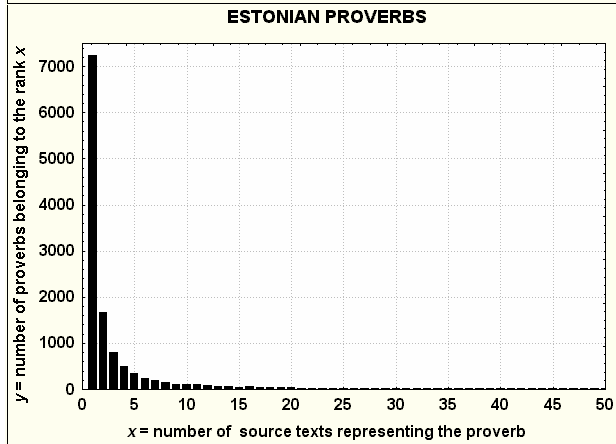
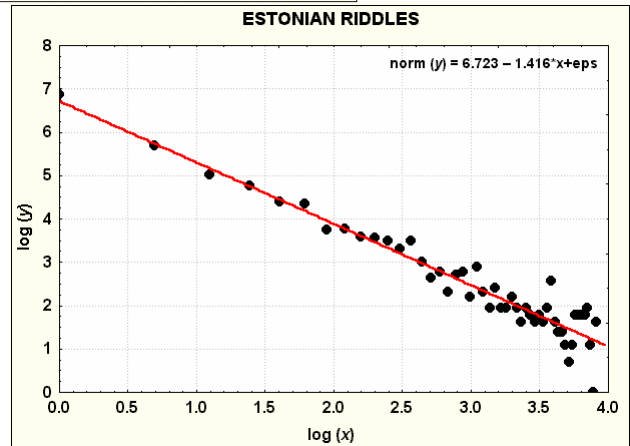
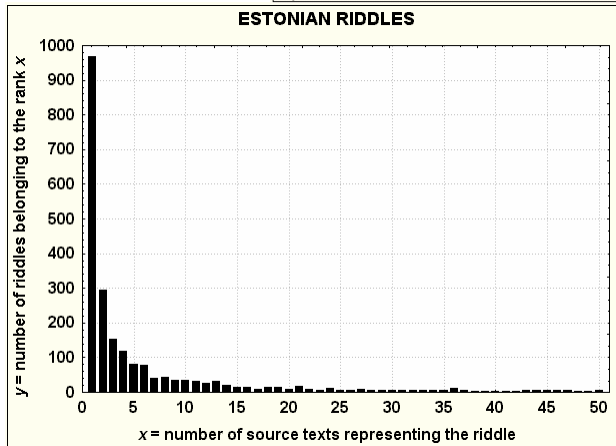
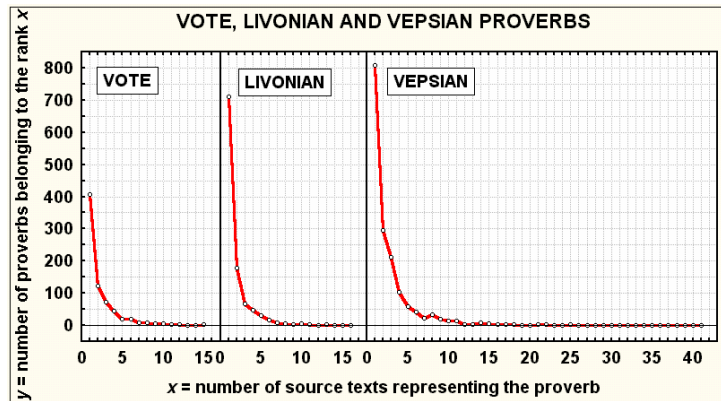
As a matter of fact, the above-described “golden reserve” effects are merely the residual by-products of the so-called Zipf’s law or Zipf distribution.

The thing is that the distribution of the “power ranks” of the specimens of many natural populations (including words in natural text samples, and also the textual and geographic frequencies of proverbs and other folkloric specimens, etc.) tends to follow Zipf’s law:

- * a great deal of small (rare, weak, poor, ...) items,
- * a small number of large (frequent, strong, rich, ...) items,
- * a moderate amount of middle-sized ones.

On the logarithmic scale the Zipfian regression fields become linear.

The following series of graphs aims to demonstrate the Zipfian distribution of the source materials of some “minor” BF peoples, as well as Estonian riddles and proverbs.



As stated above, statistics is by no means an omnipotent tool with which to study folkloric, ethnic and linguistic relationships. Statistics works with large numbers and can give us good general insights into our topics of research. In order to move forward, however, the observed statistical laws and regularities must be explained against the huge background of various historical, linguistical and other direct, non-quantitative data. As regards specific case studies, something derived from the notorious much-criticized and allegedly obsolete and conclusively abandoned Finnish method could perhaps provide a reasonable alternative. The problem, however, is that the Finnish method also assumes that one use and compare large volumes of textual and other data, so the Zipfian curse put on folkloric source data reduces the amount of items accessible to the Finnish method to the minimum.

Analyses of the proverbs “The field has eyes, the forest has ears” and “The walls have ears” by Kazys Grigas

One of the examples Grigas analyzes in his books *Lietuvių patarlės: Lyginamasis tyrinėjimas* (1976) and *Литовские пословицы: Сравнительное исследование* (1987) is the extremely well-known proverb “The field has eyes, the forest has ears”, and the frequently attached “The walls have ears”, which in Paczolay’s European chart hold the 18th and 22nd places respectively (1997: 120/4 and 142/5). Paczolay’s and also the Balto-Finnic proverbial material (*Proverbia septentrionalia* (1985) and preceding works), added after 1976, confirm the main conclusions drawn by Grigas.

1. The predominant environmental elements that are claimed to own eyes or ears in the European area are *forest*, *field*, *wall(s)*, and *bush ~ bushes*, whereas others are rarer or/and more local (cf the following table).

	Grigas	Paczolay
forest	36	26
field	30	26
wall(s) (in combination)	13	19
wall(s) (alone)	11	37
bush ~ bushes	13	11
hedge	5	3
sea	2	4
mountain(s)	2	4
corner(s)	1	3
night	2	5
day, light	1	5
earth	1	4
lake	1	1
water	1	1
fence	–	6
road, path, street	–	5
sees : hears	8	8

2. The corpus of mainly 2-compound parallelist texts originating from Europe seems to stem from two typological cores: the 2-component “The field has eyes, the forest has ears” (or vice versa), and the single-component “The walls (also) have ears”. Both may originate from an ancient source, but Paczolay (1997), Matti Kuusi & Outi Lauhakangas (<http://lauhakan.home.cern.ch/lauhakan/ceerp.html>), groups M1c18 and J1n18) also provide abundant examples from outside Europe (often exceptional in form), where it is difficult to determine the time of origin and the relation to the European material.

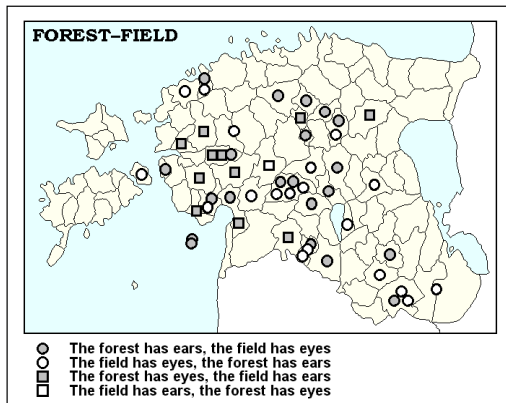
3. The most rare ~ local forms that may be mentioned include, for instance:

- a) mainly West European forms with the components *bush ~ bushes* and *hedge*;
- b) Balto-Finnic forms with the components *sea (has eyes)*: FIN, EST, VOT, LIV);
- c) purely Lithuanian adjectival forms (literally something like “*eyed*” : “*eared*”) – i.e. Grigas’ 1st version – see 1987: 110 ao.);
- d) *mountain(s)* -component forms that occur sporadically in some mountainous areas of Southern Europe (Spain, Portugal, Bulgaria, Slovakia);
- e) distinctly eastern forms, where the perceptive organs are replaced by the verb pair *hears : sees* (examples from the Eastern Slavs, the Udmurt (Votjak) and from most of the Balto-Finnic peoples (except for the Livonians).

It is a well-known fact that the Balto-Finnic and Baltic area is the contact and merger zone of western and eastern folklore tides.

I cannot determine whether it might be possible to read the traces of impact from different directions directly from the geographic distribution cartograms based on the Lithuanian material, but Grigas, at least, has not done so. The Estonian parallel material allows one to observe the impact directions to some extent. As a whole, the results of such observation are as expected, that is, in some occasions the empirical dissemination pictures may quite effectively be explained by the probable directions of loaning, whereas in others they remain completely cryptic.

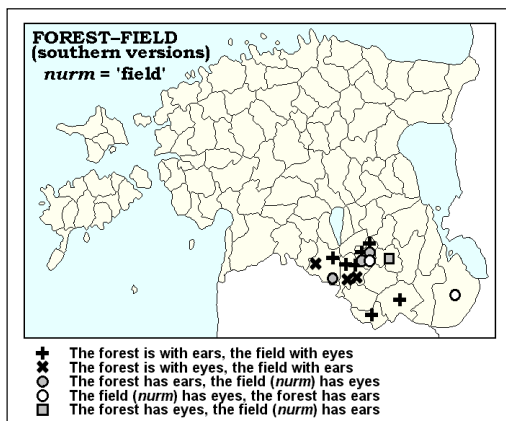
Let us take a look at some of the cartograms based on the Estonian material.



Map 1: the basic European redaction (*forest + field*). This is completely unknown in the northern, north-eastern and eastern parts of Estonia.

The grammatical construction deviates from that in the Germanic languages: the nominative + *has ~ hat* is replaced by the allative + the usually ellipticized verb *is*; this form is common in the Estonian and other Balto-Finnic redactions and corresponds to the dative of the Baltic languages.

Grigas has observed Germanic and Balto-Finnic forms together as the Third version, and the Latvian dative forms in them (e.g. “Mežam ausis, laukam acis”) separately as the Eighth version.

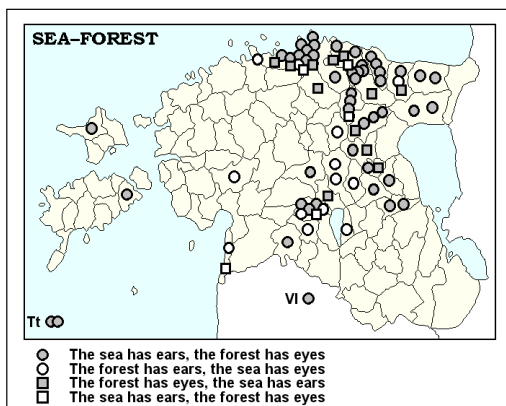


Map 2: The South Estonian forms of the main combination *forest + field*. Characteristic features are:

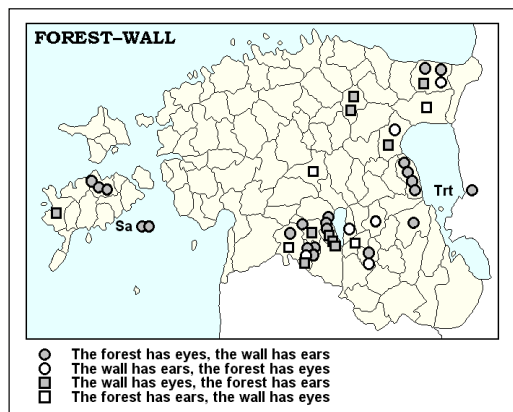
1) in addition to the regular word *väli*, there is the word *nurm*, which in North Estonia means ‘meadow’, but in South Estonia ‘corn field’;

2) in addition to the regular allative form, in this proverb the comitative form (“The wood is with ears, the field with eyes” etc.) occurs. This may be considered a Baltic impact – that is, the version that according to his data is only known in the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian languages.

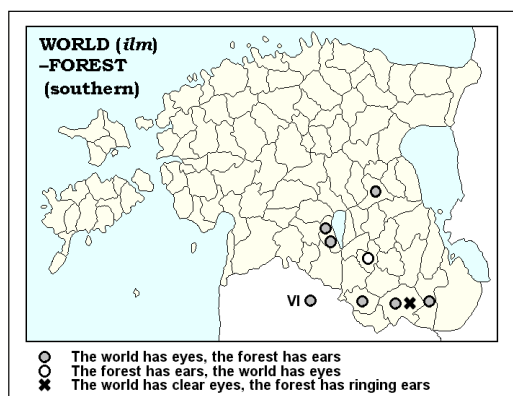
In addition to South Estonia, the *nurm*-stem elements also occur in the Votic and Livonian variants of the proverb.



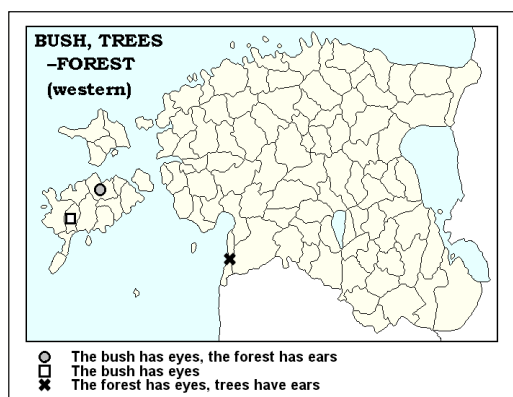
Map 3: The combination *sea + forest*, which is predominant on the northern coast of Estonia and in north-eastern and eastern areas. This is also the basic version in Finnish, and based on all the available data, is known only in the Balto-Finnic language area (FIN, EST, VOT, LIV), apparently except eastern KAR and VEP regions. Based on the dissemination chart, in Estonia it seems to be a loan from Finland.



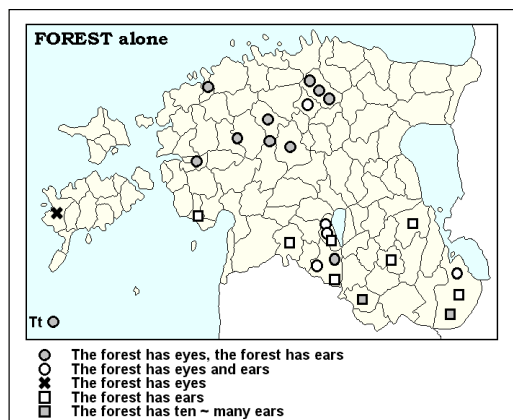
Map 4: The combination *forest + wall(s)*. The non-parallelistic “The wall(s) have ears” occurs in only a few North Estonian texts. Bipartite (*forest + wall(s)*) forms are known in several peripheral areas of Estonia, denoting that the form might be relatively old. Such a peripheral chart of dissemination may in itself be, e.g.:
 1) a relic of something whose dissemination was once more common, but has now disappeared from the central region, or
 2) be altogether imaginary, i.e. it illustrates foreign influences that have reached different Estonian peripheral areas (from Russia in the northeast, from Lätiva in the Mulgi region, etc.), but none has made it to the central area or begun to merge.



Map 5: Combinations of *forest + ilm* constitute the genuine South Estonian local version. The Estonian *ilm* originates from the ancient Finno-Ugric stem, which has counterparts in all Balto-Finnic languages. In standard Estonian it mainly means ‘weather’, but particularly in the older Estonian, i.e. in the abundant folkloric and phraseological contexts also ‘world’, the equivalent of which in standard language is *maailm*. This *ilm* meant altogether a vague open outer sphere (cf. Finnish *ilma*, ‘air’), primarily the more distant, stranger, unknown part of the human world that is indifferent or hostile towards you, and about whom one couldn’t care less. In Estonian proverbs, *ilm* is the environment to whom one should not entrust secrets, the person who is more than ready to gossip about you, etc.



Map 6: The variants with *bush* and *tree* seem to be relatively rare and very western in Estonian texts (only two records from Saaremaa). *Bush* also appears in three Livonian texts, but is probably not a Latvian loan here (at least it is not found in Latvian printed sources). As mentioned by Grigas and Paczolay, the versions with *bush* mainly originate from Western and Southern Europe. It is impossible, based on the scarce material available, to say how the *bush* (*põõsas*) variant precisely reached Saaremaa.



Map 7: Estonian texts in which *forest* lacks a parallelistic pair, localize into two strange and separate clusters: the northwestern and the southern. While in North Estonia, forms with parallelistic compound sentence structure predominate, such as: “The forest has eyes, the forest has ears”, in South Estonia simple sentence forms like “The forest has (eyes and) ears” are more common. With my data, it is once again impossible to determine what is regular what is occasional, what is local, and what is borrowed (and from where) in these forms.

**Some examples of proverb type articles from the draft manuscript of the follow-up part of
“Proverbia septentrionalia”**

Examples of “big” internationally known proverbs

150. IT IS BETTER TO HAVE A GOOD FRIEND THAN A LOUSY RELATIVE

RUS Близкий (Ближний) сосед лучше дальней родни. D 779

LAT Labāk svešnieks, nekā rads. LV 1074

GER Fremde leut thun offt mehr denn die blutfreund. ?

SCN En sann vän är bättre än hundra fränder. ?

Matti Kuusi type system H6a 14

FIN Parempi hyvä ystävä ko kehno sukulainen. Parempi hyvä naapuri kuin veli toisessa kylässä.
Parempi ventovieras kun huono sukulainen
K 256, H 1488, NH 342,181, Sat 646, SL 1875, 8729, 8730, 8751, 15755. Kivennapa 1935, Karstula
1946, Ähtäri 1949 – 62 var.

KAR Parempi hyvä kuoma kuin huono sukulane. Parempi hyvä tuttava gu paha oma. Hyvä – da
vierash, paha – da oma
KS 7677, 7742, OKP 1963, 85 (58) – 6 var.

EST Parempi hea võõras kui sitta sugulane. Parempi hia sõber kui halb sugulane. Parempi on hea võõras
kui paha oma. Hea naaber on enam kui õde ja vend. Sõber om parempi kui sõsar
EV 1129, 1130, 1134, 7125, 11039 – 12 var.

VOT üvä naapuri on parõp tõiss ommaa
VV 334 – 2 var.

VEP hüvä da veras, paha da ižeiz/ eražži verhad rahvaz parempi mi ižeen rahvaz
VeV 295, 1262, 1428 – 10 var.

LIV pařimstiz võõron äbku su'ggõn
LV 1074 – 1 var.

Cf. EV 794

187. THE MORNING IS WISER THAN THE EVENING

RUS Утро вечера мудренее. Žuk. 472, D 118 Утро вечера мудренее – трава соломы зеленее.
D 182 Утро вечера мудренее, жена мужа удалее. D 374

LAT Rīts gudrāks nekā vakars. EKS 129

GER Guter rath kommt über Nacht. ? Der Morgen ist weiser als der Abend

SCN Ein veit meir i morgon enn ein veit i dag. ?

Matti Kuusi type system T1h 19

FIN Aamu iltaa viisaampi. Aamu on iltaa ilta on aamua viisaampi. Aamu on iltaa wiekampi
SL 5, K 423. Pieksämäki 1886, Asikkala 1884, Noormarkku 1892 – 41 var.

KAR Huondez on ildoa muidroimbi. Uamu on ildua viisahembi
KS 1180, 11841 – 3 var.

EST Hommik on targem kui õhtu
EV 1443 – 25 var.

VOT oomnikko muudrap õhtogoa
VV 362 – 1 var.

VEP homendez mudreniemb ehtad
VeV 306 – 1 var.

LIV ūomõg um ju kovāl äb ku õ'dõg
LV 984 – 1 var.

Cf. EV 14532

346. WHO IS ONCE BORN MUST DIE

RUS Двух смертей не бывать, а одной не миновать; По дважды не мрут, а одна не миновать. Ruk. 153, D 78

LAT Dīvās nāvēs nemirsi, vienai neizbēgsi. EKV 228

GER Zwei Tode kann niemand sterben. ?

Matti Kuusi type system G8d 20

FIN Kerran synty, kerran kuolee, ei kahta kertaa kumpaakaan. Kerra kuollaa eik kahisse Salon seutu 1912, Tyrö 1894 – 2 var.

KAR Kahtu surmoa ei ole
KS 2444 – 1 var.

EST Ei või kahte surma surra. Katte surma koole_ei kiäki, üttest müüda ka päse_ei
EV 2955 – 9 var.

VOT kaht surmaa bölö, a üht ed vältä
VV 521 – 3 var.

VEP kahtod surmad ii lin'ne, a ühtespäi ii päzda
VeV 1422 – 1 var.

423. EASIER SAID THAN DONE

RUS Говорить легко, делать – трудно; Все скоро сказывается, да не все скоро делается.
P 331, D 410

LAT Viegli runāt, bet ne darīt. EKL 103

GER Es ist leichter tadeln, als besser machen. ?

SCN Prata är lätt, men göra är värre. ?

Matti Kuusi type system J1h 22

FIN Heleppo on sanoo vain ei tehä. Helppo sano, mut o raskas kärssi. Sukkelaa sanottu, mutt eij niij nokkelaa tehty
VKS 352, Nurmes j. Savonlinna f. Nurmes 1955, Uskela 1912, Savonlinna 1937 – 6 var.

KAR Kebie shanuo, jügie loadie
KVM 133 – 2 var.

EST Kerge ütelda, rasse tetä
EV 3606 – 4 var.

VOT juõlla on kerkiäp kui tehä
VV 115 – 2 var.

VEP teravas sanutud, da ei teravas tehtud
VeV 1503 – 1 var.

Cf. EV 3596

895. HEAR MUCH, SEE MUCH, BUT DON'T SAY EVEN A HALF

RUS Слушай больше, а говори меньше. D 407

LAT Vairāk klausies, mazāk runā. Dzirdi daudz, runā maz. EKL 176/7

GER Höre viel und rede wenig. ?

SCN Tala litet, hör mycket. ?

Matti Kuusi type system J1b 20

FIN Kuule paljon, näe paljon, älä puoliakan puhu. Kuule ja elä kuule, niä ja elä niä. Ei kaikki suuhu sovi mitä silmä näkkee
VKS 7, K 304, J 1324, Sat 1137, KL C112. Eura 1853, Savonlinna 1936, Porin ymp. 1937 – 6 var.

KAR Midä muiz kuulou, kai pidäz itsel
KS 4133 – 1 var.

EST Nää palju, kuule palju, ära palju pajada. Palju kuuled, pisut räägi. Silm võib paelu näha, kõrv

võib paelu kuulda, aga suu ei pia paelu reakima. Ärä räägi keiki, mis sa kuuled
EV 7667, 9954, 10486 – 27 var.

VOT väheb läkkä, rohkeap kuuntele
VV 276 – 1 var.

VEP enamb kulè, a vähämb basi
VeV 650 – 1 var.

LIV küld pägin, rökänd veitõ
LV 328 – 1 var.

Cf. EV 7667, 11722, KS 12993, Jak. 1,19

1267. DON'T GIVE ADVICE TO THOSE WHO ARE WISER

RUS Ученого учить, что мертвого лечить; Мертвого не вылечишь, дурака не выучишь. Rybn. 134, Vol. 197 (462)

LAT ?? Gudro nevajag mācīt. LV 311

GER Wer Gelehrte will lehren und Ketzer bekehren, macht sich unnütze Mühe. ?

SCN Inte lără pã lært folk. ?

Matti Kuusi type system M3e 17

FIN Älä neuvo viisaampaas. Elä neuvo neuvottua, elä seulo seulottua. Älä neuvo nikkaria, älä seppeä opeta
SL 7335, 10873, 14979. Merikarvia 1888, Pieksämäki 1886, Juva 1947 – 98 var.

KAR Ala openda, mida itshe ed t'eda.. Opastettuw opastua, kuol'iedu elävyttiä (on mahdotonta)
SAP 22(631). Soutjärvi 1943 – 4 var.

EST Mine surnut arstima või tarka õpetama
EV 10777 – 7 var.

VOT mitä ted' d' ee kaa pajattaa, parap õn kuullutta parattaa
VV 222 – 1 var.

VEP openuzid opeta da koliid spravitèita
VeV 1018 – 1 var.

LIV mis sa kovältõ opätõd
LV 311 – 1 var.

1312. A FRIEND IN NEED IS A FRIEND INDEED

RUS Истинный друг познается в нужде; Друзья познаются в беде. Rybn. 84, Žuk. 138

LAT Draugu pazīst tikai nelaimē. LV 44; Istos draugus mācāmies pazīt tikai bēdās. Draugus vislabāk pazīst bēdās. EKL 207

GER Den Freund erkennt man in der Not. ?

SCN Vänner i nöd är rara villebråd. ?

Matti Kuusi type system H6b 24

FIN Hädässä ystävä tutaan. Hädässä ystävät koetellaan. Tuskis' ystävät koitellahan, ja matkoos' hyvät hevoset
VKS 346, J 607, 3521, 3524, H 1456, NH 335, K 41, 63, 119, Sat 1070, VS 909, SL 1987, 13239, 15753, 15761. Ähtäri 1930, Nurmo 1912, Kauhajoki 1922 – 77 var.

KAR Hädässä ystävä tunnetaan
Sortavala 1957 – 1 var.

EST Tõsist sõpra tuntakse häda sees. Täüeline sebra jääb sebraks ka hädaajal. Ärä usu sõpra, enne kui sa ei ole teda hädän ärä kaenu
EV 1778, 11050, 12961 – 8 var.

VEP hädas tovarišt' tundub
VeV 330 – 4 var.

LIV ädās tündõb sõ'brõ
LV 44 – 1 var.

Cf. SL 15680. Sir. 12, 11

1400. DON'T TELL EVERYTHING YOU KNOW

RUS Знай больше, а говори меньше! Много знай, да мало бай!. D 423, D 407

LAT Zini daudz, runā maz. LV 915

GER Sage nicht alles was du weisst; glaube nicht alles was du kannst. ?

SCN Säg inte allt vad du vet, men vet allt vad du säger. ?

Matti Kuusi type system J1b 17

FIN Ee kaekkee saa sannoo mitä tietää. Mitäs itte tietää, jos kaikki tieloh juttelee. Ei toisille kaikkia sanota, että ittekki jottain tiäretään
K 299, 303, 354, SL 9536, 12854, 10728, 10729, 12120. Iisalmi 1957, Iitti 1890, Suodenniemi 1943 – 23 var.

KAR Äijän tiijän da sano en, äijän maltan da pakise en. Tiijä äijä, pagize vähä
KS 11163, KVM 135 – 2 var.

EST Tea palju, aga kõnele vähe
EV 11722 – 15 var.

VOT tää rohkaap, a pajat vähepi
VV 630 – 2 var.

VEP vähemb pagizè, enamb teda/ äijän teda, vähän basi
VeV 1051, 1487 – 2 var.

LIV tīeda pāgiņ, rōkānd veitō
LV 915 – 4 var.

Cf. LV 455. EV 7667. Prov. 12,23

1433. HEALTH IS MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD

RUS Здоровье всего дороже ~ Здоровье дороже богатства. D 397

LAT Veselība ir pārāka par bagātība. LV 933 Veselība dārgāka par zeltu. Veselība ir dārgāka par daudu. EKL 313/314

GER Gesundheit ist besser als Reihthum. ?

SCN Hälsan framför allt. ?

Matti Kuusi type system G7a 10

FIN Terveys kultaa kalliimpi. Terveys on kulla väärtine
K 173, SL 12801, Kitee j, a, b. Naantali 1892, Heinjoki 1957 – 20 var.

KAR Tervehys on kallehemi kuldua. Tervehys on kuldua dai hobjia kallehemi. Tervehyttä parembua ni midä ei ole. Tervehysh on ilmalda parash
KS 11131, 11134, KSA 962 – 17 var.

EST Tervis on inimesele kõige kallimb varandus. Tervis on kallim kui vara. Tervis om kallip kui kuld
EV 11979, 11980 – 8 var.

VOT tervüz on kalldõp kullass i õppaass/ tervüüs kõikkõa parapi
VV 566, 567 – 3 var.

VEP tervhuz' om kaikid kal'hemb/ tervhuz' om kuudad paramb/ zdorovd' om paremb bohacvad
VeV 1505, 1507 – 8 var.

LIV tīerat um sūr rikūz
LV 933 – 1 var.

Examples of “small” Finnish-Karelian types without any counterparts from outside

815. LOAMY SOIL IS NOT WORTH PLOUGHING

Matti Kuusi type system C6d 13

- FIN Ei salli savinen pelto, koreata kuokkijata. Ei siedä sunnuntaisaappaat pellolla traksia. Eipä kärsi kivinen pelto koreata kyntäjätä
SL 10800, 10801. Iisalmi 1930, Pori 1893, Valtimo 1953 – 94 var.
- KAR Ei salli savine peldo korieda kyndäjäjä. Ei suvai savine pelto koreata kyntäjätä, miestä verkkaista vaolla, pitkiä hameita, sukan vartta valkeata
KS 9767 – 13 var.

1796. ONE WOMAN’S WARP, NINE WOMEN’S CLOTH

Matti Kuusi type system H4a

- FIN Toisin toimet, toisin loimet, toisin kangaan kuteet
K 366. Viipurin pit. 1922 – 2 var.
- KAR Toisin on toimet, toisin loimet, toisin kankahan kutiet; toisin toishessha taloshsha muiten muishsha vanhemmishsha
Viena 1894 – 5 var.

2093. BETTER TO HAVE A CHILD ON THE FLOOR THAN AN OLD WIFE ON THE OVEN

Matti Kuusi type system G5e

- FIN Paremp on laps lattijalla kun akka uunilla. (= jos vanha mies naipi nuoren vaimon. Vanha vaimo olisi päinvastoin uunilla). Parrein lapsi lattialla, ku akka loukosa
Pielisjärvi j, c, f, g, i, k, l, SL 8574. Nilsia 1938, Paavola 1938 – 27 var.
- KAR Parembi on lapsi kätkyes gu akku pätshil. Parembi on laps lat’t’iel kui akku pätshil
KS 7681 – 10 var.

Cf. VV 246

2264. THE BEGINNING IS IN YOUR HAND, THE END IN GOD’S HAND

Matti Kuusi type system B1a

- FIN Alku keäshshä, loppu jumalashsha. Siitä alku olkoon, Luoja lopun tietköön
SL 360. Petsamo 1932, Nurmes 1956 – 3 var.
- KAR Algu käis, loppu Jumalas
KS 195, cf. KS 12 – 14 var.

2266. TIMID PERCH, WET ASS (= SLIPPERY FISH)

Matti Kuusi type system A2a

- FIN Ahven arka, märkä perse. (= liukas kala ko on)
SL 86. Vuoksenranta 1934 – 4 var.
- KAR Ahven arka, perse märkä kesät kuivilla kutou, syksyt syvillä veillä.. Ahven arka, perse märgä
KS 27. Akonlahti 1936 – 6 var.

2267. YOU’LL BE IN TIME FOR THE PERCH’S SPAWNING

Matti Kuusi type system T1g

- FIN Kyllä ahvenen kutuun ehtii. Kolmesta ei miestä jätetä: ahvenen kudusta, akkojen kylvystä ja tetren kiimasta. Tikan kylpyyn, kiiskin kutuun ja Ristiinan kirkkoon ehtii aina
SL 90. Ruovesi 1943, Pielisjärvi 1935, Keski-Suomi 1943 – 24 var.

KAR Ahvenen kuduh da tedren kiimah ken ei kerrinne, se on itshe lashku. Rugehen kylvöl, ahvenen kuvul da tedren kiimal ei ole kiirehty
KS 28, 9509 – 5 var.

2270. THERE'S TIME AND OTHERS (= MORE) COME FROM MUOLAA (= REGION)

Matti Kuusi type system T1g

FIN Aikaa on kyl ja toista Muolaast tulloo. Aikaa on ja Ahdan mylly toista jauhaa. On aikaa ja Naantalista lisää
SL 157, 170. Antrea 1911, Lahti, Joensuu 1937 – 60 var.

KAR On miul aigua, toista tuloo. On aigua, tostu Matkaselläl tuloo
KS 68 – 3 var.

2275. A WOMAN'S MIND AND A DOG'S FART HAVE THE SAME VALUE

Matti Kuusi type system G4a

FIN Naisem miel' – koiram pier'. Akkain miel' ja koiran pier' ne ovat yhden arvoset
SL 279. Liperi 1914, Karkku 1937 – 3 var.

KAR Akkoin mieli on koiran pieruo kolmie nuaklua kepiempi
KS 150 – 1 var.

2277. WHEN MATTERS ARE DRAWN OUT, THEY BECOME TWISTED (= COMPLICATED)

Matti Kuusi type system T1e 14

FIN Kun asia pitkistyy, niin se mutkistuu. Mikä pitkistyy, se lötkistyy
SL 477, 9305, 9306. Pieksämäki 1886, Ilomantsi 1886 – 81 var.

KAR Miz azie pitkistyy, se i mutkistuu. Miz azie vitkistyy, se i mutkistuu. Mi d'ielo pitkistyy, dai mutkistuu
KS 270, 275, 453, cf. 8237 – 11 var.

2278. THE MATTER NEEDS EXPLAINING AND DANCING NEEDS SINGING

Matti Kuusi type system C2d

FIN Assii kaipaa ymmärrystä ja tanssi rallatusta. Assii vaatii arvelusta, tanssiminen rallatusta
SL 444, 493. Kuusankoski 1943, Sääminki 1939 – 9 var.

KAR Azie vuad'ii sellityksen, tanssi rallatuksen. Azie vuad'ii arvelusta, tanssimine rallatusta
KS 272 – 3 var.

2280. HE WHO TAKES A STEP DOES NOT WANT TO CHANGE PLACES WITH THE SITTER

Matti Kuusi type system M7c 16

FIN Ei astuja istujaan ihteessä vaihak. Ei liikkuva vaihda itseään liikkumattomaan
SL 499. Kiihtelysvaara 1891, Lönnrotiana 11 – 8 var.

KAR Ei astuja istujaan ittshiedäh vaiha
KS 281 – 4 var.

2286. LIFE IS ROWING ALONG THE WATER AND EATING ALONG WHAT IS GIVEN

Matti Kuusi type system B2b 11

FIN Eläminen on että (= eteenpäin) myöten soutaminen on vettä myöten syöminen on saamista myöten. Eletään evästä myöten, soudetaan vettä myöten
SL 724. Metsäpirtti 1969, Saarijärvi 1943 – 5 var.

KAR Eliä pidäv sualehij myö. Elämä on etty myöten, voiminen vägie myöten. Elä etty myö, (da) souva vetty myö
KS 546, 618. Säämäjärvi 1935 – 8 var.

2287. FOOD FROM THE MOTHER BY CRYING, FROM STRANGERS BY COAXING

Matti Kuusi type system K1g

FIN Itkien emolta ruoka, maanitellen vierahalta. Lapsi itkien emältä kysyen kylän akoilta maanitellen vierahalta (ruoan saapi)
SL 608. Nurmes 1957, Lönnrotiana – 6 var.

KAR Itkien emolta ruokaa, muanitellen vierahalta. Itkien omas muamos, muanitellen vierahas
KS 565, 6892 – 8 var.

2289. THEY ARE DIFFERENT MEN WHO WASH CORPSES, AND DIFFERENT MEN WHO BURY THEM

Matti Kuusi type system D1c 25

FIN Ne o eri miehek ku ruumei pesse. Toiset taas kun hautaa. Ne on eri miehet, jotka ruumiita pesee ja eri miehet, jotka veisaa
SL 699. Muurla 1914, Viljakkala 1936 – 22 var.

KAR Eri muzikat ne pogoiniekkoi pesää da eri muzikkaset niilöi hauvatah
KS 615 – 1 var.

2290. A BREAK IN THE FAMILY MEANS A SPLITTING UP OF THE BELONGINGS

Matti Kuusi type system L1b

FIN Ero perreessä ja jako talonväkeen. Ero pereen, jako tavaran
SL 718. Viitasaari 1937, Haapajärvi 1888 – 17 var.

KAR Ero pereheh, jako tavarah
KS 616 – 3 var.

2293. THE SKIRT IS BROKEN (AND) THE SHIRT BROKEN, THE LEATHER UNDER THE SHIRT BROKEN

Matti Kuusi type system K2i

FIN Hame on rikki paita rikki, paidan alta kaikki rikki. Körtti rikki särkki rikki särkin alta paljon rikki
SL 829. Virolahti 1851, Sysmä 1937 – 6 var.

KAR Hame rikki, paita rikki, paijan alla nahka rikki
KS 733 – 1 var.

2294. YOU'LL RUN OUT OF TEETH BEFORE YOU RUN OUT OF BREAD

Matti Kuusi type system M7a

FIN Ennen hampuat loppuut ko leipä
SL 833. Rautu 1937 – 5 var.

KAR Hambahat loppuu, a leiby jää. Leivät ei lopu, ga hambahat loppuu
KS 738, 4805 – 7 var.

2296. THERE IS TIME TO LIFT YOUR HAT WHEN YOU COME UPON A STRANGER

Matti Kuusi type system T1k

FIN Kerkii hä sen hatun nostua ku vieras vastaa tulloo
SL 922. Jaakkima 1958 – 3 var.

KAR Ennättää hatun siit heittiä, konza herra vastah tuloo. Kergiebi siit hattuo nostua, ku vieras vastah tuloo. Konsa vieras vastaah tuloo, sit vasta hattuu nosta
KS 769, 773, 12523 – 6 var.

2297. RARELY ARE TWO GOOD SPIKES PUT TOGETHER UNLESS NEXT TO THE GATE (= RARE IF WIFE AND HUSBAND ARE BOTH GOOD)

Matti Kuusi type system G5f

FIN Harvoin kahta hyvää seipäistäkään yhteen pannaan - muutakuin veräjäpieleen. (= harvoin mies ja vaimo molemmat hyviä ovat)
SL 2754. Parkano 1948 – 1 var.

KAR Ei aidah panna kahtu hyviä seivästy rinnakkai. Ei aidah kahtu seivästy yhten jytytty panna. Ei kahtu seiväst yhtemmostu pystetä (aitaan)
KS 34, KSA 243 – 13 var.

2298. A PIKE SPAWNS DURING THE FROST (= CONSOLATORY REMARK)

Matti Kuusi type system A2b

FIN Hauki hallalla kutou (= näin lohduttaudutaan hallan aikana, jolloin ei edes kalasta toivoa)
SL 932. Petsamo 1932 – 3 var.

KAR Haugi hallal kudoo, piäkala koval siäl
KS 778 – 10 var.

2300. THE HORSE CODDLES ITS YOUNG, THE WIFE HER STOMACH'S FOLK (= CHILDREN)

Matti Kuusi type system G3b 20

FIN Hepo hellii varsaansa vaimo vatsansa väkeä. Hepo hellä varsoosa, äit huono poikoosa
SL 1212. Kitee 1889, Rantasalmi 1886 – 64 var.

KAR Hepo on hellä varsalle, ukko hellä akalle.. Hepo hellä varsastaa, vaimo vatshastaa
KS 794. Impilahti 1958 – 7 var.

2306. HEARTS IS EASY TO SAY, BUT THE DEVIL HAS TO PUT IT DOWN (= CARD GAME)

Matti Kuusi type system J1h

FIN Hertta on helppo sannoo mut se on piru pistettävä
SL 1149. Joroinen 1885 – 6 var.

KAR Hertta on helppo sanuo, vai piru on pistiä
KS 933 – 1 var.

2307. LOVELY EYES MAKE PRETTY CHILDREN

Matti Kuusi type system C2a

FIN Herttaset silmät tekee kauniit lapset. Iloiset silmät ja vanhurskas nenänvarsi tekee kauniita lapsia ja hyviä
SL 1150. Nastola 1928, Ruovesi 1922 – 22 var.

KAR Herttaset silmät tegöö kauniita lapsii
KS 934 – 1 var.

Curriculum vitae

Arvo Krikmann received his PhD degree in 1997 (dissertation “Insights in the minor forms of folklore”, Tartu University). He is a senior researcher at the Estonian Literary Museum, member of Estonian Academy of Sciences, member of the Academia Scientiarum et Artium Europaea and associate member of the Foklore Fellows. He is also the editorial consultant of the yearbook Proverbium (Vermont). He has received national Science Award (1998), 3rd Class Order of the White Star (1998), Baltic Assembly prize for science 2004. He has taught courses on minor forms of folklore and folk humour. He has published about 120 works on folklore (paremiology, other minor genres of folklore, problems of geographic distribution, folk humour), theory of figurative language, humour theory.