



# Faith and Magic in Early Modern Finland

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Raisa Maria Toivo



*Series Foreword*

The history of European witchcraft and magic continues to fascinate and challenge students and scholars. There is certainly no shortage of books on the subject. Several general surveys of the witch trials and numerous regional and micro studies have been published for an English-speaking readership. While the quality of publications on witchcraft has been high, some regions and topics have received less attention over the years. The aim of this series is to help illuminate these lesser-known or little-studied aspects of the history of witchcraft and magic. It will also encourage the development of a broader corpus of work in other related areas of magic and the supernatural, such as angels, devils, spirits, ghosts, folk healing and divination. To help further our understanding and interest in this wider history of beliefs and practices, the series will include research that looks beyond the usual focus on Western Europe and that also explores their relevance and influence from the medieval to the modern period.

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# Faith and Magic in Early Modern Finland

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FAITH AND MAGIC IN EARLY MODERN FINLAND

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*To the memory of my father*

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# 1

## Introduction: Magic in a Religious Borderland

This book assesses the mutual dependence of lived religion, magic, and superstition in 'Long Reformation' Finland. I examine the fluid experiences of faith, magic, and superstition in an area where local communities were constantly influenced by the political and ideological needs of the emerging state, expansionist politics, and, at times, foreign military threats. As such an area, Finland was in no way unique in the early modern period, but I hope that the clarity of the different factors at play in this context will help make their interdependency clear in other areas too.

### **Finland as a Cultural Geographic Area, and Its Relevance for Historical Study**

Early modern Finland is rarely a focus of attention in the study of European history, but it certainly has a place in the context of northern European religious and political culture. During the early modern period, Finland was a part of Sweden, a Lutheran heartland and an aspiring great power. As a part of Sweden, Finland was involved in major developments in early modern Europe, from the development of contemporary controversial theology to the Polish Counter-Reformation and the Thirty Years War. At the same time, Finland was also a borderland between western and eastern cultures, both politically and religiously. Studying faith, magic, and superstition in this context enables us to identify how the interdependency of these three concepts changed according to the social and political circumstances of the time.

The modern state of Finland we see on the maps of Europe is not the same as Finland of the early modern era. Indeed, in current historiography, when everyone seeks to avoid methodological nationalism,

using terms like 'Finland' or 'Finnish' to refer to periods before 1809 has sometimes been labelled anachronistic. I am fully aware of the problems involved in studying concepts that at the time did not exist, but, for lack of a better term (and to avoid creating a new nationalist result in trying to avoid one), I shall refer to the place that later happened to become Finland as Finland, and the people who lived there, Finnish (unless a finer gradation seems more relevant to the point I am trying to make). While potentially problematic, this position is not wholly wrong. Whether Finland could be said to have been a country or an area of its own during the early modern period depends on one's approach. Finland – except for the province of Kexholm in Karelia – had not been occupied or conquered by Sweden; rather, it had been included as part of Sweden when the country first organized its government and taxation. Finns usually considered themselves to be selfevidently loyal subjects of the Swedish King and realm. In one sense, Finland was simply a collection of Swedish governmental provinces on the eastern side of the Gulf of Bothnia. At other times, however, these provinces had a special role and a special place in the realm and its politics, economy, and cultural development, and the provinces were thought of as belonging together. Of course, contemporaries emphasized whichever approach they felt most advantageous to their aims in the situation.

Historical Finland was geographically defined according to three factors: the border between Russia and Sweden, the struggle for access to the Arctic Ocean among Sweden, Denmark, and Russia, and the geographical divisions of government, jurisdiction, and church life within the realm of Sweden. The idea that the provinces east of the Gulf of Bothnia belonged together and formed a place called Finland was – to a great extent – based on language, although Finnish was spoken on both sides of the Gulf of Bothnia and in various areas of Russian Karelia and Ingria. Government officials who were placed in Finland were often (but not always) required to gain a working knowledge of the language. Laws and orders were translated into Finnish, and church liturgies and sermons had to be rewritten in Finnish. All materials produced by the local authorities for the purposes of control by the central authorities – like court records, tax records, and communion books – were, of course drawn up in Swedish.

The geographical proximity of the provinces embraced by the northern shores of the Baltic Sea made governmental unity practical, and most of the mid-level state bureaucracy used the Gulf of Bothnia as a main geographical boundary. When Sweden established a system of courts of appeal, one was established in Turku in 1623, and 'Finland'<sup>1</sup>

was established as its jurisdiction. The episcopal seat of Turku covered the whole of Finland until the eastern parts of the bishopric grew too large and a bishop was assigned to Vyborg.

Another factor that characterized early modern Finland was its position as the eastern part and the eastern border of the Swedish realm. During the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, this meant it was a theatre for the foreign politics of the expanding Swedish Kingdom: it was a place of war and devastation. To a certain extent, by the sixteenth century this had produced a sense that the elite in Finland had a special interest in eastern foreign politics. If this was true, it was crushed as a result of Charles IX's bloody purges of his political and religious opponents after



Map 1.1 Finland in early modern Sweden

Source: Haapala and Toivo 2007: 87.

the civil war – or the Club War as it has become known – at the end of the sixteenth century. During the seventeenth century, the eastern border was a place of relative domestic peace, for, although Sweden's great power aspirations demanded heavy taxation and continuous conscriptions, troops marched and made havoc elsewhere, in the Thirty Years War and in other battles in Poland, Germany, Denmark, and Norway. In these conflicts, Sweden sought to lead the Protestant forces of Europe. The war efforts were, nevertheless, largely funded by France, and this foreign money bridged the shortfall in Swedish taxation. At least 25,000 Finns served in the Swedish army between 1630 and 1648, some of them as high-ranking officers. As was customary, the officers brought back with them the spoils of war, both culturally and materially.<sup>2</sup>

Early modern Finland was essentially a rural area. Only about two per cent of the population lived in towns, and the few towns that did exist were mostly small. The rural character of the area gives this investigation a fresh perspective compared to much current research on early modern Lutheranism. Many scholarly works have focused on German towns and cities, with the pragmatics of religious life thus centring on the hierarchies of the workshops and guilds. This book, on the other hand, presents an inherently rural Lutheranism, where the experience and practice of religion is adapted to not only agricultural life – of seasonal and daily cycles, field work, and cattle rearing – but also to long distances, self-sufficiency, material scarcity, and a constant awareness of the fluctuations in life's fortunes. Even an averagely wealthy farmer in early modern Finland was just a couple of rains or frosts away from penury. Peasant farmers were usually freeholders who held hereditary rights to their land, but, if they failed to pay taxes for three consecutive years, the crown had the right (though not necessarily the desire) to confiscate the farmstead and offer it to somebody else in the hope that they would have greater success in paying their taxes.<sup>3</sup> Social mobility was fluid; people could both rise and fall. However, the loss of one would often turn into the gain of another.

Early modern Finland was simultaneously a periphery and an integral part of the central Swedish realm. There were relatively densely built areas in the south and south-western parts of Finland. The shores of the lakes and rivers with easily workable soils had been inhabited since the previous ice age. These areas were an integral part of the realm, and they were in relatively regular communication with the centres of power. Royal orders and stipulations were sent by postal routes to be read aloud by the parish priest every Sunday after the sermon. There were systems of regular market days during which trade between the

town and the countryside was supposed to take place, although people tended to travel for trade on others days too. Secular court sessions were held at least three times a year, and episcopal and parochial visitations were conducted at irregular but not infrequent intervals. These areas of Finland were, while not at the centre, relatively well attached to the centres of Sweden and, through it, Europe. Nevertheless, in areas with clay and sandy soils, and in the great forests, there were still unclaimed areas of land where settlers could go to make their fortunes, even in the parishes of Satakunta and Tavastia. In the more northern and north-eastern areas, settlement was still in its infancy, infrastructure was sparse, and people were few and far between. These areas were the true peripheries; a round trip to the nearest church could take three days.

Finnish church historians have been rather keen to argue that Christianity was still a relatively new ideology in Finland at the time of the Reformation – some even argue that the Christianization of these areas was incomplete. However, the first signs of Christianity reached Finland around the eleventh century. Apparently, the parochial system had developed by the thirteenth century, although new parishes were established and churches and chapels were built in new areas of settlement well into the eighteenth century. One of the theories most often ascribed to is that the recent Christianization of Finland meant that it did not have the time for spiritual or structural deterioration, which, in the rest of Europe, had led to the Reformation efforts from the thirteenth century onwards. Therefore, the argument goes, the Reformation in Finland was largely led from above and was less politicized than in Sweden. This, in turn, led to greater tolerance and a lack of religious violence and iconoclasm in the Finnish Long Reformation period. This theory does not quite match the evidence though, since both economic connections and communication between south-western areas of Finland and the German areas on the southern side of the Baltic Sea were frequent in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. New religious trends can be traced along these routes, such as new types of guild devotion, rosary practices, saints' cults, and – later on – ideas about the Reformation, religious radicalism, and witches. In fact, south-west Finland was a well-established area of European Catholicism in the late medieval period.

## **The Religious Background in Early Modern Finland**

Lutheran orthodoxy and confessionalism is taken for granted in the research of seventeenth-century Swedish history. It has been treated as one

of the most important tools for supporting the power of the sovereign and of enabling Sweden's rise to a great power in Europe. Historians claim that Lutheran orthodox teaching cemented early modern authority, from the king to the father of the peasant household, and it justified warfare and tax collection. Catechism teaching unified the country's culture and mentality. Religious argument formed the basis on which social order was justified, from estate privileges to the 'reform of manners' that suppressed extramarital sexuality and addressed blasphemy and witchcraft. There is hardly a single trait in seventeenth-century Sweden's history that is not connected to Lutheran orthodox theology and folk teaching.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, despite this emphasis, little historical research has been done on the subject. Lutheran orthodoxy has been referred to as explaining, causing, and being explained by other phenomena. However, ever since the studies conducted from the 1950s to the 1970s on modernity and premodernity in religion,<sup>5</sup> the nature and prevalence of Lutheran orthodoxy has been taken for granted.

In recent decades, a number of scholars have published studies on Finnish and Scandinavian church and religious history.<sup>6</sup> Those studies make it clear that whereas the importance of religious teaching and argument in seventeenth-century society cannot be overemphasized, the meaning of what social historians interchangeably call 'Lutheran orthodoxy' and 'confessionalism' is in need of reinterpretation, especially in political and social history. Nordic historiography (with the exception of Garstein and Laasonen,<sup>7</sup> both theological historians) has overemphasized the special character of Swedish Lutheranism as a religious form connected to power-states and the development of a patriarchal society. For social and political historians especially, the religious framework has been something of a given. My approach sees Lutheran orthodoxy as a process rather than as a finished body of dogmatic and social teaching. Lutheran theology was searching for its form and content somewhere between the Roman Catholic and the Calvinist denominations during the time of orthodoxy,<sup>8</sup> and the trends that later took the shape of Pietism were already present from the Reformation. They can be followed in the individual deliberations on religious experience and religious thought that are presented in many cases of blasphemy and magic.

The Reformation in Finland was a slow and uncertain process – as big changes often are – groping to find its direction in the midst of political and economic turmoil. Although the process culminated in certain events and decisions, these took a long time to make an impact. Lutheranism, the 'the pure Christian religion', was pronounced to be the religion of the country in the Diet of Västerås in 1527. This made

the king the head of the church, abandoning papal authority. What the 'pure Christian religion' meant theologically was left open at the Diet. This was a princely Reformation, imposed from above, without any great popular demand or violence of the kind that was present in the German cities. Nor did it raise much resistance, especially on the Finnish side of the Gulf of Bothnia. Certainly, there were clergymen in Sweden and Finland who were not only familiar with but genuinely convinced by the new Protestant ideas. Olaus Petri and Laurentius Andreae were such men in the immediate service of the king. Mikael Agricola in Finland had studied in Wittenberg at a crucial time. Gustav I took advantage of the spread of these ideas and the way in which they struck a chord with the emerging Swedish 'national' pride. The urban areas in Sweden found the Reformation appealing for much the same reasons as the German cities – a cultural climate perhaps, formed by religious fervour and anxiety, political and proto-nationalist ideas and social change. In the rural areas of Sweden proper, however, violent disturbances occurred. On the Finnish side of the Gulf of Bothnia, no systematic violence was recorded, although isolated instances were reported. This has been attributed to the less political nature of the religion and to the even slower development of the Reformation in Finland than in Sweden proper. It took time to create Protestant liturgical and religious texts and formulas in Finnish. Mikael Agricola published the first catechisms, the 'ABCkirja' (1543) and 'Rucouskirja' (1544), and a translation of the New Testament, 'Se Wsi Testamentti' (1548). In addition he also published Finnish liturgies (1549), as did the bishop of Vyborg, Paulus Juusteen (1575). When these texts did appear, they were slow to spread – they were too expensive for even the clergy to purchase – and their nature was conservative; the changes to the old formulas were few.

The Counter-Reformation had exerted some influence in Sweden and Finland, too. John III is widely known to have been interested in Catholicism, and during his reign of 1562–92, the religious policies of the realm took a Catholic turn. A new liturgical handbook with strong Catholic tendencies was introduced, named the Red Liturgy after the colour of its binding. On the other hand, rumours about a Jesuit conspiracy in the royal court provoked a wider anti-Catholic allegiance at the end of John III's reign. The decision on Lutheranism was cemented in the Council of Uppsala in 1593. It is rather ironic that it was not until the ascension of Charles IX that Lutheranism was established as the state religion. Charles's own religious ideas were definitively closer to Calvinism than Lutheranism. In Finland, this seems to have caused some tension, but, unlike Sweden proper, the bishops here were not

forced to resign from office – possibly because Charles had already beheaded a huge number of his political opponents in Finland at the end of the Club War. He had angered and at least temporarily defeated the nobility, and he was not in the position to take risks with the clergy.

It took well into the seventeenth century for the Lutheran Reformation to establish its influence on the level of lay piety. This was a period during which the church and the state united into a confessionalist policy of state religion and theocracy. Religious and denominational uniformity was an explicit aim of the realm in Sweden, as in many other areas. In Finland, the Russian Orthodox population of the Kexholm area – which had been annexed to the country in the Treaty of Stolbovo in 1617 – formed a notable minority. It is usually considered that only the rise of Pietist movements in the eighteenth century questioned the denominational unity of Finland and Sweden. Lutheranism was, therefore, more secure in the Nordic area than it was in the more contested central Europe. Nevertheless, the complex development trod a path among Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Reformed Protestantism. Moreover, the slowness of the changes suggests that the Reformation was not a single process; rather, we could talk about Reformations in the plural, meaning not only the different temporal phases but also the approaches and experiences of the different actors on the scene. The theological, the political, and the lay religious – and the different types of Protestantism and Catholicism – were all present in the early modern Finnish scene in one way or another. The period during which these processes took place can thus justly be termed the Long Reformation.

The final period of the Long Reformation in Finland and Sweden is also considered a period of confessionalization and of religious orthodoxy. The crown and the church together strived for discipline and control. The populace was taught the Christian religion through sermons and catechism teachings, and this was supervised by the parish clergy. Church attendance was, at least theoretically, made compulsory by the 1680s, although the authorities well understood that cattle and fires could not be left alone for days in order for people to go to church: household members had to take turns. One could be fined for neglecting church attendance, however. The sermon and the sacraments were emphasized, and theoretically, attendance at communion was compulsory at least twice a year, although in practice most people took communion only once a year, at Easter, in the medieval fashion. To be able to take part in the communion, one had to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the rudiments of religion, and one could not have any unresolved criminal matters pending. The church came to the aid of the

crown in encouraging people to bring their disputes – both petty and serious – to the secular courts. In turn, the secular courts came to the aid of the church in taking over the investigation and the punishment for religious deviance and misdemeanours.

## **Understanding Faith, Magic, and Superstition as Part of Lived Religion**

Faith, magic, and superstition were interdependent concepts in the early modern period. The meaning of each varied according to the contents of the others, and each was defined by theological and philosophical debates, which differed according to each theologian's emphasis. Since the medieval period, the Devil had been thought of as a master of deception, and therefore one could not always easily distinguish between good and evil. Thus, many efforts to separate faith and prayer from magic and superstition also centred on the disposition of the actor: faith and prayer were thought to be humble petitions towards the heavenly powers, while magic was supposed to mechanistically produce the desired outcome.

Often, the discourse relied either on the good or evil powers in question, with God being appealed to in faith and the Devil being appealed to in magic and superstition. By the late medieval period, all magic, for evil purposes as well as seemingly good ones – for curing illnesses, finding treasures – was considered to involve some cooperation with the Devil. Discussions on 'natural magic' existed among the Finnish and Swedish clergy as well as elsewhere in Europe, but mainly to separate the natural powers and qualities of minerals and ore from magical characteristics: natural magic was natural because it was not really magic, and because there was no good or evil supernatural power involved, except the original creation by God. Among the students and professors of the Royal Academy of Turku, the discussion was also connected to the early natural sciences, but there is little evidence of either astrology or alchemy gaining much practical interest. It has been noted that bishop Gezelius Sr did not condemn all forms of astrological fortunetelling as darkly as most of the authors he usually followed, but only thought the results uncertain. Usually magic of any kind was attached to lack of proper knowledge of either Christian or natural sciences.<sup>9</sup> To make the distinctions more complicated, superstition included both magic and futile beliefs or practices that were deemed to have been practised not so much out of malevolent intent, but out of ignorance.

As most historians of magic and witchcraft today are aware, the debates on terminology were complicated and the results far from

unanimous, and the same terminology was cheerfully applied to varying purposes. This becomes especially evident when one moves from the spheres of the late medieval and early modern scholars to investigate how the lay authorities at various levels of the community and the lay parishioners understood and experienced the concepts.

There have been numerous attempts in the last four decades to shed light on popular religion as opposed to official theology and highflying ideology. This move reflects the democratic idea that the 'popular' must have had more practical importance for the ways of life, economic choices, and even political acts than theological jargon, which the not-so-well-educated nobility and the uneducated 'real people' probably understood and cared for as little in the early modern period as we do today. This has resulted in an admirable attempt to reconcile the paradox that historians have described in the early modern period: people were inherently religious, but it has been difficult to see how religion worked in people's minds. From a modern perspective, so much seems cynical pretext and hypocrisy, and so much seems not to be real religiosity, nor 'real Christianity' according the perspective of twentieth-century Christianity. Popular religion seemed to be a solution to this dilemma, but the inherent dichotomy between the correct and modern theological views and the popular traditional (or straightforwardly mis-) conceptions have since turned out to be another way to pejoratively label religion historically 'unimportant' when compared to the marching soldiers of competing states, the tactical letters of diplomats, and the flow of money in global or local trade. Another problem has been that the members of the populace rarely sat down to write coherent explanations of how they saw their religion. Rather, they went from day to day conducting their lives. Their thoughts on religion were generally only recorded when the authorities tried to pin them down and control them, in catechism hearings and in church or secular court investigations of religious offences; such situations are likely to emphasize the dichotomy between the 'popular' and the 'elite(s)'.

Rather than recording what they thought about religion and faith, people lived out their concepts in their daily life. My intention in this collection is to approach religion and faith as a normal and inseparable part of the day-to-day lives of lay people. The relation of magical – or sacramental – thinking as a part of early modern Lutheranism and faith (and vice versa) seems to be an essential part of these experiences, or at least the descriptions of these experiences. Consequently, when discussing their lives, people also discussed their fluid interpretations of religion and faith.

It is also my hope to avoid the dichotomies between the elite and popular and the theological and mundane – to me they seem not to add much to the understanding of the complexity and plurality of early modern religiosity, although they do offer tools for constructing neat narratives. This book will therefore shift to and fro between theology and church politics, religious teaching, and lay life in a way that might be considered eclectic. I do so not because I am providing a systematic categorization of who believed what, but because I am trying to follow how ideas, events, and people influenced other ideas, events, and people. Lived religion in the lay context did not have the coherent and ordered structure of learned dogma, nor was it mere outward ritual; it was also an experience and an emotional performance, a ‘living out’ of one’s sometimes unexplainable concepts of the world and one’s relations with the sacred and the supernatural.

The ‘living out’ of religion and faith reflected in a way the more theoretical works, but it was much more situated in people’s own personal lives and the local and cultural communities. The living out of the concepts of faith, magic, and superstition reflected not only one’s own relationship with the sacred or supernatural powers, but also one’s relationships with other people in the community. In these circumstances, one is psychologically likely to describe one’s own relationship with the sacred as faith – and to experience it as such as well. Even magic requires faith in its effectiveness: it requires belief in there being a higher power that can be coerced into interaction. In the early modern period, a lack of faith – and through it, despair – was thought of as a sin that threatened both the individual and the whole community; it was a taboo and therefore unlikely to be discussed by the laity. Magic, despite its alluring potential, seems to have been something which one would suspect others of: the same deeds – such as walking around a slash-and-burn fire nine times to prevent it spreading, or sacrificing a sum of money to the church to ensure health – would be considered faith or diligence and carefulness when performed oneself, but as ritual magic when performed by others. Moreover, superstition was always a label imposed from above. The complexity of the lived experience of concepts prevents narrow definitions at the beginning of this study: indeed, the terms faith, magic, and superstition will inevitably evolve throughout this study and it is one of the aims of the book to observe how.

The performance of certain deeds was private and individual and partly public, communal, and shared. In the surviving evidence, the aspect of publicity, communalism, and sharedness dominates – indeed, communalism has been considered one of the key elements of traditional

premodern religion – but its dominance in the source material may also reflect the fact that few lay people wrote down descriptions of their religious sentiments and experiences unless they had an audience in mind. Consequently, at least two parties had to be involved for any historical source material to be created. Thus contextualized, the trials that sprung up against superstition and saints' rituals at the height of confessionalization in the second half of the seventeenth century can be treated as material on the religious life and sentiments of a wider culture than that of just a few dissenters. Religion was a factor of shared identity, and it created grounds of sorting people into 'us' and 'them'. Religious diversity and flexibility in accommodating different viewpoints and practices to the point of toleration seems essential in the religious atmosphere of the era, which has nevertheless been termed the 'age of persecution'. Religion – as it was lived out in daily life and personal encounters with other people – was different from the dramatic disruptions of the witch-hunts or religiopolitical wars and massacres.<sup>10</sup>

The development of the official treatment of magic in Finland during the seventeenth century has previously been researched as part of the development of the witch trials. This context is natural, since the concepts were as much intertwined as those of faith and magic. Chart 1.1 displays the developments of court trials against various kinds of improper intercourse with the supernatural that were, for various reasons, treated as being connected to witchcraft in Finland. The first of the two most important categories is traditional maleficium, prevalent from the medieval period onwards, and in the Swedish source material usually called *trolldom* or *förgörning*. The second category is superstition (*vidskepelse*) or magic (either *vidskepelse* or described by various other terms including *signeri* (chanting), *lövjeri*, or just *olovlig konst*, forbidden art). These have often been termed as benevolent, although that obviously depended on one's point of view. Trials for magic only became relevant in the middle of the seventeenth century, clearly before the statutes on oaths and breaking the Sabbath in 1665 and 1667, where punishments were outlined for both making an implicit or open pact with the Devil and for trying to use magic, spells, and fortune-telling or for making offerings at places such as forests, lakes, and wells. These statutes have been considered the most important reason for the rise in magic trials after the 1660s, but, as can be seen, that rise actually starts somewhat earlier. Furthermore, as Nenonen states, the new legislation was rarely cited. Moreover, various stipulations with essentially the same content had been made at least since Gustav I's orders in 1528, giving secular courts the right and duty to judge superstitious crime

'according to the custom of the land'.<sup>11</sup> The rise in both magic trials and in all kinds of witchcraftrelated trials in Chart 1.1 has also been connected to a general religious disciplining project during the second half of the seventeenth century, especially during the 1680s.<sup>12</sup> It is also a part of a general trend of crime statistics in early modern Finland and Sweden where almost any crime – from violence to premarital sex – saw a similar rise in the second half of the seventeenth century. Whether this was a real phenomenon in judicial life, a disciplining project by the controlling authorities,<sup>13</sup> or the result of increasing bureaucracy producing more and more source materials<sup>14</sup> is still not definitively clear. I will discuss the campaigns of discipline in the following chapters; despite the statistics of the trials and punishment, and the evident rhetoric of repression and condemnation, the campaign does not strike me as very vigorous. Nevertheless, my argument must be seen in the context of these paradoxical statistics.

It is the two categories of traditional maleficium and especially that of magic that also involve most of the discussion on the interaction between the magical and the religious. These categories were by

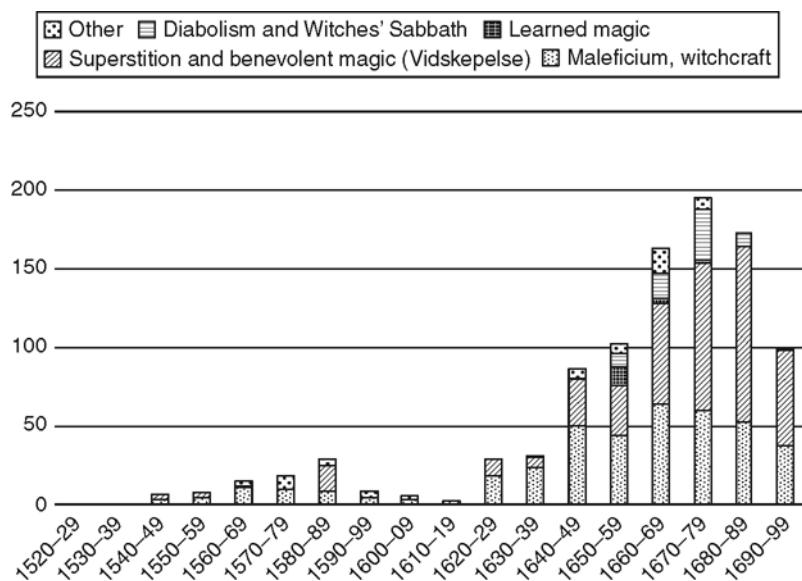


Chart 1.1 Magic and witchcraft in Finland 1500–1699

Source: Nenonen 1992: 405–29, appendices; Nenonen and Kervinen 1994: illustration appendix, with some small changes by the author.

no means exclusive; in fact they were intertwined, and although a conceptual separation between them existed – in there being separate terms for them – the contents of each category kept changing. Many historians have observed that in all areas of Finland and Sweden, neighbours generally brought charges of maleficium, but the court authorities brought charges of magic and superstition, and the courts could turn maleficium accusations into charges of magic and superstition without actually changing the description of what had been done or said, instead changing the interpretation. Individual acts in individual trials could drift from one category to another.<sup>15</sup>

During the second half of the seventeenth century, a third category was added, that of making an explicit pact with the Devil. This new category is split into two subgroups, one of learned magic and the other of the socalled Blåkulla or Witches' Sabbath trials. In the 1640s, a professor of the Royal Academy of Turku was accused of using magic and kabbala, and during the following days a series of trials emerged against students who were suspected of having made a pact with the Devil in order to get through their difficult studies. Neither the professor nor the students were convicted, however, both because of a lack of evidence and because of the personal intervention of count Per Brahe, a witchcraft sceptic. Nevertheless, they were suspended and never permitted to return to their studies, even though they had apparently only just recovered their ability to study. Since these trials involved students at the Academy and the clergy as their teachers, they reflect lay views in only a very limited sense.<sup>16</sup>

The Blåkulla trials, beginning in 1666 in Åland,<sup>17</sup> however, do reflect lay views to a greater measure, and although it is to be suspected that the narratives of the meeting with the Devil and the participation in the Witches' Sabbath were coached and coerced by the interrogator, the testimonies also include a multitude of very mundane cattle magic, fishing magic, and the curing of illnesses with the help of words and rituals that could be interpreted as prayers or spells. These trials therefore present an opportunity to explore the interchange between magic and faith.

The classical distinction between religion and magic – that prayer is the act of humbly begging a divine entity to intervene, after which this entity may or may not do so according to its own will, whereas magic is something coercive, something that in itself has the power to make supernatural powers act – does not wholly fit in this discussion. If such a distinction was not uniformly applicable to the thoughts of early modern philosophers and theologians, it was even less so among the peasant farmers, workers, and lawyers that sat in the early modern

Finnish courts. The intention – supplication or coercion – of an act was, as it still is, essentially only known by the actor him- or herself.<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless, there was a continuous discussion and negotiation in the secular and church courts of early modern Sweden and Finland as to what acts should be considered prayer and what superstition. After all, superstition was prosecuted as a criminal offence and a religious crime, although there was also the possibility (which was increasingly exploited as the eighteenth century wore on) of prosecuting superstitious acts of magic as fraud, at least if they were performed for money. The competition between the church and the crown jurisdictions had brought church punishments within the jurisdiction of secular courts already in the Middle Ages. During the sixteenth century, secular dominance strengthened, and the secular courts came to have precedence also in sentencing church punishments. The initiative legally held by the church had often meant that the local vicar would act as a prosecutor in the secular court. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, minor, unimportant cases could be dealt with solely in the church courts.<sup>19</sup> Sometimes a public confession was thought an appropriate remedy, and more often the secular courts let the church court institutions (the local church court or the cathedral chapter) deal with the matter. Neither of the church institutions had the legal ability to issue secular punishments, although sometimes whipping was added to public confession.

## **Source Material**

In shifting to and from theology, religious teaching, and everyday life in the religious experience of lay people, I combine various sorts of source materials. Theologians wrote to each other and to government officials during times of controversy and irenic politics. Their concerns were strategic and often detached from the mundane. These writings were in turn translated to the local parish clergy in a number of manuals, confession books, model sermon collections, and circular letters. Episcopal visitations served not only to give a personal touch in determining how the teaching material had worked, they were also a channel – one that worked better at some times than at others – for church officials to gain knowledge of what was going on in the parishes and to learn of the practical needs of lay religious life. The lay religious voice can be heard sometimes more and sometimes less authentically in church and secular court records. As the secular courts provide my chief source material – and I rely heavily on them in this book – a short description of the nature of the material is in order.

The material from the secular courts was produced in trials against religious offences. These had in practice been conducted in the secular courts at least since Gustav I's time when a secular punishment was in someone's interest, although religious crime was generally thought of as *casus mixti fori* – cases that could be dealt with both in church and in secular courts, depending on where they first came up and how simple they were. Since the Swedish Church had lost the ability to inflict fines and corporal punishment following Gustav I's orders, it became common for the clergy to demand punishments for religious offenders in the secular courts if they thought that church penance was insufficient. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, various stipulations encouraged the clergy to inform the secular court of serious offences, and in 1686 church law made it compulsory for all offences. The secular court material thus includes a vast amount of minor religious offences, too.<sup>20</sup>

The lowest level of the judicial system in Finland and Sweden consisted of the town and rural courts. The principles of their work were largely the same, and their records are similar in character, although obviously town courts were attended by burghers, craftspeople, apprentices, and town labourers, whereas rural courts were filled with farmers, farm labourers, and various people from the countryside.

The Finnish lower-court records have survived from the 1620s onwards and provide excellent material for various research purposes using cultural studies methodologies, such as trials and hunts for witchcraft and magic or superstition. At the height of the witchcraft trials – from around 1660 to 1700 – the formally accusatorial Swedish system was gradually transforming into a more inquisitorial one, as officials and vicars adopted the role of public prosecution and the characteristics of the older system started to lose their importance. The *talion* principle – that individuals who brought but failed to prove charges risked the same punishments their opponents would have suffered, had the charges been proven against them – was used increasingly rarely, and the punishments were no longer the same; they were usually turned into small fines. Group testimonies, like the water or fire ordeals, or the group oath – that is, systems where the community, be it kin, village, or parish, was given a chance to assess whether they thought the accused person was to be punished or not – were legally abandoned by 1695, and assessment of formal evidence instead of reputation by an educated judge from outside the community was given increasing weight.<sup>21</sup>

The courts at the end of the seventeenth century in Finland worked with a mixture of medieval town laws – compiled by Magnus Ericksson in the mid-fourteenth century – rural laws – compiled by Christopher

the Bavarian in the mid-fifteenth century – and a range of more recent ordinances, verdicts, and statutes subsequently issued by the crown. In 1608, the King had also declared that the Mosaic law of the Bible was to be followed in the law courts of the realm, although it never gained an equal footing with the law of Christopher the Bavarian in Finnish rural courts.<sup>22</sup> Legal codification was therefore both old and fragmented. Moreover, customary law and tradition was also used. As a result, judicial praxis did not always follow the law – or any of the different law codes – as such, but it strove for the transparency, predictability, and verifiability that the Court of Appeal demanded.<sup>23</sup>

All the proceedings of the lower courts were eventually reviewed by the Court of Appeal. During the seventeenth century, there was only one court of appeal in the whole of Finland, in Turku (from 1623 onwards). The court records that historians use today were, in fact, mostly created for the Court of Appeal of Turku to read and review. Each town, and, in the rural areas, each district parish, held a session three times a year. If something highly unusual or urgent occurred, an extraordinary session would be organized. Witchcraft was rarely thought of as urgent enough to warrant such trouble; the extraordinary sessions were organized for crimes such as murder, infanticide, suicide, major theft, and disobedience or rebellion against the authorities. At the end of the year, the records from all sessions in the jurisdiction of each judge were compiled, edited, reviewed, and signed by the judge and most often the scribe – and they were then sent to the Court of Appeal. Cases of witchcraft and religious error, among all other crimes that could possibly carry the death penalty, were reviewed in the Court of Appeal before the sentence – whatever it might be – was carried out. Very often, the Court of Appeal changed sentences during its review, often showing greater leniency. Both the lower courts and the courts of appeal were legally bound to act rigorously according to the letter of the law, but the courts of appeal across the Kingdom of Sweden started to soften sentences fairly early in the seventeenth century. By the 1660s, the lower courts followed their lead, and they handed out a wider range of punishments than before that were often more lenient. Still, when the lower courts used harsh punishments, such as the death penalty, imprisonment, or very heavy fines for witchcraft, the courts of appeal often showed some form of clemency.<sup>24</sup>

It is still debated how far the court records can be taken to represent either the ‘populace’s’ voice or any historical truth whatsoever. To take some of the best-known examples, Norman Cohn<sup>25</sup> emphasized the influence of the Inquisition and traditional theories of treason on

the formulation of confessions and testimony. Stuart Clark<sup>26</sup> likewise considers it almost impossible to draw any conclusions on what the accused peasant witches thought about the Witches' Sabbath. Theories of the Sabbath were produced by the elites and then imposed on the people involved in the trials, constructing a kind of formula to which the accused and the witnesses had to conform. Clark's material does indeed obediently echo the elite theories, but not all witchcraft trials do so. In Finland not all trials were exclusively driven by the elite: accusations that sprang up between neighbours – especially when they had no connection to the Witches' Sabbath – seem to reflect popular worldviews as extensively as the views of the elite. Nevertheless, Lyndal Roper<sup>27</sup> has read the Augsburg magistrates' records as 'forced discourses' that the accused would not have used had they not been under threat of torture.

A very different kind of reading – of a different kind of material – has been made by Natalie Zemon Davis<sup>28</sup> on French pardon tales, which she claims provide insight into the people's mental world, although their factual content may be more obscure. Carlo Ginzburg<sup>29</sup> goes even further and operates largely on the assumption that the suspects consciously told and phrased their own stories, describing how they saw matters. Some more recent scholars, like Diane Purkiss<sup>30</sup> and Marion Gibson,<sup>31</sup> or those from a more social-historical point of view, like William Monter<sup>32</sup> and Brian Levack,<sup>33</sup> have pointed out that the stories were 'negotiated' between the questioner and the accused, and coauthored by the judge, the accused, the interrogator, and the scribe – and in the case of pamphlet literature, the author and his financier.

The Finnish and Swedish early modern judicial system was one based on interaction in the local community, on the one hand, and that between different governmental and jurisdictional levels, on the other. At the lowest level, in the rural district courts and town magistrate's courts, the participants were summoned to tell their stories in person. The hearings were normally oral, face-to-face, public events, although written testimonies and contracts were also used. Present along with the plaintiffs, defendants, and witnesses was also a varied crowd of local people; this group could offer additional information and affect the outcome of the trial. Anonymous accusations that characterize some European trials were simply not heard.

The officials included the judge, the scribe, and a jury. The judge and the scribe were not locals, but represented a higher level of learning and the central government. The jury, however, was composed of prominent locals. Unlike juries today, the rural and town magistrate's jurors

were expected to act as local experts providing information, delivering summonses, negotiating settlements, and verifying damages, payments, or borders. The judge and jury passed the sentence together, although the judge's influence on it grew markedly towards the end of the seventeenth century. Educated judges might sometimes hire a substitute law reader to act in their stead, but this was less common than office-hiring elsewhere in Europe.<sup>34</sup>

The populace acted in court as plaintiffs or petitioners, defendants, and witnesses, or as members of the general crowd that was watching, listening, and talking to each other; they could always offer a word in the actual hearing if they thought it necessary. The trials were always public, and the authorities in court were the judge and the scribe, aided by the vicar and the crown bailiff. Between the authorities and the populace was the jury, which consisted of twelve farmers in the rural courts. The judge and jury of course held tangible power in the court. Nevertheless, the others present could also use the court arena for their own purposes, with equally tangible results in their lives and the lives of their village competitors.

It is generally acknowledged that in the Swedish rural courts, the actors consisted mostly of peasant farmers. Whether they dominated the action or were dominated by other actors has been the subject of debate. Swedish historians have emphasized the active part played by farmers and the 'peasantry' in the countryside and the burghers and craftspeople in the towns<sup>35</sup> whereas many Finnish historians have emphasized that the courts were essentially a tool of control used by the crown on the populace.<sup>36</sup> The part played by the *allmoge* – the landless workers, the elderly, and the poor – has received considerably less attention. Their input, where they have received attention, has been judged to be small. Accordingly, peasant farmers and their wives form the largest social group in all roles in the rural courts of law.

It is clear that the character of the records depends on the character of the court system, and consequently scholars who work on different series of court records in Europe and the New World must read their material differently. The court records of the Finnish witchcraft trials merit a discussion of their character because they show characteristics of all parties in the debate. The Finnish and Swedish court records were produced by relatively free discussions between the parties beforehand and with the judge and jury. They were not forced discourses; there is very rarely torture, even in most of the criminal cases (and in the rural courts even more rarely), although studies in Sweden proper<sup>37</sup> reveal a violent and imposing atmosphere in the panic trials. However, these

panic trials were very unusual compared to the totality of the witchcraft and magic trials in Finland and Sweden. The rest of the cases were thus of the milder sort, where the trials make it possible to study and to some extent distinguish the views of different social groups, be they farmers and burghers or workers and landless people, young or old, uneducated or educated. All hearings and information in the Finnish trials were public and could be confirmed or contradicted by a wide audience. Nevertheless, there is no reason to assume that the members of the populace testified naïvely only what they thought to be true: the participants were competing, and they sought to present themselves in the best light and their opponents in the worst possible light. In other words, they surely lied to their best ability. However, the lies had to be credible. They had to represent a culturally acceptable possible truth, one that the audience could be expected to believe. These culturally shared notions and expectations can be – in the investigation of how people interpreted their religious experience and interaction – much more interesting than what ‘really’ happened in any individual case.

## **The Structure of the Book**

The early modern concepts of magic, superstition, and faith must be understood in relation to each other and to religion, even though many of their expressions were mundane. Magic, religion, and faith were inseparable and interdependent concepts in the early modern period; they were parts of a continuum and overlapping spheres of ideology, thought, and experience. My focus on the overlap of these spheres also provides the focus with which I hope to grasp the experience of the magical and the religious in the early modern world. In doing so, I investigate what each of these concepts tells us about the others. It is not my intention to try to separate religion or faith from magic or superstition, but rather to show how these concepts mutually influenced their formation. I focus on religion and magic as lived and performed social processes, on lay religious practices and experiences, and on their relation to magic and superstition. These concepts are nevertheless set in the context of official church policies and teaching.

This book also offers an analysis of the religious development of lay Lutheranism and lived religion under the influence of Catholicism and the Russian Orthodox faith. Historically, as the eastern part of Sweden – a leading Protestant country – Finland offers a place in historical geography where both western Catholic and eastern Orthodox views overlapped with the heartlands of early modern Lutheranism.

As a consequence, the study of this region offers a fresh approach to studying the characteristics of Lutheranism, and in a study of magic and superstition, it offers a unique platform from which to explore the themes of religious change and otherization.

The remainder of this book is divided into three main chapters and a conclusion.

Chapter 2, the first main chapter, begins with an assessment of the policies of the church in Finland as a part of Sweden's aspiration to Protestant leadership in Europe. From the institutional level, the chapter moves on to look at the consequences of those policies on folk teaching and sermons, which both attacked superstition and created new non-orthodox customs and superstitions. Here historiographical discussion on 'confessionalization' (Reinhard, Schilling) and 'confessional culture' (Kauffman) is used and critiqued from the perspective of cultural history. For the laity, faith manifested itself in many customs that the practitioners considered perfectly Lutheran, but which others considered superstitious.

There seems to have been a clear, mutually exclusive distinction between what was considered proper Christian faith and unorthodox superstition on the one hand, and magic and witchcraft on the other. What was not as clear was whether any one act or deed should be categorized on this or that side of the distinction. The title of a subsection, 'Do I not mention God, too, sometimes?', refers to a defence commonly used by people accused of magic and witchcraft in a court of law. Their argument was that they had been praying; therefore their actions could not be considered magic.

If these testimonies can be thought of as evidence of lived religion and its appearances in daily life, what was that religion like? This chapter takes up the discussion on traditional religiosity (Briggs, Scribner, etc.) and magic, arguing that early modern prayer culture included not only ritualistic repetitions of liturgical prayers – such as the Lord's Prayer or even the credo – but also highly individualized, personal, and situationally changing prayers to which verses were added or left out according to the needs of the time.

Therefore, not only were traditional forms of religion branded magic, but so was a considerable amount of 'modern' religiosity too. By the end of the seventeenth century, the laity abandoned prayer as part of their defence in magic cases in court, claiming that they 'practised no readings', and adopted a more secular rhetoric of skill and diligence instead. Nevertheless, new 'Lutheran superstitions' emerged, such as a custom of religious offerings on special days and in special places. Some of these

places were unofficial sites at home or in the home village, but others were churches further away from home. As such, a custom of Lutheran pilgrimage was created and observed, and it was finally branded superstitious during the eighteenth century.

Chapter 3 deals with 'Catholic Influence and Magic in Finland'. Alongside the Lutheran establishment, there were also evident Catholic influences – especially in western Finland – well into the late seventeenth century. These influences have most often been understood as the survival of medieval Catholic or even pre-Christian traditions in the way originally explored by J. Bossy and J. Delumeau: Catholic influences were therefore both a sign of the slow progress of Christianization and the Reformation, and a set of incoherent, fragmentary, and therefore unimportant pieces of an already lost tradition. This interpretation is reassessed in this chapter.

The chapter connects the fragments of 'popular religion' to provide evidence of definite Counter-Reformation efforts in Finland by Jesuit missionaries and the Catholic-minded King John III. Evidence suggests that the Counter-Reformation effort was more successful in Finland than in Sweden, which may partly be due to the personal influence of the King who, before his accession to the throne, resided in Finland in the very areas where Catholicism seemed strongest. In these areas, an attested Marian rosary cult attracted suspicion and accusations of the use of magic, especially during the first half of the seventeenth century.

Likewise, a number of saints'-day celebrations show a continuation of tradition until the end of the seventeenth century. It seems that these practices remained strong despite being meticulously labelled 'superstitious' and 'magical' by Lutheran authorities. In this chapter, the Marian rosary cult and the celebrations of unsanctioned saints' days are analysed to see who participated in them and what functions or needs they served in the community. The methods of labelling used by the authorities are likewise studied to see how these practices were turned into the superstition of the ignorant instead of either proper forms of religious practice or real religious or political threats. The Catholic influence in 'magic' is thus placed in the context of the Counter-Reformation and Lutheran confessionalism in northern Europe.

Chapter 4 is titled 'Eastern Orthodox Influence and Its Demonization in Finland'. A third major influence on religion, magic, and superstition in Finland was the Russian Orthodox faith, the main religion in the eastern areas annexed by Sweden in 1617. In these areas, religion had for a long time already constituted a clearer and more easily defined

centre of antagonism between the ‘Finnish’ and ‘Russian’ population than the fluid and often porous boundaries of ethnicity and language. A grudging religious tolerance was established at the official level: the Russian Orthodox population was allowed to retain its religion.

The official policy of toleration was nevertheless often accompanied with practical persecution and mob violence in the eastern border areas. The authorities of the Lutheran population treated Orthodox customs and modes of faith as superstition, and some judged these traditions even more harshly, condemning them as devilish. Whereas the Catholic influence in western Finland was treated as superstition – although potentially magical ignorance – the condemnation of Russian Orthodox religious customs extended further: they were actually demonized.

Court cases reveal a range of stereotypes for persecution narratives, like those described by Norman Cohn or Alexandra Walsham. They tell of violent orgies organized by Russian Orthodox villagers where Jesus was mocked and denied and forest spirits worshipped instead. These stories resemble stereotypical narratives describing Witches’ Sabbaths, except here the festival takes place in this world and the Devil is replaced with forest spirits and the ancestors of the participants. Lutheran magic at gravesites, burial grounds, and special trees named after ancestors also seemed to increase. Combined with occasional explorative reference to western Finland, this chapter thus describes the religious atmosphere and its development in the eastern borderland of Lutheranism.

The concluding Chapter 5 highlights the central themes of the previous chapters and draws them together within the context of European research on the Long Reformation and Lutheran confessionalism. I argue that the Finnish concept of magic was formed by competing religious ideologies despite the supposedly established character of Finland as a part of the Lutheran heartland. I also argue that the concepts of magic and ‘superstitious’ customs – as well as the trials against them in courts of law – were a result of religious coexistence and new influences rather than mere remnants of older traditions. This book reconnects the study of religious history with the history of magic and witchcraft after many years of separation. For a long time, it was concluded that the Protestant and Catholic authorities were equal in condemning various customs as superstition, in persecuting witches, and in creating new religious rituals to replace the condemned ones. More recently, for obvious reasons, in today’s society, religious divisions in Europe have regained a place in the historical explanations of persecution and integration. As such, I hope this book offers the reader some timely insights.

# 2

## Lived Lutheranism and the Development of Superstition

### **Religion and Magic in the Confessional Era**

In pre-Enlightenment culture, and in early modern Finland for the learned at least, the universe seemed to be organized along Neoplatonic polar opposites: there was good and evil, God and the Devil. Theoretically and theologically, faith and magic also formed such a pair, with faith attributed to God and magic linked with the Devil. However, at the level of lay religion, people seem to have lived out the concepts of faith and magic on a continuum rather than as clearly separated binary opposites. While it was clear to the laity that faith and magic derived their power from opposite ends of the spectrum – and that faith was expected and magic was forbidden from use – it was always debateable whether the ritual, act, or word belonged to one category or the other. Furthermore, the categories were not necessarily mutually exclusive: a witch who had made a pact with the Devil could well continue to pray to God, too.<sup>1</sup> The interdependency of the concepts of magic (or, indeed, witchcraft, superstition, or even heresy) and religion or faith has been quite clear to scholars of early modern history. Historians have generally connected witch-hunts and the suppression of popular magic with the attempts of official religion to discipline the populace and control lay religious practices.<sup>2</sup>

During the seventeenth-century period of confessionalization, the church was considerably aided in its disciplinary efforts – and usually also pressed into action – by the emergent state. The church and the state mutually supported and enhanced each other's processes, and, in doing so, made the cultures within the religious and political territories more uniform. While historians have not considered the elite powers – namely the church and the state – as directly initiating court

trials and inquisitions against magic, superstition, witchcraft, and other religious errors, they have nevertheless thought that these elites shared some responsibility: after all, through education, preaching, and cultural example, they made it possible for the populace to believe in and initiate action against witches, cunning people, and members of other religious sects and denominations.

Lutheran orthodoxy and confessionalism have been accorded enormous importance in research into the history of seventeenth-century Sweden, and almost as much in the history of northern Europe of the time before the age of Pietism. Orthodoxy and confessionalism have been treated as the most important tools for supporting the power of the sovereign king and of enabling Sweden's rise to great power in Europe. Historians claim that Lutheran orthodox teaching cemented early modern authority, ranging from the position of the king to the role of the father in the peasant household, and it justified warfare and tax collection. Catechism teaching unified the country's culture and mentality. In general, the historiography presents a picture of the religious background similar to German authors on confessionalization – but it is mainly as the background to other historical phenomena that religion is treated, not as a subject of its own.<sup>3</sup>

In 1958, Ernst Walter Zeeden suggested that in the second half of the sixteenth century, Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Calvinism started to build modern, clearly defined confessional state churches, each of which centred on a confession of faith. Zeeden called the process *Konfessionsbildung*. Zeeden's approach was mainly from the perspective of the state and sovereign power. German historians Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling further developed the concept into one of confessionalization (*Konfessionalisierung*) to include perspectives from the social or cultural history movements and the modernization theory current in 1970s and 1980s historiography. By engaging in confessionalizing policies, the state gained control not only over the church; it was also able to foster a national or territorial identity, and – above all – to discipline its subjects. The unintended result of this process was a modernization of society as a whole.<sup>4</sup>

The confessionalization paradigm has been criticized from several angles during the past three decades, especially because of its focus on statebuilding and the top-down processes of political and religious institutional imposition. The confessionalization paradigm has also been criticized because of its aim. Investigating similarities in the development that both Protestant and Catholic states and churches went through has required a level of generalization that leaves aside the

very things that were crucial to contemporaries – namely the specific characteristics that distinguished the confessional churches in theology: piety and spirituality, as well as lived religion in its many shapes and forms. This criticism has recently led to further modification of the concepts of *Konfessionsbildung* and *Konfessionalizierung*: ‘confessional cultures’, as first suggested by Thomas Kaufmann, has gained wide traction among German, Danish, and Norwegian cultural and church historians. There have been an increasing number of studies on, for example, the visual and ritual aspects of confessional cultures and on space as a new category for the exploration of confessional differences.<sup>5</sup>

On a non-elite and non-theological level, confessionalization appears to have been a coercive form of religion, where ‘correct’ ideas were imposed from above and unwanted ideas were suppressed in an equally top-down process of cultural and social discipline. At the same time, historians of popular culture and popular religion have concluded that the populace never quite accepted what it was being taught, and that the religious culture remained very traditional and medieval, if not pagan and animistic. The Reformation failed in its aim to replace deed-oriented, ritualistic, and communalist medieval religion with a more modern, internalized spiritual relationship between the individual and the Divine. The period of religious orthodoxy and confessionalization that followed the initial Reformation is usually seen as a period of intellectual and cultural stagnation, when new and fresh thinking was thought of as dangerous and which therefore failed to inspire faith or theology. Popular religious teaching – *pace* its importance in Reformation rhetoric and in real educational work – was eventually sloppy, authoritarian, and ineffective, resulting in the survival of a range of medieval and pagan superstitions. It was only with the rise of Pietism during the latter half of the seventeenth century that real Protestantism reached the populace and the parish clergy.<sup>6</sup>

This collection of historiographical clichés seems rather paradoxical. My intention in this chapter is to look beyond the well-worn questions of differences between elite and popular religious ideas and rather to look at the application of theology and politics in people’s everyday lives, with the idea that there was a constant communication between theology and politics, albeit not always outspoken. Lay religious life influenced Lutheranism just as much as theologians and politicians. In doing so, the lay people also influenced concepts of magic and superstition. Below, I will look at the interdependency of religious ideas and the understanding of magic and superstition from different perspectives. First, I will discuss the development of church policies and ‘aims’, and

thereafter examine how the aims of the policies were put into practice in parish work from the perspective of popular teaching. After this, I will turn towards religious experience, and the way in which the laity lived out their concepts of faith and magic in the context of seventeenth-century Lutheranism in Finland.

### **Church Policies in Finland as Part of Sweden's Aspiration to Protestant Leadership**

In Sweden and Finland, the term confessionalization and its derivatives have been less in use. This is partly because the timing of the German concept is not a perfect fit: although one can see the central characteristic of intertwined confessionalization and statebuilding very early on in Sweden – ever since the Diet in Västerås 1527, when the king was made the head of the church<sup>7</sup> – the period is usually thought to have begun in Sweden only after 1670 (with the slow introduction of the Formula of Concord to Sweden, or even after the 1593 Convention of Uppsala) – at the very point when it started to ebb in German areas – and it continued long afterwards, until the end of the following century.<sup>8</sup> Otfried Czaika also points out considerable differences between Swedish and German confessionalization. In Sweden, confessionalization was driven by the crown and the king, and the result was a more uniform Lutheranism – although this was what he terms a *Minimalbekenntnis*, a confession with minimal definition, based on the Augsburg Confession in order to include Protestantism as widely as possible. In German areas, the different cities and principalities made different choices and consequently Calvinist and Catholic churches also had official status. Nevertheless, whereas in Sweden the religious culture was more uniformly Lutheran, the language situation was more varied than in the German areas: the languages of church orders, the vernaculars of the Bible and the liturgies, and so forth, had to be created not only in Swedish, but also in Finnish, German, Estonian, Livonian, and Latvian. Cultural uniformity was far from complete, and this had its effect on the religious climate and the ways of living out religion.<sup>9</sup>

Although the confessional guidelines of the Swedish Church were drawn up at the Church Council of Uppsala in 1593, they were still vaguely defined.<sup>10</sup> The Red Liturgy not only bound the church in Sweden – and especially in Finland – more tightly to old Catholic rituals, it also led into liturgical debates and even strife within the church, with some clergy defending the old ceremonies as an essential part of the Lutheran identity against Calvinism, while others feared that the

old ceremonies would take Sweden too close to Catholicism again. These debates grew louder as the time approached for John III's son – the Polish and practising Catholic Sigismund – to take the throne. Consequently, the perceived threat of Catholicism acquired temporarily a stronger hold in Swedish thinking on liturgical questions than it did among the other European Lutherans.<sup>11</sup>

The Convention of Uppsala condemned Calvinism just as harshly as it condemned the 'papists' and the more radical spiritualist wings of the Reformation. Although the convention was probably influenced by the Formula of Concord in this, the convention's authors nevertheless did not consider including it entirely in the Swedish credo: as in Denmark, the Swedish clergy eventually found the Augsburg Confession a sufficient basis for unity among Lutherans. The Swedish approach was further highly defined after the Diet of Örebro in 1617, obviously because of political reasons – namely animosity with Poland and its king, Sigismund, who had been deposed as king of Sweden in 1599.<sup>12</sup>

The Formula of Concord led to trouble even in many countries that were uniformly Protestant and even formally Lutheran. This trouble was often economic. For example, Margrave Georg Friedrich tried to expel all Anabaptists and Calvinists from Prussia. Since the Dutch craftspeople were essential to the country's economy, enacting this policy soon turned out to be impossible. Similar reasons stopped many of North Europe's merchant cities – like Nuremberg and Altdorf, or the Prussian Danzig – from adopting the Formula of Concord.<sup>13</sup> In the eastern part of northern Europe, the situation was even more compelling for policies of toleration: Siegburg and Poland settled on the intermittent legal coexistence of Lutheranism, Calvinism, Roman Catholicism, and Unitarianism. At the same time, in many of the eastern countries, the Slavic population identified with either Calvinism or Roman Catholicism, turning religion into an ethnic signifier to distinguish themselves from the German and Livonian populations.<sup>14</sup> In the cities and countries dominated by the Holy Roman Empire, of course, the Formula of Concord could not be accepted, even though in some areas religious freedom was substantial. The result was that the Formula of Concord never gained the influence in Lutheranism that it was intended to have. Lutheranism, therefore, remained internally unstable and factious.<sup>15</sup>

As the relationship between Lutheranism and Calvinism deteriorated rapidly due to the many political and denominational turnabouts in German states during the latter half of the sixteenth century, theological confessionalism in Sweden centred on questions of ceremony. The

Lutherans had kept many of the old Catholic ceremonies, the sanctity of the church, the clothing of the priests during the celebration of mass, and the elevation of the host, for example. Medieval church spaces were adopted for use by Lutherans largely as they were, without any great changes of the kind that took place in Calvinist iconoclasm. Calvinists demanded the Reformation be carried out 'in full', not just half way, as the Lutherans had done. They demanded the 'second Reformation' to be carried out in the north as it was in Switzerland. For Lutherans, the question of ceremonies was, rhetorically, 'adiaphoron' – something one could choose to do or not do because it was neither commanded nor forbidden in the Bible. Nevertheless, the customs in question were not indifferent to Lutherans, at least not in Sweden. They became markers of Lutheran identity exactly because they were so harshly condemned by Calvinists. The ceremonies were an integral part of marking out the Lutheran relationship to the sacred – indeed, the existence of sacred, since many Swedes even hinted that the Calvinists were atheists – and thereby Lutheran identity.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the differences of opinion between European Lutherans and Calvinists culminated in debate around the Eucharist. Unanimity was close with Roman Catholicism, rather than Calvinism – though it was ultimately unattainable with both. The real point of theological disagreement – justification was the bone of contention – was touched on in comparatively little detail, and in general the controversial polemics between Lutheranism and Catholicism were weak before the Thirty Years War.<sup>16</sup>

In Sweden, the Convention of Uppsala in 1593 resolved some symbolically important omissions from the liturgy, such as the elevation of the host, the use of salt and candles in baptisms, and some rites in the mass. The result satisfied few, however. For those leaning towards Calvinism, the convention did not go far enough. For traditionalists, it went too far. In the following years, Duke Charles continued to demand the clearing away of the old ceremonies on the grounds that it was the decision of the Convention of Uppsala to abandon them. This was of course a convenient part of Charles's political agenda: he presented himself as the protector of the true Swedish, Lutheran Church against the Catholic Sigismund, but it also suggests that the clergy was fairly slow in putting the decisions made at Uppsala into action.<sup>17</sup>

Finland is a case in point here. The Bishop of Turku was Ericus Erici Sorolainen, who had previously strongly defended John III's Catholic-leaning Red Liturgy. His loyalties were, according to recent church historians, rather to his colleagues in the church than to the king who

had ordered the liturgy. There have been different interpretations as to how strongly he supported the Convention of Uppsala decisions and whether he only accepted them as a collegial decision. He did, however, end up in a situation where he had to defend the decisions against the more radical clergy, the policies of Duke Charles – who wanted to do away with all the old church ceremonies – and the political establishment in Finland. The figurehead of the latter was the leading Finnish nobleman, Klaus Fleming, whose political and religious loyalties were to the legal king, the Catholic Sigismund. Fleming issued a memorandum addressed against Sorolainen in which he defended the ceremonies that the Convention of Uppsala had ordered to be dismissed. Placing himself in the current political competition in Finland and Sweden, Fleming defended the old Catholic ceremonies by using the threat of Calvinism: elevation, he said, was a good way to honour God and a way to repel Calvinist heresies that stated the communion was merely commemorative. The ceremonial clothes, likewise, were a way to honour God and to make a social distinction between the worldly and clerical estates, ‘for there is a difference between a Swiss Landsknecht and a Man serving the Word of God’. Fleming’s ideas were intertwined with the political situation and his place – and the Finnish nobility’s place – in the struggle between King Sigismund and Duke Charles. Fleming was choosing tradition over Calvinism for the reason that it also symbolized Sigismund and Polish support against the east instead of Charles. Nevertheless, Fleming, like many others of the highest Swedish nobility, was well versed in theology as well as the military arts.<sup>18</sup> The Bishop of Turku and therefore the church in Finland was torn between conflicting interests, even more so than the church in Sweden proper. As the balance of power tipped suddenly with the death of Klaus Fleming, the dethroning of Sigismund, and the accession of Charles in Sweden, political powers now began to press for the ‘continuation’ of the Reformation by dismissing the rest of the liturgical ceremonies. The clergy in Sweden and Finland, however, were not willing to go quite that far towards Calvinism; they managed, with great effort, to maintain their unity. They were aided in this by Sweden’s changing foreign policy and the influence of the Thirty Years War.<sup>19</sup>

The Thirty Years War clarified circumstances for Swedish politics and for the church and the clergy. As Sweden aspired to present itself as the leader of Protestants, it had to present a roughly general Protestant position that would not cause problems for any of the Protestant league’s allies. Conversely, as Sweden’s military efforts were largely funded by French loans, there was reason not to adopt any radical Protestant

rhetoric. In the middle of the century, as the peace of the Thirty Years War ended, there was a need to steer clear of the fractions between different Protestantisms, so the trend once again turned further away from radical Protestantism, and Calvinism with it. Only slightly later, the Counter-Reformation achieved its most prominent success and, simultaneously, its conclusion with the abdication and conversion of Queen Christina.<sup>20</sup> The course open to the Swedish Church was a strict and compulsory orthodox Lutheranism, a form of confessionalism only slightly moderated by the Calvinist upbringing and education of Charles X. In Finland, the struggle against Calvinism culminated in the dismissal from office of the Bishop of Turku, Johannes Terserus,<sup>21</sup> and the appointment of Johannes Gezelius Sr in his place. Terserus had been an irenic, and had proposed the abandonment of exorcism from baptism because it was one of the things that most irritated the Calvinists.<sup>22</sup> Gezelius was also an irenic to begin with, but in the Finnish historiography he has come to be considered the most forceful and thorough orthodox Lutheran confessionalizer of the seventeenth century. For both bishops, and for the whole Church of Sweden during the latter half of the century, the influence of Catholicism was a thing of the past. It was no longer a threat, and Lutheranism was now defined against Calvinism.

To summarize, the church and religious policies in Sweden changed according to the state's foreign policy and the internal situation. Gustav I had left the Reformation to the churchmen, but his sons had had a broader education and therefore took a more active interest in church policies. Erik XIV cherished Calvinist hopes for further reform, while John III's political and irenic tendencies led him to seek friendship from Catholic Poland. This situation changed once again with the ascension of Charles IX, but soon the wars of religion in Germany – and Sweden's own aspirations – forced Sweden to stay on a generally Lutheran path. The Peace of Westphalia, in the middle of the century, allowed a clearer, confessionalist and orthodox Lutheran church policy to develop: the Formula of Concord – that is, the line of contestation between general Protestantism as in the Augsburg Confession and more hard-line orthodox Protestantism – finally came to dominate Swedish church policy and official theology. The nature of this confessionalist Lutheran orthodoxy was now defined against Calvinism rather than against Roman Catholicism.

Current studies on the religious climate in Scandinavia and Finland have tended to compare seventeenth-century Lutheranism to medieval Catholicism in order to see how well the Reformation had succeeded.

The usual conclusion arrived at is that the efforts of the Reformation had not reached very far, and indeed genuine Christianity had not penetrated deeply. Such conclusions can be traced through Robert Scribner's work back to the work by John Bossy and Jean Delumeau. Early modern religiosity in Finland and Sweden was still 'traditional': it was a profoundly communal, ritualistic, deed-oriented bargaining religion, instead of the more intellectual, individual, and internalized spirituality that historians have understood the Reformation to have aimed at. This is evidenced by the ample number of sacramentalist rituals and acts of magic performed by the people, with and without the approval of the clergy, which itself was only beginning to receive a better education.<sup>23</sup> In light of the above, I question whether this is the correct point of reference. Protestantism was different in France and Britain: it had a Swiss origin and a Calvinist nature. It was devoid of ceremony and, to have any effect, it had to be internalized and individual, although it has been debated whether this is the reason for secularization; its rationality failed to create the necessary individual feeling. In Sweden and Finland, however, the dominant religion was Lutheranism, whose character was different. Reformation-period Lutheranism up until the emergence of Pietism was a traditionalist, conservative religion by character; it did not forget the communal when it strove for the individual. Its success or failure cannot, therefore, be measured in how traditionalist and 'medieval' or modern the religiosity of its time really was.

### **Sacramentalism and the Conservative Nature of Lutheranism**

The conservative nature of Lutheranism can be demonstrated by its sacramentalist nature. The premodern sacred is said to have manifested itself in material things, in objects like relics, images, and, eventually, the Bible and the Eucharist, or in places like shrines, altars, and churches. This was manifested in numerous late medieval miracle stories involving Eucharist vessels, which were told and circulated in order to strengthen faith in transubstantiation, and thus in the corporeal, real presence of Christ in the sacrament. It was this materialism of the sacred that many of the reformers attacked. The spiritual and the material – or the spiritual and physical efficacy – were far too intertwined.<sup>24</sup>

Some customs had been branded superstitious long before the Reformation, but the church and theology were committed to a sacramentalist view of religion, which, in fact, made it impossible to draw a clear line between magic and faith or religion. Scholars often claim

that the Reformation consisted of an effort to break the fluid continuity of the sacred and the profane, and to place them in opposition to one another – to create the kind of understanding of the sacred of which Durkheim would have approved.<sup>25</sup> Many reformers spent much time and effort to demonstrate the immateriality of the sacred, and they encouraged mobs to destroy the sacred objects and places of the other denominations. Most of the violence was performed in conflict against the Roman Catholics and either the Reformed or other radical sects, but Lutheran iconoclasms did take place, for example in Estonian coastal areas in 1524–29.<sup>26</sup>

There were no iconoclasms or other major violent events in the Finnish Reformation. This has been considered proof of both the relatively smooth acceptance of the Reformation and of the slow practical progress of the process – and perhaps of the lack of an organized bureaucracy to scribble down source material for later historians. It was only in the 1680s that Bishop Gezelius ordered the old murals to be whitewashed according to the example of the Västerås district. The orders were not definitive and they were carried out in only some parishes, since the principle was, as expressed in the church-law proposal by Bishop Laurelius, that 'beautiful' images should be allowed, but those provoking superstition should be removed.<sup>27</sup> It seems Finland lacked the sort of religious fervour and hatred against other denominations that could have led to mob violence and iconoclasm.<sup>28</sup> The problem with this interpretation, however, is that in most Lutheran areas the medieval churches were adopted for use without any major changes in their appearance. This could have been done as an attempt to not court trouble with powerful figures nearby who adhered to other religions, and – at least during the latter half of the sixteenth century – out of respect for artistic values. Nevertheless, it was also a part of an inherent social and theological conservatism and moderation that was important for Lutheran identity.<sup>29</sup> Iconoclasms in general were rare in Lutheran areas, therefore the lack of iconoclasm in Finland as such tells very little about the speed of, the support for, or the resistance to the Reformation in Finland. Such questions need other kinds of proof.

Some change in the attitudes towards the sacred can, however, be discerned: the number of sacramental objects were reduced and they became plainer in both Finland and Sweden. This took place not as mob violence but as the organized and orderly topdown process of the confiscation of church property by Gustav I – the tithe reduction in the 1540s and the silver taxes imposed on the church in the 1550s – plus the later Älvborg ransom tax levied by John III in the 1570s, which was

apparently met with little resistance by the church, and only by slightly more resistance by the populace in Finland, although there were open revolts in Sweden proper.<sup>30</sup> While it may be slightly farfetched to call this confiscation organized iconoclasm, it shows that the understanding of the sacred had changed. The property of the church, including silver chalices and hosts, was no longer understood as sacred as such, but as objects and decoration first and foremost. Therefore, the crown could claim them, and the church could relinquish them to be melted down and used for more important purposes, as the sermon of Bishop Laurentius Andreæ explained. Nevertheless, this reduction in the wealth and splendour in church interiors was far from complete: while silver and gold chalices and other objects of financial worth were taken and reused, religious art, murals, and sculptures – even relics, although the reliquaries may have been confiscated – were usually left intact. The first altarpieces were changed in the 1630s, and even then this was not a frequent procedure.<sup>31</sup>

In principle, Luther had held that a church or a place of worship did not need to be consecrated, and that a service to God could be conducted anywhere: a sacred place was where the word of God was faithfully preached; a yard served just as well as a dedicated building. In practice, however, Luther and the Lutheran clergy recognized that a functional congregation needed suitable, specially appointed rooms. Luther also emphasized the communal service: an orderly, public, reverent assembly, in a properly appointed place: 'one cannot and should not appoint a special place and location for each individual and one should not seek out secret corners to hide away, as the Anabaptists do'.<sup>32</sup> It was not merely a matter of practicality, either – although the pragmatics of sufficiently large rooms were clear – but also a matter of efficacy: prayer was stronger and more likely to be heard when a congregation prayed together. Moreover, the church and the church interior should create a solemn atmosphere. A church must be recognizable as such, and should create the proper state of mind with altars, candles, and images.

Some of the pre-Reformation statues and altarpieces were taken down because the local authorities considered them a potential risk for idolatry, but they were usually replaced with new images of biblical events, the reformers, and Lutheran catechetical emblems. They were thought to have great didactic value, but also spiritual value in creating appropriate thoughts and feelings, sometimes even an experience of a connection with the sacred. The Lutheran church room therefore was a visually rich and traditional place.<sup>33</sup>

Of course, visual continuity does not mean that the use of that space did not change. Many of the customs that had marked and articulated the hierarchies of sacredness within and without the churches – processions, kneeling, the lighting of candles, and decoration during holy days – were at least partly discontinued. In Sweden and Finland, however, even this was imperfect: the church ordinances did not wholly drop the use of candles or the elevation of the host.<sup>34</sup> Apparently, processions were still carried out in places. Eamon Duffy claims, on the basis of English religious life, that the deeds and actions that surrounded traditional piety were essential to it, and that when the deeds were taken away, the cult itself started to disappear. Objects and images 'dwindled from presences to not much more than furniture'.<sup>35</sup> On the basis of Finnish Lutheran religious life, I claim that the deeds and the markers of the sacred were not taken away, and therefore the objects did not turn into mere furniture; they retained a sacramental quality not only for the populace but also for the clergy, who still valued a lived experience of religion and faith. This is a typical example of the conservative nature of northern Lutheranism before Pietism.

It is likely that the extent to which the Finnish parish clergy were willing to embrace the many Catholic customs they thought necessary was a reflection of this attitude rather than a failure of the Reformation in general. Neither the Reformation in Finland, nor the church or the clergy, failed because they did not aim. Bishop Gezelius Sr warned against causing trouble by trying to suppress old customs if they were not absolutely anathema. The conservative nature was also a good fit with the pragmatic tolerance necessary in many German areas<sup>36</sup> and it reflected Gezelius's own experiences in Livonia. Laasonen maintains that this was a necessity for the populace, but the clergy nevertheless seems to have consciously taken part in this conservatism. Similar discussions did take place in Finland, too: parishioners opposed the omission of the elevation of the host and other cultic customs that they felt important.<sup>37</sup>

### **Lay Teaching and the Toleration of Superstition and Magic**

The architects of the Reformation had already pronounced that every lay person should be able to not only read the Bible but also to understand its contents. For this reason, catechism teaching and sermon preaching were important elements to be developed. In Finland, the importance of sermons was greatly enhanced at the beginning of the

seventeenth century when Ericus Erici Sorolainen published the first model sermon collection, the *Postilla*, in two volumes between 1622 and 1624. During the rest of the century, the importance of the sermon only grew with the strengthening of Lutheran orthodoxy. Two bishops of Turku, Rothovius and Gezelius Sr, regularly wrote model sermons for prayer days<sup>38</sup> to be circulated among the clergy. The purpose was not that the model sermons should be preached as such; rather, they introduced the biblical text, its proper explanation, and some of its possible applications that could be further applied to local needs.

Preaching was always important, although it is possible that not every Sunday service included a sermon. Preaching was especially important during holy days like Easter and Christmas, and during prayer days, which were held a few times a year to ask for God's forgiveness and to beg protection for the realm and its inhabitants in the advent of some special event. According to the church ordinances, sermons were supposed to be simple and understandable, and it seems that the model sermons stayed that way even in the latter half of the seventeenth century, when elaborate baroque preaching was fashionable elsewhere in Europe. The Old Testament texts seem to dominate the sermon material. This was not merely an expression of the emphasis on law and sin, but was also of the communal character of preaching. The sermon was supposed to touch on the social and communal issues of the locality and the realm, the latter of which connected especially with the hierarchical and military ideas of the Old Testament. Even though the sermon and its form remained fairly simple, elaborate baroque rituals grew around it during the latter half of the seventeenth century, with multiple hymns sung as preparation. As the epicletic preparation of the sermon grew more and more like that before the Eucharist, it also gave the sermon a sacramental gloss.<sup>39</sup> The order in the church manuals was not uniformly followed, and in some parishes the practice was simpler than in others.<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, the importance of the sermon grew on two levels: it was not only an instrument of teaching, but also a medium of faith and a ritual among the larger set of rituals formed by the church service.

In order to understand the connection of church teaching to the development of ideas of magic and superstition, it is not necessary to go through the whole apparatus of church teaching; it suffices to look at what the sermons in Sorolainen's *Postilla* say about superstition. Sorolainen started to write the *Postilla* shortly after the Convention of Uppsala (1596), although he carried out most of the work during the 1610s. At the time he began his work, Sorolainen was in a problematic

situation because he had supported the Catholic-leaning Red Liturgy of King John III before the Convention of Uppsala. The express purpose of the Convention of Uppsala had been to 'prevent the spread of Catholicism, to disclaim the Liturgy of King John III' and to define the *Confessio Fidei* of the Lutheran Church in Sweden. After the Club war, Duke Charles saw 'papist' influence everywhere, and he had had Sorolainen and a number of other Finnish clergy arrested and brought to Uppsala for investigation. Charles treated the arrested clergy as if they had already been dismissed from office, and suggested a new clergy instead. The Diet of Linköping acquitted the clergymen, Sorolainen included, but they were condemned at the Convention of Uppsala and had had to recant and apologize. In addition Sorolainen had to pay a fine of 1000 thalers for his previous actions. Sorolainen had also been among those who opposed Calvinist influences, for which Duke (and later King) Charles was pressing. Here he agreed with most of the Swedish clergy, but the very success of the clergy placed him and other public speakers in political disfavour. It is possible that in this situation the purpose of the *Postilla* was in part to make his positions clear and established.<sup>41</sup>

The compilation begins rather ostentatiously with an admonition that it should not be used as an excuse for not going to church to hear a proper sermon given by a minister, but that it could be used for preparation to enter into the proper state of mind for going to church or for meditation after the ceremony – in short, the *Postilla* claims to be intended for use by lay people. However, in reality not many lay people could afford to buy it or invest their time reading its 2500 pages. The *Postilla* was actually meant to be a collection of model sermons to be used and applied in the sermons written by the parish priests for their own parishes. The *Postilla* is a learned work, as was Ericus Erici's own catechism compilation<sup>42</sup> a few years earlier, but it lacks the tangible simplicity of presentation possessed by this earlier work. However, when the university students and parish ministers did read the book, they also spread its ideas in their own sermons, which were held in the more remote rural areas of early seventeenthcentury Finland.

The *Postilla* discusses at various points – at length, but not always in detail – the contrasts between the Lutheran faith and service and what Sorolainen called false practices. For him, the most important forms of superstition – and magic with it – were the competing religions, Calvinism and Catholicism. In the preface of the *Postilla*, in its justification, Sorolainen also mentions 'the pagan ways of the past', but these do not seem all that important. Indeed, he gives no details, but only

mentions some pagan gods in a way that suggests he had been reading Mikael Agricola's Psalter, a hymn book where a similar but longer list of supposedly pagan deities appeared, and Sorolainen appears to have copied it not so much because it interested him or that he thought it important, but rather because it was the common thing to do.<sup>43</sup>

The position of Catholicism, however, figures somewhat more clearly. Already in the dedication to his work, Sorolainen describes Catholic ceremonies in detail, condemning some of them at length and referring to the Pope as Baal. He dismisses Catholicism as a hollow cult of deeds and rituals, where thoughts can be far away from the numerous prayers that the lips may cite. A number of 'papist delusions' are named, among them the elevation of the host, and the use of salt and candles, and the use of rosaries.<sup>44</sup> The text touches little on Catholic dogma, however, only dwelling on the outward practices. The superficial treatment of Catholicism by Sorolainen is therefore in some contrast with the learnedness of the treatment of biblical material and Protestant teaching.

Calvinists are unsurprisingly criticized for trying to rationalize things that only faith can explain, and for the treating the Eucharist as a purely commemorative act. If one should compare the court material either in the church courts or in the lower secular courts with this, there is actually in practice very little material that could be interpreted as Calvinist-influenced superstition.

It is said that Sorolainen's polemic against other confessions – Catholicism and Calvinism – 'remained moderate'. There are, however, other points in which Sorolainen refers to recent development in his sermons. Some of them are directed more to the clergy than the populace. Some even have a sort of apologetic, albeit clearly condemning air. For example, in the sermon on the first Sunday after Christmas, Sorolainen takes the example of the sin of Peter – of denying his God – and compares it to

what has happened in our time, when the Pope's Mass book or Liturgy was imposed on the clergy both in Sweden and Finland, that they should receive it or lose their offices and their bread. And then many hearts were revealed as many received it and many spoke against it.<sup>45</sup>

The Hail Mary and in general the cult of Mary seem to have a special place in Sorolainen's condemnation of Roman Catholicism. This may be because the cult of Mary included suitable, illustrative rituals like the rosary prayer or the Hail Mary that brought tangibility to the futility

of such rituals. It is striking that indulgences are less often spoken in seventeenth-century propaganda – they had been so important at the beginning of the sixteenth century – perhaps because the Bishop did not wish to curb donations now that new Protestant churches were being built and decorated.<sup>46</sup> However, Sorolainen was not alone in attacking the cult of Mary in particular. Mary flourished and various forms of reverence towards her were ridiculed in both popular poetry and clerical propaganda writing. One such poem, which was probably translated into Finnish from a Swedish original, was spread by manuscript by the clergy of Finland; it ridiculed Catholic practices and offered mock advice to a Catholic priest – once again the cult of Mary is accused of being a vessel for outward lip-service. In the beginning of the poem, the Catholic priest, the Priest of Anti-Christ, is given this advice:

Use your office like a man,  
And show that you mean it seriously,  
But first put on the clothes of a sheep,  
And let them cover you down to your feet.

—  
And pope the Anti-Christ, the reverend father  
Was as innocent as a dove and prayed with his mouth  
Like a wolf that lurks for the dog at the gate.  
Christ's sheep will hear your real voice  
And will not come to your side of the bridge,  
For they will hear the wolf under the sheep skin  
And know where it would lead them.<sup>47</sup>

It seems indeed that the attack against Catholicism and Catholic practices in Finland were, at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries, largely embodied in an attack on the usage of rosaries and the cult of Mary.

Sorolainen carefully refrains from any suggestion that the rituals of the Marian cult might actually have any power other than that of taking up time and keeping simple people away from their proper duties. This is different from the Danish context, for example, where, as Louise Kallestrup shows, Catholic practices and the devilish arts were connected in the Protestant writings of Peder Palladius and Niels Hemmingen.<sup>48</sup> There is no suggestion in Sorolainen's works that magic could work in the rituals or that rituals could be successfully used for magical purposes. Sorolainen's was a rationalist discourse in which Catholicism is presented as futile and idolatrous, but not as something

that had the power of the Devil. This changed to an extent when the seventeenth century wore on and confessionalism grew more secure: the Devil entered the arena, yet he was not clearly attached to anything ceremonial or ritual. The attitudes grew more confessionally Lutheran. In his early work *De Angelis*,<sup>49</sup> for example, the Bishop of Turku, Johannes Gezelius Sr, discusses explicitly witchcraft, demonology, spirits, and ghosts and the limits of their power. While Gezelius normally avoids confessional polemics, in this case – in a Latin *oeuvre* to be discussed in a synodal meeting, not meant for a lay or popular audience – Gezelius did find a connection between Catholicism and superstition. There were Devil's arts in popery, which were unhelpful and must be avoided. The papist methods like prayers for the dead, the sacrifice in the Mass, pilgrimage, invoking ghosts, relics or signs of the cross were not useful but only trust in God, prayer in the name of Jesus, an impeccable life, and patience could bring real consolation. This was a theoretical presentation, however. While much of Gezelius's more practical and immediate advice to his clergy in his circular letters condemns Catholicism, it seems to be drawing an implicit line against Calvinism in its content: although Catholicism was a source of superstition, the bishops in the latter part of the century rather defended ceremonies again as an essential part of parish life and popular piety.

This becomes evident in other forms of what might be called official or compulsory lay piety, part of which was the church service. As it was a collective service, with the efficacy of prayer and service growing according to the number of people participating, discipline was important. The orderliness of the service was an essential prerequisite for piety, prayer, and religious understanding. Orderliness was challenged by long services, as different ceremonies from churchings to baptisms and weddings were added to the standard service, so the time in church could last well into the afternoon. Such services could be very tiring, and in one disciplinary hearing from the parish of Vehmaa, a man had snored so loudly that the preacher could not be heard – and when he was woken up, he had made even louder noise, so that the chaplain had had to interrupt his sermon and give him a warning.<sup>50</sup> During such long services people wandered in and out of the church, taking care of other business, talking to people as they gathered together, and, quite often, drinking outside the church. This caused noise and disruption, and also sometimes other problems, such as unpleasant smells during the service. Disciplinary actions were taken in secular courts, although only in the three last decades of the seventeenth century.<sup>51</sup> Twentieth-century research was at times very interested in these stories, and

sometimes they can be amusing. There is, for example, a description from Huittinen in 1684 where a man had left the church during the service – the record does not tell what for – and when he reentered the building, he was described as having about him such an evil smell that the priest had to stop the sermon and the rest of the congregation could only barely stay inside until the end of service.<sup>52</sup> In another story, a soldier vomited so violently that the vomit reached from the church door to the part of the vestibule where the soldiers' weapons were stored.<sup>53</sup> In one case from Pyhämaa church, a drunken man had wrung his hands and moaned, 'O Dear Sir, you preach so well, but I've heard this one before.'<sup>54</sup> The punishments for disrupting the church service varied according to circumstances: it could be high, from 50 silver thalers to imprisonment on bread and water, which was what the Pyhämaa man got – although not only for this case, but because he was known to have been drunk in church numerous other times. The snoring soldier who was mentioned above was only ordered to do church penance and the vomiting one a smaller fine turned into corporal punishment. There were approximately one or two cases per year in Lower Satakunta and Vyborg Karelia; some of them ended up in acquittals as the people who had been coughing, vomiting, or making a disturbance had been proven to be ill.<sup>55</sup> This implies that although disciplinary actions were taken at a fairly low threshold, in the vast majority of church services in all parishes, nothing happened that crossed that threshold. Older research has rather exaggerated the early modern popular irreverence for church services.

In current research, the exact opposite idea seems to gain more prevalence: the lay congregation was rather too reverent towards the church service. For example, Göran Malmstedt shows that the traditional, medieval sacramental attitudes of the populace, who, not satisfied with the plain Protestant rituals, kept adding gestures and repetitions where the official liturgy had none or had too few for their taste. In Sweden proper, parishioners were recorded to have repeated the priest's words before the Eucharist and to have turned and bowed towards the sun when coming down from the altar.<sup>56</sup> The Swedes were punished for their behaviour. In Finland, Bishop Gezelius Sr seems to have taken a slightly more educative approach. The bishop advocated reverence and showing honour to God in pious gestures and ceremonies. For him, the ceremonies had been removed from the services for the purpose of fighting Catholicism; nevertheless, there was no reason to approach Calvinism either. Therefore, the ceremonies could be allowed as a matter of choice. In a Livonian Church order, Gezelius brought back tapers,

consecration bells, and the elevation of the host, pointing out that the 'simple person must beware of the habit of not showing respect when the Holy name of Jesus is spoken, which shows a lack of piety'.<sup>57</sup> Gezelius warned his clergy against causing disturbances in the parishes by trying to abandon 'established customs' that were dear to people if they were not absolutely wrong.<sup>58</sup> Nevertheless, Gezelius also warned against 'papists' when he listed some things that were definitely wrong. Similar concern for the preservation of order can also be found in for example Nuremberg, where the political status quo between Catholicism and Lutheranism was unstable.<sup>59</sup> These related most often to the Eucharist and the use of the oblate bread, and Gezelius emphasized how important it was to make sure that communion wine or bread did not end up in the wrong hands and risk being misused.<sup>60</sup> When misuses of the sacrament come up in relation to magic, they most often pointed in the Catholic direction and the belief in full transubstantiation: if the bread was the body of Christ, it was also an object with an enormous supernatural power in itself, independent of other rituals and actors. There is, however, also at least one instance in the district court records where the lay understanding of the Eucharist seems to have been troublesome because of Calvinist rather than Catholic tendencies. In this case, the bailiff of the royal manor of Kokemäki was quoted to have said, 'Going to the Lord's Supper is nothing but Ritus.' Nevertheless, even though this was enough to get the man taken to court, and the matter was taken seriously enough to fetch several witnesses, it was not enough to convict him; and the matter was eventually handed over to the cathedral chapter without earthly punishment.<sup>61</sup>

### **'Do I not mention God, too, sometimes?' Lived Religion between Prayer and Magic**

In 1676, a widow from Ulvila was accused of using magic and witchcraft in fishing. When her maid testified against her, the widow asked her maid, 'But do I not mention God, too, sometimes?' The maid admitted this, citing the words the widow had used, 'Eyes of salmon, eyes of pike, eyes of all fish, look at my nets in the name of the Father, the Son, etc.' It is clear the widow thought that her words were a godly prayer and offered proof against the accusation of witchcraft. The court, however, apparently interpreted it as a charm, and fined her 'according to her own confessions' the considerable sum of 40 marks.<sup>62</sup>

Similar examples of religious experience and thought interpreted as superstition can be found in court records of superstition and magic

cases throughout the century. Different men and women accused of magic, witchcraft, and superstition in court claim that they had not used any; they had only used common methods of hard work and prayer. One witch, Wallborg Andersdotter from Lapua, confessed to 'curing toothache with salt, of helping mothers in labour with natural means and by reading the Lord's Prayer upon them, but nothing else'.<sup>63</sup> She was convicted, too, because she had admitted using the Catholic practices of salt and sequential prayers. Similarly, one can find court cases of superstition and witchcraft where the accused had cited the Lord's Prayer or the Hail Mary, sometimes also the Creed: the discussion then revolves around whether this was prayer or superstition.

In the exceptional Blåkulla trials of Åland, witches were eventually accused and sentenced for having made a pack with the Devil and for having flown to Blåkulla for a Witches' Sabbath. The accused women fairly freely testified that they had recited the Lord's Prayer to protect their cattle. One woman, Karin, gave her cows special fodder to protect them from disease, saying, 'My cow has been robbed of spirit, my cow has been robbed of blood, my cow has been robbed of flesh, but I will give you malt and salt, and you will get your strength back, and thereafter she read the Lord's Prayer'.<sup>64</sup> Another woman, Lisbeta, said she had let her cows out together with the rhyme 'you shall go after me, like the Devil goes after the wrong master, and like the one who goes to court and knows right but testifies wrong'.<sup>65</sup> Later on, one of the women also testified to having read a long reading to the cows; however, the witness could only remember that she said to the cows, 'you shall want me like the poor soul wants the Realm of God, or like the earth wants fresh water'.<sup>66</sup> The accused woman was later on sentenced for magical deeds, for misusing God's name, and for forming a pact with the Devil.<sup>67</sup>

The accused women's churchgoing habits were also discussed in the Blåkulla trials: the provost's brother testified that it was general knowledge in the parishes that some of the women had not attended church (even) during the greatest holy or prayer days before the accusations, during the spring of the accusations, or when the rumours of their witchcraft had started to circulate.<sup>68</sup> It is evident that both the accused witches and their neighbours were familiar with the idea that churchgoing might appear beneficial and exclusive of witchcraft – but that it could also be used for deception. It is also interesting that despite all the Old Testament emphasis on sin and punishment in the sermon preaching, the women apparently used prayer magic with the expectation that the Divine was likely to offer protection rather than punishment. They plainly ask the divine power to cure illness and to protect their cattle – the spells include

no mention of sin or penance as the cause or prerequisite for suffering, nor do they mention divine retribution. If their opinions changed during the suffering of the next two years when they were interrogated and eventually executed as witches, this is not recorded in the court records.<sup>69</sup>

The vast majority of Finnish members of the populace accused of either *vidskepelse* (magic and superstition) or of *troldom* and *förgörning* (maleficium or sorcery and witchcraft) seem to have used prayers as part of their practices. They often used this fact as part of their defence, thinking that magic or witchcraft and religion were mutually exclusive: in their eyes, using Christian formulas placed them on the side of the respectable folk and they therefore could not be considered witches. Sometimes this was openly stated, like the woman above who asked from her opponents in court, 'Do I not mention God, too?' More often, the implication of citing prayers was left to be worked out by the court. The elites, however, though thinking prayer and magic equally exclusive, were not ready to accept these ritual words as prayers, but rather as blasphemy. A debate among early modern Finns arose around which individual acts and beliefs belonged to which side of the divide.<sup>70</sup> This produced a debate in which the most interesting point may not be the general impression that everyone usually held their own thoughts and deeds to be in the right whereas others were less certain, but rather the ways in which people argued to support their beliefs against those of others. The aforementioned fishing prayer was interpreted as a charm and the woman was fined 40 marks for witchcraft and magic together because she had confessed to using that charm. It was treated as magic and even potential witchcraft.

Paulinus Gothus, one of the most prominent early seventeenth-century authors in Sweden, wrote on magic – or *vidskepelse* – in 1630. Gothus grouped superstition, magic, and witchcraft together in a way that was common in the learned theory of magic and witchcraft of the time. Among the forbidden kinds of magic, he listed the reading of word formulas, the names of the Trinity, Jehovah, quotations from the Bible, the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, and the rosary saints, as well as 'other, non-understandable words', and the use of the sign of the cross.

Gothus, like many other European authors, grouped magic and witchcraft together in thinking that ultimately both derived their power from the Devil. Magic and witchcraft were heavily intertwined in Finland, both in theory and in trial practice. All magic was thought to derive its power from the Devil. In the court trials, magic and witchcraft were also often lumped together as an indistinguishable entity: both the charges and the sentences usually mention '*vidskepelse och förgörning*' – magic

and witchcraft. Between the charges, testimonies list individual actions but do not usually state which category they belong to. The difference between witchcraft and magic was not relevant to either the court officials or, it seems on the basis of the court records, to the people being accused, accusing, or testifying for or against others in court. The only definition given is whether the actions were suspected of being illegal or not. That was relevant for everyone, and thus the difference between magic and prayer was, too. Being relevant did not make them simple or certain, however.

A good deal of the magic involving prayers was ritualistic. The Lord's Prayer or the credo were cited many times. They were not often used on their own, but accompanied with other rhymes, and sometimes also other rituals, such as offering special food to the cattle and lighting fires and candles – or just using the rituals to bless salt. It is often said that it was the mechanistic part of rituals, religion, and faith – the *do ut des* principle – that blurred the distinctions between magic and prayer in medieval or traditional religion, and that it was the survival of the traditional mechanistic understanding that the early modern clergy criticized in early modern lay (or popular) religion. One can see this in the prayers/charms, although much less vaguely than in other religiomagical rituals that will be discussed in the following parts of this book, such as calendar celebrations on holy days or church offerings. The fact that the court records often cite prayers/charms verbatim – sometimes even in Finnish when the rest of the court record is usually in Swedish – suggests that the words were understood as ritual: the exact record was important because the words were understood as powerful in themselves. For example, the above-mentioned charm of Lisbeta from Åland, 'you shall want me like the poor soul wants the Realm of God, or like the earth wants fresh water',<sup>71</sup> was also recorded as 'like the earth (not heart) wants fresh water and my poor soul wants God's Realm, so shall you want me and you will enjoy all the good and gain for your care all year. And then she read the Lord's Prayer, etc.'<sup>72</sup> The story of giving sick cows malt and salt was also recorded in different ways: one has been recorded above, but Lisbeta was also made to confess that she gave her cows malt and salt when they had had calves

and said this: 'I see well where stands the hag who has spoiled my cow; she stands on a stone, she will burst inside while she lives and before the sun shoots, in the name of God the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit'<sup>73</sup> and that on Eastern Mondays she said to every cow 'I give my cows malt and salt like the Virgin Mary gave hers in the name of Father, Son and the H. Spirit.'<sup>74</sup>

The precise recording of the testimonies suggests that the verbatim form was thought of as important and they are certainly given as ritual – as something that the woman always said in a certain situation.

Nevertheless, the fact that different versions were given also suggests that the exact form of words may have been less important to the people who testified. To me, it also suggests that the ritual character of the prayers was less important to the witnesses. Rather, it seems that the prayers and charms were something that could be applied to situations slightly changed and they would still retain their character. The power, then, was not in the words as such, nor in the other ritual deeds, but in their entirety – in the communication to the higher power in a certain situation. The deeds and words were but one part of that communication with the sacred, and it was not one-sided or merely mechanistic. Mechanistic rituality was a quality that was enhanced and emphasized when the actions of the lay people were presented as evil acts of witchcraft.

The theologians of the time were well aware of the difficulties of separating magical spells and charms from prayer either by the addressed higher powers or by the mechanistic thoughts behind the action. Therefore, as a number of scholars have concluded, the clergy often tolerated and even supported rituals and customs which left the power of interpretation – and, thereby, control – in the hands of the clergy. Public forms of traditional piety like the church-offering practices, which I will discuss in the last part of this chapter, may have thus survived for a long time without obvious repression. It was not necessary to repress customs that could be otherwise controlled and perhaps even used for the benefit of communal parish piety. On the other hand, private forms of piety, such as the inventive use of prayers or charms, were beyond clerical control and therefore suspicious – even with the concept of the Lutheran priesthood of all believers.

Theological confessionalism in Sweden clearly centred on questions of ceremony, perhaps even more than it did in Germany, as Laasonen concludes.<sup>75</sup> This special character of Swedish Lutheranism, compared to other forms of Protestantism, needs to be taken into consideration.<sup>76</sup> I would suggest that the same tendency can be seen at the level of religious teaching and lay thinking. Nevertheless, whereas the theological debates within Lutheranism started in opposition to Catholicism at the end of the sixteenth century and moved on to an emphasis against Calvinism by the middle of the seventeenth century, this shift seems less obvious on the level of sermon teaching and lay thinking. Controversial debates against Calvinism do not seem very obvious.

However, the theological emphasis against Calvinism can perhaps be seen in the relative tolerance shown towards rituals and ceremonies that seem to be close to Catholicism in the middle and even during the latter half of the seventeenth century.

By the 1680s, more and more of the accused witches learned to claim – like Jaakko Eeronpoika Karlö in 1691 – that they ‘used fire under the cowshed threshold when the cattle are let out for the first time, and against illness, as many people do, but no readings’. In other words, they admitted having performed various acts, but they denied using any special words.<sup>77</sup> They had learned that ‘reading’, whether prayers or charms and spells, involved a debate on orthodoxy, superstition, and even heresy, and it was likely to be interpreted in non-beneficial ways. When they admitted having performed different actions and rituals that others had interpreted as magic, they themselves interpreted these acts in a secular framework, as diligent and skilful work. It was safer to stick to the pragmatics of work and customary ways.

When prayer lost its potential as a defence claim, the everyday debates defining magic were also secularized. The major way to defend oneself against an accusation of magic was now to claim that what one had done was in fact a common example of diligence and skill in ordinary work, preferably an old and well-known custom. The above-mentioned Jaakko Eeronpoika Karlö and his wife provided both of the popular defences of the late seventeenth century. The specifics of their case, however, highlight the secularization of magic.

Jaakko Eeronpoika Karlö and his wife had moved to the village of Preiviikki in Ulvila in the early 1680s. Their own farm thrived. In terms of social relationships, however, they had regularly upset the village by claiming bigger shares in the village’s common fishing and milling than their fellow villagers were willing to give them. By 1691, the situation was further complicated because Jaakko’s former maid and farmhand had married and were now in the process of clearing a new farmstead for themselves next to Jaakko. After some reciprocal meddling in each other’s business, Jaakko suspected his new neighbours had practised witchcraft against his farm. The affronts had started when Jaakko’s former maid, now the mistress of the neighbouring farm, had thrown the remnants of a dead calf onto the roof of Jaakko’s cowshed. The following summer several of Jaakko’s animals died. Jaakko also suspected that his neighbours had stolen the tail of his breeder boar and castrated one of his geese when they castrated their own.<sup>78</sup> The neighbours admitted to doing all three things but said these were not witchcraft: they had thrown the calf refuse on the roof in order to shoot down troublesome

magpies and the rest had been mere accidents. Jaakko held to his suspicions because, as he said, his neighbours could equally well have thrown the garbage on their own roof. The rest he would have believed to be accidents if he had been informed of them immediately when they happened instead of only when further damage took place.

By the next court session half a year later, the matter had escalated. This time Jaakko demanded that his neighbour's wife be punished because she had claimed that Jaakko's wife was a witch. Such accusations were often voiced in the heat of an argument and were then taken back, at the latest, when the defamation suit was presented in court. Jaakko's neighbours did not do so, however, holding to their claim that Jaakko's wife, Brita, was a witch. They testified that Brita performed a strange ritual every time one of her cows gave birth: she took three pieces of bread, lit a fir torch or a smaller piece of wood, and then milked all her cows, pulling their udders three times directly onto each of the pieces of bread. She ended this ritual by feeding the pieces of bread to the cow that had given birth. This cow was always milked into a special bucket from which Brita gave the newborn calf drinks three or four times. Brita was said to put rowan tree branches on the cowshed threshold when she let her cattle out to pasture. During a third court session a few months later Jaakko and Brita brought their current maid to testify in their defence. She told that she knew 'nothing else but that Brita had often had a rowan tree branch in the cowshed ceiling', although 'she did not know if it still had roots on it or not'. She also stated that Jaakko himself used fire under the cowshed threshold when cattle were let out the first time, and both of the couple lit, according to an old custom in the region, a fire under the threshold against disease—and perhaps on Easter—but that neither of them used any readings. Moreover, she said she had not been taught or told to do anything 'unnecessary' in the household. The word 'unnecessary' was a key concept in determining the line between magic and ordinary work: magic was unnecessary, was outside the rationally arguable—it was something that was surplus to the normal.<sup>79</sup>

Brita's cattle magic had clear ritualistic characteristics. Nevertheless the defence presented the milk and bread as giving nourishing food to a cow after birth and the newborn calf and the constantly lit fire as something that allowed them to work more effectively. The most interesting explanation is the way the maid described the attempt to defend cattle against disease with fire under the threshold as an old and widely known habit in the region. Apparently the audience in the court confirmed that there was such a custom, although someone, most

probably the scribe, added a note to the court records that the old local custom was 'unsuitable'. Unlike in the case of prayers, the courts were willing and able to enter into a discussion on the usage and rationality of individual methods of work. Also, unlike in the case of prayers, the notion that a custom was old was good when it related to work. Jaakko's case is one among many others that reflects the intersection between economic needs, communal morality, and attitudes towards magic in early modern Finland.<sup>80</sup>

The world of ideas behind the now secularizing view on magic was not wholly without religion, though. Lutheran catechisms taught that God had ordered the world and given everyone his fair lot; whether it was more or less, it was what God had considered adequate and therefore should not be changed. This interpretation combined with a generally protectionist understanding of economy, where the common rhetoric was that each burgher in a town and each farmer in a village should have his necessary share of the business and the produce but no more than his share. Morally, these ideas meant that everyone was responsible for preventing anyone else from suffering or being economically disadvantaged by aggrandizing themselves inappropriately either personally or financially. It has been argued that this moral rule guided the farming economy to such an extent that profit optimization could never be an explicit aim. This did not mean that the total amount of success would always remain the same, however; profits and produce could be increased in legitimate ways, such as with skilful and diligent work. In Lutheran teaching God himself had instituted work not only as a punishment, but also as a means of salvation: keeping people occupied made sure that they had no time to sin, and it provided a way of serving God and the community. Profit and produce, if waited for patiently, could be work's reward, but causing them through magic was stealing as opposed to the just reward of godly work.<sup>81</sup>

In many areas of rural Finland, the ideas of profit-making and market economy first spread in small-scale dairy production.<sup>82</sup> Accordingly, whereas many forms of magic were in daily use in early modern Finland, cattle magic was one of the most common types of magic. In this area new and successful methods of work aroused suspicion, and many people considered very similar work methods as skill when used by themselves and as magic if used by their competitors. The importance of cattle is also reflected in the number of activities where cattle magic was employed. People certainly went through much trouble to ensure that calves were born safely, were of the right sex, free from disease, safe from wild beasts, well fed, and productive. Given their importance to

livelihoods and status, it is not surprising that cattle, milk, and butter are recurring themes in witchcraft and magic cases.<sup>83</sup>

Due to population growth and tightening of settlement in the arable lands close to the shores, success in fishing and farming was becoming more and more crucial and competed. The correctness of these methods became important for much more immediate and tangible reasons than any confessionalist ideology, which emphasized that the sins of any one member of the community might draw the wrath of God on all. If it was magic or witchcraft, and a farmer in your village practised it, it was practised on the village plot, where your crop was, too; it was practised on the village cow herd, with your cows in, too. You were involved in it. Therefore, one had to ascertain not only in their own mind, but also together with the community, that all the methods used were really tolerable. The situation was tangible and the consequences practical.

### **Lutheran Pilgrimage and Offering Practices in Early Eighteenth-Century Finland**

The establishment of Protestantism did not end the era of pilgrimage in Finland or the other Nordic countries. Some churches received visitors from outside their own parishes – perhaps from afar – to participate in divine services, to pray, and to offer gifts or sacrifices. There is a wealth of information on the various offering traditions in Finland, including offering wells, offering stones, and offering churches; sources include folklore and archeological and historical evidence, such as the parish account books and court records. Some part of the traditions seem to have been semipagan, while some, on the other hand, seem to have been part of what both the laity and the clergy understood as Christianity. The offering church tradition has been interpreted as an essential part of the faith of the people who, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, thought of themselves as Lutherans: in this respect, the tradition has been offered as a remnant of medieval Catholicism and as proof of the relative failure of the Reformation in Finland. The tradition is an example of how the Lutheran culture created its own forms to respond to the needs of local communities in the Nordic countries.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the church and secular authorities in Finland had an ambiguous attitude towards the offering practices. The contemporary court records, drawn up in instances when the custom was criticized, describe it as papist idolatry and blasphemy. At the same time, the leaders of the Lutheran Church in Finland, including the Bishops of Turku and Vyborg as well as the consistoria, also

encouraged offering practices in certain churches, writing encouragement letters and setting a good example by making donations of their own.<sup>84</sup> Especially during the major holy days, multitudes of people travelled to certain churches beyond the boundaries of their own parishes. The best-known offering churches – those in Pyhämaa, Oulunsalo, Kuorevesi, and Kuopio – received visitors who had travelled for several days to get there. In Pyhämaa, a large part of the offerings came from sailors who passed by on their way to Stockholm. In Oulunsalo and Kuorevesi, most of the offerers were peasant farmers and their household folk who travelled to the church from the neighbouring parishes. Nevertheless, according to the account books, the church of Oulunsalo also received gifts from visitors from as far as Luuleå, Kemi, Tornio, Kuusamo, Kajaani, Kuopio, Lappeenranta, and Hamina, as well as from the nearby parishes of Liminka, Kempele and Oulu.<sup>85</sup>

Since the offering churches were often slightly further away from the immediate centres of population and worship – in the countryside rather than in towns – the role of this distance and the consequent travel has been the subject of some investigation. Sven-Gunnar Sundberg concluded on the basis of the tradition in the diocese of Växjö (now in Southern Sweden) that such journeys were a postReformation version of the medieval pilgrimage tradition, old in its roots, but changed by the Reformation and Lutheran confessionalism.<sup>86</sup> According to Sundberg, the official church condoned the practice until the 1720s, although pilgrimage as such had been prohibited in Sweden since 1544. Faced by the prohibition, the pilgrims looked for new targets. Instead of the former central churches, they now headed for sacrificial wells and offering churches in the more remote peripheries, where the popular culture was stronger and the grip of the official church was weaker.<sup>87</sup> Some of the church officials in the seventeenth and especially eighteenth centuries saw the tradition in a similar light, calling it 'papist'.<sup>88</sup>

Nevertheless, the tradition is far from a direct continuation of the medieval Catholic period. The ultimate target of the medieval pilgrimages was a saint's grave, image, or a relic, and the gift was offered to the saint, who had the power to perform miracles or at least mediate between God and the petitioner, and who was represented by the grave, image, or relic. Buildings were considered worthy pilgrimage sites only if they had a grave or shrine, or if they had a specific letter of indulgences, promising a shortened stay in Purgatory for those who donated there. Seventeenth and eighteenthcentury travel to offering sites was directed to a specific church building, which in itself was thought of as the recipient of the offering and the place where the offering was

most efficient. Sometimes offerings were also given at a sacrificial well near the church, as for example a late seventeenth-century description from the Parish of Lemland in Åland tells. When asked to tell about the remains of former religious practices, the Vicar wrote, 'Half a mile from the church, there is an old chapel St Olaf, where you can still see the altar, but the roof has collapsed and birches grown around it. There is also a St Olaf's well nearby, which is an offering well.'<sup>89</sup>

The medieval Catholic votive tradition encouraged people to enhance the chances of their prayers being heard by making promises of votive gifts: when in need, the believer prayed to a heavenly intercessor, like a saint or Christ, promising to give a gift or perform a task or a pilgrimage if the saint helped. The votive promises were mutually binding: the promise in itself also obligated the saint to whom it was addressed. In theory, Lutheran teaching did not support the idea that the power of prayer could be enhanced by any promise or any additional act by a person – justification by faith alone precluded such an idea. Lutheran ideology nevertheless did not abandon the idea of offerings and gifts to accompany prayer, but in theory it changed the emphasis: offerings were not meant to enhance the power of prayer, but to give thanks because the prayer had been heard or would be heard in the future. Thanks and the gifts offered to accompany it were due when one had overcome a danger but also just because one had the privilege to live as a good Christian among others, had survived so far, and could be relatively sure that when one's life on earth ended, one would be counted among the saved. Therefore, the separation between giving thanks and votive gifts is theoretical.<sup>90</sup>

Votive promises – or promises which accompanied prayer at the moment of emergency and need and which the maker of the promise diligently sought to fulfil – were nevertheless recorded in Sweden during the seventeenth century. For example, in 1680 the Swedish field superintendent<sup>91</sup> Olaus Ekman published a religious booklet called *Siönodz-löfste* (promise in distress at sea), pronouncing in the preface that he had written the pious booklet because he had been in distress in the Baltic Sea and had promised to write something to improve the degenerated state of Christianity in the kingdom. Ekman gave no direct hint of any other identity than a Lutheran one, but it is of course likely that as a field superintendent and a widely travelled man, he had come across several different religious influences.<sup>92</sup>

There are also records of promises in Finland, although in less elaborate written form. The churches in the southern coastal area of Finland and the archipelago of Åland are known to have displayed small silver votive

fish donated by fishermen before and after the Reformation. Similarly, some silver cereal ears were found in inland parishes. These have usually been linked to the means of livelihood in these areas, although the lack of any reference to cattle or hunting – equally important forms of livelihood – also suggests that there were links to the biblical fish and bread in Bethesda or to the fish St Peter was promised in souls. Votive paintings were popular in towns, and at first they were small religious paintings made by primitive popular artists and donated to the church by pilgrims. Wealthier gentry and nobility took on the custom and started donating more impressive pieces, often depicting the donor and his family in a pious arrangement. One of the best-known examples of votive painting in Finland depicts the burial of Margareta Jussoila – the daughter of the Mayor of Rauma – in 1572; four of Margareta's brothers left to study in Jesuit schools in Europe. The original painting has been lost, but a copy was donated to the offering church in Kuorevesi in 1835. Although votive paintings went out of fashion during the sixteenth century, during the seventeenth century – a period of great Swedish military power – a large number of detailed votive ships were donated to churches by members of the navy and their families. Nevertheless, most often the gifts offered consisted of either money or some other valuable parcels, such as linen, wool, or fur.<sup>93</sup> Religious items were also present, such as crosses, images, and altar cloths.

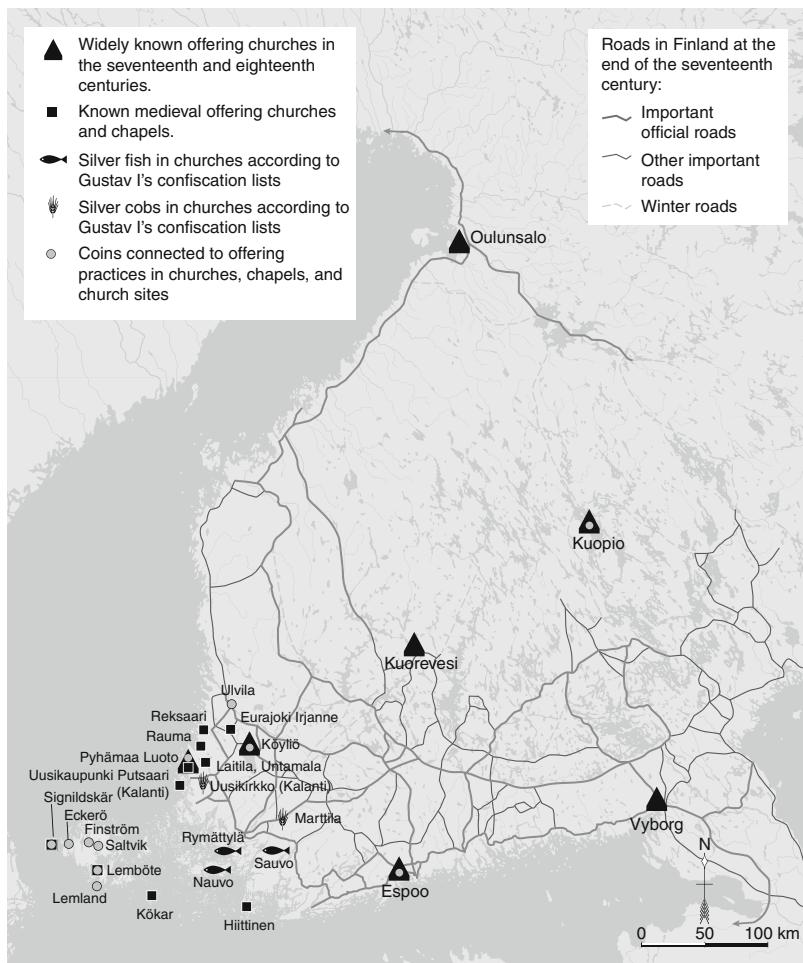
In the account books that listed all the gifts offered in Oulunsalo and Pyhämaa – and in the court records of the trial against those Kemppele parishioners who went to offer in Oulunsalo – some people state that they made an offering for a definite purpose: one man said he made his offering to ensure the health of his cattle, while another wanted to have his sore eyes cured. Many people also wanted to give thanks for safe passage – especially at the church of Oulunsalo, which was on the road from the countryside to the marketplaces in town – or for having had a good previous year.<sup>94</sup> On the other hand, conscripted soldiers offered together before leaving for the battlefield during the Great Northern War. During the latter part of the eighteenth century, when trade recovered from the war, ship-owners and sailors were a prominent group of donors at Pyhämaa.<sup>95</sup> Some of the gifts were also offered as part of the yearly cycle and its celebrations, apparently in order to make sure that life next year would continue to be as good as or preferably better than the previous year. The calendar holy days were made even more important to the offering tradition when offertories became popular at the end of the seventeenth century, and the collections were placed on major holy days and prayer days.<sup>96</sup> At least in eastern Finland

and Tavastia, the calendar celebration offerings were also given outside the churches, at homes and farmsteads, and even in home villages.<sup>97</sup> At the church in Oulunsalo, the majority of offerings seem to have been made regularly on certain holy days – especially on St Olavi's (Olaf's) Day – for the health and luck of cattle.<sup>98</sup> At Pyhämaa church, the account books show that both the local parishioners and the burghers and shipowners of the towns of Rauma and Uusikaupunki regularly offered once or twice a year, often before the sailing season began.<sup>99</sup>

According to Monica Weikert, who has researched the offering tradition in Sweden, the medieval offerers had sought to influence their fate in the afterlife, whereas the early modern offerers rather sought to influence life in this world, threatened as it was by mundane illness, tempest, and death.<sup>100</sup> Such a view is a simplification of both the Catholic and the Protestant offering traditions. It was hoped that the Catholic pilgrimage would also affect life and illness in this world. Similarly, although in Protestant theology justification could be attained by faith and given by a merciful God alone, the parishioners hardly made such a neat distinction between the good deeds that didn't earn a place in heaven and those that were incumbent on a good Christian to perform because one had already received God's mercy.

The seventeenth-century offering tradition had become a Lutheran tradition that served the needs of and took its significance from local Lutheran culture. While the offering tradition had some roots in the Catholic period, it was usually not a continuous tradition from the medieval period. Some of the offering churches were old, dating from the medieval period, but some of them were rebuilt on old places, and others were completely new churches in new parishes and chapelries. As Map 2.1 shows, most of the medieval offering churches and chapels in Finland stood on the coastal areas and in the archipelago, often at stops along the established sailing routes. The early modern churches, on the other hand, seem to have been more inland, on the outskirts of towns and centres.<sup>101</sup>

In the Nordic area in general, church offering practices seem to have spread and increased in importance during the second half of the seventeenth century. Sundberg even concludes that the term 'offering church' (*offerkyrka* in Swedish) first appears during the second half of the seventeenth century. For Sundberg, the offering tradition allowed lay people to tangibly influence their own relationship with the sacred even after the Reformation herded the parishioners into pews to listen and watch the service performed by a proper priest. The offering tradition is said to have moved on to more remote areas or to have survived



Map 2.1 Offering churches in seventeenth-century Finland

Source: original version in Finnish previously published in Toivo 2014: 308.

longer there because the immediate clerical control did not reach the peripheries.<sup>102</sup>

When the offerers described their actions themselves, they seem to have considered making an offering an important part of being a good Christian and as a personal duty towards both God and the other members of their community. When the tradition was attacked in Oulunsalo, most donors defended it by commenting that the money

was used for the common good, for parish duties and poor relief.<sup>103</sup> At the churches of Kuorevesi and Pyhämaa, which were not under such attack, the account books list offerings made for the maintenance and the decoration of the church building, emphasizing a spiritual rather than practical communal significance.<sup>104</sup>

The church leaders and the parish clergy's attitudes towards the offering tradition were ambiguous. On the one hand, the leaders were clearly aware of the tradition, because the donations were duly recorded in the account books. None of the descriptions of the tradition from the seventeenth or early eighteenth century even hints that the donors attempted to keep their acts secret – the opposite was true. For example, in Oulunsalo the offerings were given during the service either by placing the money in the offering chest that hung on the wall, or by throwing the money on the altar during the service. Everyone was aware that the method of donating determined the use of the given money: if placed in the chest, the money was meant for poor relief, if thrown on the altar, it was meant as an addition to the personal income of the vicar. Some donors also climbed to hang squirrel skins – a valuable fur – on the church chandelier, which cannot have passed without notice in the church. After the service, the money was counted and noted down, along with the names of the donors, in the parish account books.<sup>105</sup> Similarly, meticulous records were kept in Pyhämaa, where the major part of the donations consisted of money, but where altar cloths, candlesticks, chandeliers, crucifixes, and oblate boxes were also recorded. Instead of squirrel skins, two bear skins were donated by hunting groups. Folklorists have thought that the purpose of these was to ensure good luck in hunting, but it is also possible that they were given because of their economic value.<sup>106</sup> It is clear that the custom was established and everyone knew how to proceed in making an offering. There are also descriptions of how donors who had not been able to make the offerings during service called on the chaplain or the vicar to open the locked church doors.<sup>107</sup>

Offering during the calendar celebrations in particular was important to the whole local community, and it was considered the duty of every landowning master and mistress. This duty also mirrored the rural hierarchy. Many of the donors owned their own land, but, at least in Oulunsalo, masters and mistresses did not always travel to the offering church themselves. They could send a servant maid to take the gift on their behalf. Soldiers and sailors often made common offerings in groups, which highlights the communal nature of the offering tradition.<sup>108</sup>

Offering was a lay tradition first and foremost, especially in inland areas. Nevertheless, there were also locally and regionally important people among the donors. The early donors to Pyhämaa church included not only the local smallscale nobility and wealthy peasantry, but also Isak Rothovius, the Bishop of Turku, and the widow of the late vicar in the neighbouring parish of Laitila. The parish clergy and vicars made regular donations during the following decades.<sup>109</sup> It is difficult to say how far these donations were thought of in the same way as the peasant offerings, and how far they were regarded as donations by the nobility to their own parish churches. Donations from the nobility are more often thought of as marking the status and importance of the donor rather than as being part of a prayer culture. However, the account books make no distinction in this sense. It is possible that the difference was not all that great for the donors either; for the peasants offering in yearly celebrations, the offerings were also a part of their social status and role.

The act of offering and the pilgrimage-like travel to the offering places were not only religious, they were also social and public events. Regularly repeated, they held the community together and showed a common effort to maintain an equal balance of success in a world where luck was thought of as a scarce resource, and everyone's fair share of it could only just make ends meet. Therefore, it was important that the offering was made together with others in the community. Nevertheless, it was not just a public display of a performance of the social; the common participation created a shared emotion – or an emotional community in Barbara Rosenwein's terms<sup>110</sup> – and strengthened the religious experience. The Reformation emphasized the individual's relationship with the Divine, but religion was always also a communal matter, where the ability of each individual to take proper care of his or her spiritual duties and religious roles influenced the whole community's chances of receiving divine mercy or punishment.

The church offering tradition seems to have gained in strength during the second half of the seventeenth century – paradoxically at the same time the confessional Lutheran Church in Sweden had otherwise launched a battle against superstitious old customs. Popular teaching, preaching visitations, and – everything failing else – punishment in secular court trials were used to root out the old customs. Magic trials against those who sought to magically cure illnesses, secure cattle fodder for the winter, find fortune, or tell the future multiplied after the 1660s.<sup>111</sup> The coincidence of the spreading offering custom and the repressive culture of the time seems paradoxical, and, as far as the

church offering tradition is concerned, it is not merely a result of the repressive actions drawing attention to and creating written evidence for the custom. The offering tradition was supported and even prescribed in various acts and orders by the cathedral chapter on churching mothers of newborn babies and in relation to poor relief, as well as when a new chapel or church building was in need of financial aid. But negative attitudes were also present among the authorities from a fairly early point onwards. Already in 1659, the Governor-General of Finland, Count Per Brahe, complained to the bishop in Vyborg that the peasants in his county 'practised superstition by offering in churches'.<sup>112</sup> Although scholars of popular religion in Finland have not paid much attention to it, this also shows that the varying religious preferences among the authorities in Sweden and Finland had an influence on the level of lay (and popular) religion as well. The church authorities, condoning and supporting the custom in the seventeenth century, were confessionalist Lutherans, and used the ceremonies to draw a distinction between Lutheranism and Calvinism rather than between Lutheranism and Catholicism. Per Brahe, on one hand, is known to have been a keen orthodox Lutheran, and on the other hand, to have put a damper on the trials for devil's pacts in the Royal Academy of Turku. His concern in the matter may have been rhetorical.<sup>113</sup>

Most of the source materials on the offering tradition were not created by the efforts to suppress the custom, but by church accountancy; the church seems to have approved of offering. In the wellknown offering churches of Pyhämaa, Oulunsalo, Kuopio, and Kuorevesi, accounts were diligently kept and detailed, noting down who had given what, and how much. Likewise, the account books recorded the use of the funds collected.<sup>114</sup>

Charles XI forbade the clergy from accepting church offerings as personal income when he gave new orders on parish clergy's salaries in 1681. Nevertheless, the custom continued and started to be more clearly disapproved of only after the Great Northern War of the eighteenth century. At this point, letters were dispatched to parishes in several Swedish dioceses enquiring after the offering practices. Both church courts and secular trials against those doing the offering and the complying clergy began in the 1730s and 1740s.<sup>115</sup> In Oulunsalo, the practitioners of the tradition were interrogated in a church visitation and in secular court in 1732. Since the customs still continued, the interrogations were repeated in 1742. Some witnesses testified how groups of people came to the church to offer at midsummer, on St Olaf's Day, St Stephen's Day, and New Years' Day; the numbers were so great that not everyone

could fit inside the church. People were shoved and knocked, and the more delicate young men and older people were trampled upon. There were various sorts of disturbances in the churchyard, where the mobs enjoyed the entertainment created by the company, beer, and spirits. Other witnesses, however, testified that the offering in itself occurred in a pretty orderly fashion, for there was time to write down the names of the offerers, which were read aloud from the pulpit after the service.<sup>116</sup>

It may well be that even though the contemporaries condemned the practice as superstitious, the main problem was not superstition after all. The custom of offering as such was never fully condemned: what was disapproved of was the idea that an offering in one church was more profitable than in any other. The offering was not only tolerable but also essential for the benefit of the parish – for building new churches, decorations, and church bells, or, as the defence usually concluded, for the daily running of the parish, such as poor relief and the purchasing of communion wine. Many parish priests explained that instead of superstition, offering was charity – and that good works were not prohibited but were self-evidently the duty of every good Christian, even though they could not buy salvation.<sup>117</sup>

As the good works gained a communal nature during the great holy days, they became linked with other religious popular movements, which the clergy in turn began to view as troublesome when the radical Pietist movements spread to Sweden and Finland in the eighteenth century. Especially in the early phase, Pietism was violently critical of existing church practices and authorities. In 1698, Laurentius Ulstadius, the son of a parish priest of Ii, arrived in Turku and rose up in church in the middle of the sermon to scream and cry, accusing the clergy of lacking the influence of the Holy Spirit, and of being sinful and in want of penance. Afterwards, the movement was led by Petrus Schäfer, who was imprisoned for years on charges of blasphemy and insulting the church authorities. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the movement had spread to lay circles first in Southwest Finland, Satakunta, and Ostrobothnia, and soon also inland to Upper Satakunta and the Savonia region around Iisalmi and Kuopio. As it spread, the movement grew more moderate in some areas, but in others it retained its apocalyptic, ecstatic individualism and its violent critique against the established authorities.<sup>118</sup> It is noteworthy that the offering practices as a form of communal piety met with greatest disapproval at the same time as the Pietistic movements spread and rose critical mobs.

It is intriguing that in the middle of the late seventeenth-century campaign against superstition and magic, a good part of the church

elite actually encouraged the church offering practices. The alternative to these practices was, at that point, a religious life outside church space and control. When Pietist criticism openly challenged the established order in church, however, all other large popular groups began to appear threatening. They were frowned on not only by the vicars and priests, but also by lay parishioners who held competing religious views.

The offering practices did not come to an end despite disapproval and repression, nor did the offering givers confine themselves to their own parish churches. In Oulunsalo, the offering givers were sentenced to fines in 1742, and the offerings stopped only temporarily: according to the account books, the church received as many offering gifts in the 1750s as it had received before the 1740s. The custom grew in importance and popularity into the second half of the nineteenth century. The practice changed, however, and grew more private as religion did: in the seventeenth century, it had been important to offer together with others, and to be seen and recorded doing so, since it was a social duty related to one's position in the community. At the end of the eighteenth century, the donor's names disappeared from the account books, and offerings were being sent to the church by post or left at the door in private. The letters that often accompanied the gifts, asking or thanking for intercession, were increasingly sent anonymously.<sup>119</sup> This reflects a wider change in Nordic religious life from the early modern religious experience – as reflected in experiences of success and misfortune and likewise in support and belonging or in shame and exclusion – to the more individual and private, even secret religion that came to be appreciated by the modern secular Nordic person.

# 3

## Catholic Influence and Magic in Finland

### **Medieval Tradition and the Jesuit Mission in Western Finland**

It once was widely held that the veneer of Christianity in medieval Finland was rather thin, and therefore it was possible for the Reformation to take place without much opposition. This has been proven to be a misconception.<sup>1</sup> Rather, there was a vivid and strong Christian culture in Finland, as in the rest of the Nordic countries, prior to the Reformation. While the source materials showing the influence of Christianity are rather scarce, material archaeological evidence reveals evidence of an ample visual culture, both within churches and without, including the veneration of saints and pilgrimage. Current historiography holds that the Reformation slowly wiped out this culture, even though it ultimately failed to replace Catholicism with a proper, modern faith. Historians note isolated remnants of medieval Catholicism as evidence of the failure of the Lutheran Reformation. The consideration that these records could have represented anything other than the quality of Lutheranism has been, in the grand narrative of the national Lutheran identity, impractical.

There was, however, a phase in early modern Finland when the Counter-Reformation was a factor. This was during the period when John, the second son of Gustav I, was Duke of Finland (1556–63), and later on, when he ruled as King John III. Duke John resided in Finland in Turku and in Lower Satakunta. His principality consisted of a relatively extensive part of southwestern Finland, including the province of Turku and the Royal manor of Kokemäenkartano, Åland, western Nyland and some parishes from the west borders of Tavastia. The rest of Tavastia, Ostrobothnia, Savolax, and Karelia were outside the

principality. The period was extremely important for the development of Finland in many senses.

In a manner usual for the period, religion and politics were inextricably interwoven. The eastern politics of King Eric XIV – John's predecessor – had aimed at keeping peace by negotiation and staying on good terms with Russia. Duke John, on the other hand, wanted closer relationships with Poland, and drove towards that policy throughout his period as Duke of Finland, although aware that the policy was against the King's intention. The political advantages were already connected to a personal interest in Catholicism and irenic religiosity. John's policy culminated in 1562, when he married the Polish Catherine Jagiellon – despite Eric's orders. An alliance with Poland would have formed a relatively strong military front against Russian advancement, and John's policies gained considerable support from the nobility in Finland. Nevertheless, John's independent politics brought on a total break with Eric. In 1563 the Diet of Sweden sentenced John to death for treason, and Eric sailed over with a military fleet and captured Turku. Duke John and Catherine Jagiellonica were captured and taken to Gripsholm in Sweden Proper, but the terms of surrender stated that they should not be executed.<sup>2</sup>

When John seized power in 1568, the Catholic powers of Europe – and especially in Poland – saw a chance to influence the religious politics of Sweden. Cardinal Giovanni Commandore, a papal legate to Poland, wrote to Princess Anna of Poland in November 1569 to enquire whether it was possible for Anna's sister, as the new queen of Sweden, to influence the country's politics. Anna could not give a direct answer, for Sweden and Poland were at war, and all communication between the sisters was temporarily severed.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, the Bishop of Ermland, Martin Krömer, a personal friend of Catherine Jagiellon, had written directly to the queen, exhorting her to make every effort to convert her spouse, the new king.<sup>4</sup> The queen did not, however, immediately find such measures possible. In February 1570, she replied to Krömer, stating that the king had decided to stay loyal to his father's faith. She also mentioned that the Swedes might not react well to the conversion of their king. Since John had only recently attained the throne and since his brother Eric – the previous king – was still alive, he had to be careful in his policies.<sup>5</sup>

This situation – or rather John's preferences – changed, however, not only when his reign had been established for a couple of years, but also when Catherine's brother Sigismund II died in 1572, leaving his sisters to divide among themselves the enormous inheritance of their mother, Bona Sforza of Milan. A sizable part of the inheritance comprised a loan

given to the city of Naples. Getting this fortune to Sweden was of the utmost importance, but Naples was reluctant to repay it, especially, as they made clear, to a Protestant. So, there was pressure and some legitimization for appearing favourable towards Catholicism. The previous hard-line Lutheran bishops in Sweden, Laurentius Petri and Johannes Ofeeg, also died soon afterwards. A third consideration – not made explicit but obviously implied – was that Sigismund II August of Poland had no heir: thus, the throne of Poland was free. If either John himself or his son by Catherine Jagiellon, Sigismund – baptized and raised as Catholic, although not yet in his teens – could be elected the new king, a strong front against the threat from the east would be secure.<sup>6</sup> The current understanding is, however, that the intention of John III was to be irenic and conciliatory rather than to return Sweden unconditionally to the Catholic Church. John had learned theology as part of his renaissance education, and, it is said that he insisted on the sacrament being distributed under both kinds, on the clergy getting married, and on vernacular liturgy.<sup>7</sup>

The royal views got their best public representation in the *Nova ordinantia ecclesiastica* Church Ordinances of 1575 and the new liturgy of 1576, the *Liturgia Svecanae ecclesiae catholicae et orthodoxiae conformis*, called the Red Liturgy due to the colour of the book's binding. The Catholic activists had high hopes based on the *Nova ordinantia*, and worked to defend it against the Lutheran clergy.<sup>8</sup> The title of the liturgy and the contents of the *Nova ordinantia* suggest that while church historians have termed John irenic, there was also another quality present: the newly emerging nationalism that spread across Europe and struck a chord with the Reformation in Protestant countries and the Counter-Reformation in Catholic countries alike. It was not a nationalism in the nineteenth century sense, and it had very little to do with ethnicity, although language and (religious) identity were relevant issues.<sup>9</sup> The early modern nationalism had a strong Machiavellian tone, emphasizing the sovereignty of the king or prince instead of the supranational pope. This obviously was also important to John, a renaissance prince of high ambition.

At first, John's reforms were received 'without resistance', as church historians have termed it. The *Nova ordinantia* was thought of as complementary to the Church Ordinance of 1571. The Red Liturgy was more severely criticized from the beginning. Nevertheless, on the Finnish side of the Gulf of Bothnia at least, some reactions were even enthusiastic.<sup>10</sup> The Counter-Reformation activists, especially in Poland and Rome, sought to make use of the situation and turn the development

towards a fuller Counter-Reformation and the reconversion of Sweden. A careful and meticulous plan was drawn up to this end. It was decided that both the reconversion of John III and the establishment of a permanent Catholic influence within the Church of Sweden were necessary for the purpose. With these aims in mind, the Polish Jesuit and Rector of the collegium in Vilnius, Stanislav Warszewicki, was sent to Sweden with the official purpose of negotiating the inheritance of Bona Sforza. Besides having a thorough Jesuit education, Warszewicki had also studied for three years in Wittenberg under the tutelage of Philipp Melanchthon. He knew his ultimate aims, and he was aware of the opposition he would have to counter in Sweden.<sup>11</sup>

Warszewicki stayed in Sweden for a few weeks in 1574. His learning made a very good impression on John III, which, together with his hopes for the Sforza inheritance and the Polish throne, led to great expectations of his reconversion in Poland. These expectations were initially disappointed, however. Nevertheless, it was clear that John's policy was not as strictly opposed to Catholicism as his father's and brother's had been.

Despite the religious volte-faces when rulers changed in the German territories, it was clear that in Sweden, royal favour or even the conversion of the king was not enough to secure reversion to Catholicism at a national level: the clergy also had to be influenced. The *Missio Suetica* – as the secret effort to re-Catholicize Sweden was called in Rome – activists thought it best to educate a new generation of Catholic-minded clergy for Sweden. After a couple of failed attempts, it was decided in Rome that the Brigittine house in Rome would receive six young men from Sweden to study at the *Collegium Germanicum*. A letter was sent to the queen of Sweden asking her to send these six young men to Rome. In November 1574, Cardinal Hosius wrote to Anne of Poland that the first – and, briefly, only – Swedish student arrived in November 1574, joining the *Collegium Germanicum* with a Danish student. While this hardly testifies to support from John, there was royal support.<sup>12</sup>

As this was happening in Rome, however, the Red Liturgy and, later on, the *Nova ordinantia*, were receiving greater resistance in Sweden proper. King John did not have the same position of power over the church that his father had had during the beginning of the Reformation. He seems to have then arrived at the same conclusions as the Roman Jesuits: it would be advisable to educate a new generation of clergy, one more favourable to his – if not Catholic, at least – irenic ideas. For this purpose, a royal theological *pedagogium*, called the *Collegium Regium Stockholmense*, was established in Stockholm. Since the school was

based in Stockholm, it was closer to the king and further away from the Lutheran Church's power, which was based in Uppsala. The school was situated in the former Franciscan convent in Gråmunckeholmen (now Riddarholmen). Laurentius Nicolai Norvegus, a Jesuit, arrived in Stockholm in 1576 to serve as the court chaplain in the service of the Catholic queen; he was also appointed to act as the rector of the new school. The new school started swiftly and promisingly: 30 new priests and an equal number of students from the upper grades of the town school enrolled in 1576–77. At first, there were disturbances between the new school and the old town school, but, when the rector of the town school, Abraham Angermannus, was banished from Stockholm (for having refused to conduct church services on two holy days which were assigned by the *Nova ordinantia* but not the Church Ordinance of 1571) in autumn of 1576, the situation settled down and the *Collegium Regium* began its regular work.<sup>13</sup>

The school's aims were not merely in making way for the Red Liturgy. The boarders of the school were given the Catholic Eucharist as early as Christmas 1576. By the following Easter, about 30 of the 70 students at the school had confessed the Catholic faith and taken communion according to Catholic rites.<sup>14</sup>

The *Collegium Regium* was insufficient for the proper education of the new Catholic clergy: there were plans for a larger schools for advanced studies. In the meantime, Laurentius Nicolai sought to send his students to Rome for further studies. The first six students left in July 1577, among them some prominent members of the Catholic nomenclature in Sweden, such as Petrus Brask, a close relative of the exiled Catholic Bishop of Linköping, Hans Brask, and one Finn, Gregorius Clementis from the western Finnish town of Pori.<sup>15</sup> Other Finnish students in the early groups include Marci Sundergelteus from Pori and Johannes Jussoila, the son of the mayor of Rauma.<sup>16</sup> Only the students sent to Jesuit colleges are known. Therefore, it is likely that the students of the *Collegium Regium* included a number of other students from the earlier Grand Duchy of Duke John before he became king. As Jussi Nuorteva argues, the representation of Finns was not a coincidence, but rather a deliberate plan by the king.<sup>17</sup>

There were, all in all, seven Finnish students who entered the Jesuit colleges through the *Collegium Regium*.<sup>18</sup> The Finnish students leaving Stockholm for the Jesuit colleges all came from south-western Finland, and the relatively small area of Lower Satakunta was overrepresented among them. In addition to the aforementioned students from Rauma and Pori, the students included other men from Rauma, Turku, and

Karjalohja, as well as a young man called Joachimus Finlandus, of whom little is known.

It is noteworthy that so many of the first students to leave came from the area of Lower Satakunta, since it coincides with Duke John's winter residences in Finland. The castle of Turku was renovated for his use and a third floor in the renaissance style was added to the castle for him and his wife. The stone castle was nevertheless cold and unpleasant in the Finnish winter, and the Duke and Duchess preferred to live at the royal manors<sup>19</sup> he built in Ulvila and Rauma. The Rauma manor was situated in the former Franciscan convent and rebuilt in 1556–57. The building works furnished the duke with brand new, comfortable rooms and provided considerable work – although also a taxation burden – for the local inhabitants.<sup>20</sup>

The best-known story is that of Johannes Jussoila, the son of the mayor of Rauma. This story also suggests the personal influence of the king in the student's choices. Johannes had most likely begun his studies under the tutelage of the Vicar of Rauma, Martinus Olai, who had originally been ordained as a Catholic priest and appointed to office in Rauma by Duke John in the 1558, when the Duke lived in Finland. Reverend Martinus was an unconditional supporter of the king's religious efforts. In 1577, he was invited to Stockholm, where he seems to have worked as a preacher and royal chaplain at the *Collegium Regium*.<sup>21</sup> According to Jussi Nuorteva, Jussoila probably studied in Turku before moving to Stockholm. Johannes's younger brother followed in his footsteps by attending the collegium after he had already left for Rome. A few years afterwards, the younger brother left the *Collegium Regium* for the Jesuit College in Braunsberg (modern-day Braniewo).<sup>22</sup> Johannes Jussoila and Marci Sundergelteus were also granted a personal audience with King John, during which a Finnish translation of the Catholic Catechism was discussed and the men were entrusted with the task of providing one. When the students left – secretly, as they had to from an officially Lutheran country – the king, who was in on the secret, gave each of them a travel stipend of 50 thalers. Laurentius Nicolai gave them a letter of recommendation to ensure that they were accepted at their future colleges. The Holy See offered the northern scholars free tuition.<sup>23</sup>

A further turn took place in the *Missio Suetica* in early 1578. The conversion of the king had been the first aim of the *Missio Suetica* all along.<sup>24</sup> Now King John was not only very supportive of the Catholic cause when Antonio Possevino made an official visit to exhort Sweden to avoid supporting the Netherlands in its rebellion against Spain, but the king also secretly converted to Catholicism. This was a secret,

however; even afterwards he insisted on clerical marriage and on communion under both kinds, on not returning the abandoned saints' days to the church calendar – which may have been significant for it shows a pragmatic irenic attitude – and on Swedes who had converted to Catholicism being allowed to participate in Lutheran services as well as Catholic ones. As Nuorteva claims, the conversion did not necessarily imply a wholesale change in John's religious opinions, rather, it resulted in a subtle shift of emphasis. John still saw the unity of the church as the chief aim: subjugation to the Catholic Church was not under consideration. This also points to the nationalist character of John's irenic views; while the church should be one and unified, the kingdom with its special religious characteristics was his to govern as a sovereign.<sup>25</sup>

In 1580, the secret purpose of *Collegium Regium* was leaked to the public after the reconversion to Lutheranism of one of the early students. The opportunities for the *Missio Suetica* were diminished, although a further 40 students left from the *Collegium Regium* to Jesuit seminaries during the next three years.<sup>26</sup> While it had previously been implied that the students in Rome would in future act as teachers in a major Swedish Jesuit seminary, it now became obvious that a proper seminary in Sweden could not be speedily organized. Instead, special seminaries for Scandinavian students were organized in, for example, Braunsberg and Tartu. During the early years of the 1580s, the first students returned to Sweden. According to Laurentius Nicolai, they declared Luther the antiChrist and claimed that there were no true priests in the whole realm. Understandably, this was not favourably received by the Swedish clergy.<sup>27</sup>

In late 1683, John decided to break with the *Missio Suetica*. He was disappointed by Antonio Possevino's support for Polish claims on Baltic lands in the peace negotiations of 1582. In addition, negotiations for the Sforza inheritance had been going nowhere for years. His demand for dispensations for Swedish special customs in exchange for the uniting of the churches had not won any support from the pope. When Catherine Jagiellon died in September 1583, John was no longer bound to keep a Catholic priest at court. John resumed his own religious agenda, as expressed in the *Nova ordinantia* and the Red Liturgy, as the utmost and sole aims of his policy. The Catholic priests at the late Catherine's court and at the *Collegium Regium* where banished from the country.<sup>28</sup>

Even at this point, the students who had studied at Jesuit colleges and seminaries were able to return to Sweden and work there. One of them was appointed Rector of Vyborg School in 1584, but he ran into conflict with the Lutheran students and had to be dismissed within a year.

Johannes Jussoila returned the same year in order to serve as the chaplain of Crown Prince Sigismund, who was still a Catholic. Jussoila was a devoted member of the *Missio Suetica*. He immediately started to distribute tractates and other literature, and preached in Stockholm both in Swedish and in Finnish. This caused displeasure among the Lutheran clergy, and he was summoned before the Diet in Västerås in 1585 to defend himself and his views from accusations of blasphemy (*hädelse*). Catholic sources describe his defence in the debate as a success, and he himself claimed he was supported, especially among the nobility – according to the custom of the time, the opposing party did just the same on their side.<sup>29</sup> Jussoila therefore continued his propaganda work. John, however, removed him from court to act as the confessor for the remaining Brigittine nuns and a school teacher in Vadstena. From that point, his work no longer influenced Finland or the Finnishspeaking Swedes. In 1587, when Sigismund was elected king of Poland, Jussoila moved with him to Poland and Warsaw.<sup>30</sup>

The election of Sigismund in Poland was expected to be advantageous to the Catholic cause: it secured his Catholicism, and, with the eventual union of Sweden and Poland, it was expected to provide the Catholic parties a new grip on Sweden. In the meantime, however, Sigismund and his court moved to Poland, leaving Catholics in Sweden without what had previously been their best protection. The focal point of the Counter-Reformation in Sweden moved outside the realm itself. Nevertheless, political and religious ideas could still coincide, especially in Finland. For example, Caspar Juusteen, a son of Bishop Paulus of Vyborg, first enrolled at the Lutheran university in Königsberg (modern-day Kaliningrad) and then at the Jesuit College in Braunsberg, but eventually he cut his studies short to join Sigismund's court in Poland as a clerk. In western Finland, Bishop Ericus Erici Sorolainen (senior) of Turku continued to support the Red Liturgy and the *Nova ordinantia* – now the focus of John's religious policy, but under growing opposition from the Lutheran clergy. Opposition was especially strong among the clergy of the diocese of Strängnes, the heartland of Duke Charles. From the end of the 1580s, Charles harboured not only Calvinist religious sentiment but also ambitions for the crown.<sup>31</sup>

When John III died in November 1592, Duke Charles immediately called for a church meeting of all the estates in Uppsala. This meeting pronounced on 20 March 1593 that the only religion of the realm was to be Lutheranism, as defined in the *Confessio Augustana invariata*, the socalled Augsburg Confession. Sigismund could only be crowned king of Sweden if he swore to honour the *Confessio* and the resolution of

the Uppsala meeting. And so he did. The state's commitment to the Lutheran confession was further cemented by the order that conversion from Lutheranism and baptizing or raising children in another religion were forbidden on pain of confiscation of all property and banishment. Conversion and propagation of an alien faith were made, at least theoretically, a capital crime.<sup>32</sup>

Sigismund left a small group of his court in Sweden when he returned to Poland in 1594. The purpose of the group was to serve the interests of the king and the Counter-Reformation. Caspar Juusteen was among this group. As it proved difficult to work in Sweden proper, however, Juusteen returned to Finland. Presumably things were easier in Finland, both because of his family and because Finland was Sigismund's political foothold in the realm of Sweden. In religious terms, too, Finland was more inclined to Catholicism. Only a small portion of the nobility in Finland had signed the resolutions of the Uppsala meeting. The leading politician, Klaus Fleming, had a Catholic chaplain at his court. This chaplain, Haraldus Laurentii, had studied at Jesuit schools in, for example, Braunsberg and Vilnius. The correspondence between Fleming and Sigismund was mediated by a group of former Jesuit school students in Poland and Finland.<sup>33</sup> The Catholic influence was, as far as can be assessed, still strong in Finland in the mid1590s.

Finland fell into the turmoil of the feud between King Sigismund and Duke Charles, and civil war broke out between the nobility, who supported Sigismund, and the peasantry, who were supported and encouraged by Charles. This conflict became known as the Club War. As in all civil wars, this was devastating for all parties. In the early phases of the war, the untrained and poorly armed Finnish peasants fought against the Finnish military nobility, and were slaughtered accordingly. In the latter phase of the war, Duke Charles brought his better-trained and better-armed military forces over the Gulf of Bothnia, and the Finnish nobility was slaughtered in turn – if not in battle, then afterwards, following mock trials; the vanquished were executed for treason.

The same fate befell most of the Catholics – but not all, at least not immediately. One of the later Finnish students of the Jesuit colleges, Petrus Petrosa, joined the Royal Council bureaucracy as a clerk and possibly served for some time as a teacher to the Crown Prince Gustav Adolf (later King Gustav II Adolf). In 1606, Petrosa was accused of still being Catholic, and was executed.<sup>34</sup> Ericus Erici Sorolainen Sr also faced charges like most of the clergy who had supported the Red Liturgy, but, as he denounced all Catholic views, he was allowed to retain his office. In the *Postilla*, which he apparently started to write soon after Charles's

ascension but finished only in the 1620s, he writes that the Red Liturgy was imposed on the clergy from above.<sup>35</sup> His son, Ericus Erici Jr, however, did once again join a Jesuit school. It is usually said that he was not motivated by either religious or political reasons, but rather by his desperate need for money (which he hoped to get from Sigismund) and personal vanity.<sup>36</sup> The phase of the Counter-Reformation, on the official level, was over.

Nevertheless, the underground effort of the *Sacra Congregazione l'evangelizazione dei Popli o 'de Propagande Fide* in Sweden continued in the first half of the seventeenth century until the end of the Counter-Reformation period with the Peace of Westphalia, or perhaps the conversion of Queen Christina.<sup>37</sup>

In Finland, traces of Catholicism can be found well into the middle of the seventeenth century.<sup>38</sup> These traces have been interpreted not as aspects of a single phenomenon, but as isolated incidents without a common background. Social historians have studied these appearances as part of 'popular religion', including various 'superstitious' rituals and celebrations on, for example, saints' days, and mostly interpreted them as isolated remnants of medieval Catholicism.<sup>39</sup> This trend has been strongly influenced by British studies from the 1980s and 1990s,<sup>40</sup> which emphasize the slowly changing traditions and even incomplete Christianization in the early modern period, as described by John Bossy (1970) and Jean Delumeau (1977). The situation is much the same throughout Scandinavia,<sup>41</sup> although there have been recent efforts to include elements from other methods, including narratological for example. As Elise Garritzen (2011) and Jussi Hanska (2005) have pointed out, the grand national narrative of history in Finland – and in Scandinavia – has prevented the full assessment of any religious ideology or development other than Lutheranism. The voluminous work of Oskar Garstein (1992) is the sole exception among a multitude of works on the Lutheran Reformation and the Lutheran confessional period. Below, I shall attempt to place certain traces of Catholicism at the level of lay religion in the context of not only medieval remnants, but also the Counter-Reformation.

### **Marian Cult and Rosary Practices in Seventeenth-Century Finland**

In early seventeenth-century Finland, several people in the south-western regions of Finland – in Lower Satakunta, to be more precise – were found to possess and use rosaries.

Rosary practices seem to have survived in this region in particular. The incidents took place in the countryside, not in the towns of Rauma and Pori, where so many young men left to study in Catholic Schools, but in the neighbouring rural parishes. This is also the region of Finland that Antonio Possevino had described as the most promising part of Sweden for the purposes of the Counter-Reformation in the 1580s.<sup>42</sup> Whereas the survival of medieval religion and Catholicism in Finland is usually presented as a result of Finland's peripheral position, long distances, and lack of both communication and learning, Lower Satakunta was a densely settled, central area, where the Catholic faith had gained a strong foothold before the Reformation. Lower Satakunta was also centrally placed in terms of communication, trade, and outside influences, since both the towns Rauma and medieval Ulvila attracted a notable level of foreign trade in addition to domestic business. There were also good, regular connections to Sweden proper and also to the southern side of the Baltic Sea. The parishes were wealthy and the clerical livelihoods available there were therefore sought after. Nevertheless, it might be possible that the survival of the cult in the countryside rather than in the towns was because of the relative distance from the controlling eyes of not only the clergy but other authorities and close neighbours as well. Since these parishes were wealthy and central, however, it is also possible that more zealous pastors and court scribes working in the thriving area ensured that the surviving rosary cult was noted there more often than elsewhere. It is significant that all the rosary incidents were recorded in the heartland of Counter-Reformation influence in Finland, but it does not necessarily prove that the rosaries should only be found there. Archaeological excavations of a south-western region of Finland that is wider than Lower Satakunta – in churches and also at lay sites – have also uncovered beads and bead strings from the seventeenth century; some of these beads clearly seem to relate to rosary cults, but others do not.<sup>43</sup>

I shall first briefly describe the remnants of the rosary cult in the Finnish lower-court records in the context of the period. Only then is it possible to ask what emotions were solicited in the court records – and how. Lastly, I will go beyond the records to trace evidence of the actual rosary practices and the emotions that were played out in them.

Rosaries and the use of rosaries were mentioned in a handful of secular lower-court records from the beginning of the seventeenth century. More records could undoubtedly be found if the church court or visitation records of the early seventeenth century survived, but unfortunately they have been lost.<sup>44</sup> The following analysis of the rosary practices and their

place in the early seventeenth century lived religion – and the surviving effect of the Counter-Reformation – is based on the evidence of the secular lower-court records, combined with theological teaching on the subject. After the Reformation, Catholic practices began to be prosecuted in courts of law as superstitious or even heretical beliefs. They were understood as superstition, and as such were not distinguished from other forms of superstition, magic, or even witchcraft – all of which were often lumped together in trials. It is only in the content of the case description that the historian can discover what kind of religious error the defendant was accused of. In all of these cases – there are more than 2000 witchcraft and superstition cases in seventeenth-century Finland – records that mention rosary practices form a tiny, seemingly insignificant proportion. Only six cases on the use of rosaries can be found. Cases that include elements of ritual prayer or the Marian cult but no direct note of rosaries are far more voluminous. Nevertheless, the value of these few cases in investigating lay religious life, religious experience, and the emotions of early modern Finns can be crucial, since they provide a lay, ‘from below’ view of the subject from a period when most of the other available materials consist of official model sermons, liturgical texts, and catechisms.

The first cases, from the beginning of the seventeenth century, mention rosaries only in passing. Indeed, one of them is really a dispute over an inheritance – it is nothing to do with religion or superstition as such. An inventory of the inheritance was presented in court and one article in it was ‘a couple of strings of stones that old wives at the time used to read upon’.<sup>45</sup> In records both before and afterwards, however, rosaries also seem to have been in contemporary use. In August 1624, in the rural district court of Huittinen, a woman accused her parish priest of denying her communion. The priest explained that she ‘used a rosary [*läseband*] and old papist fallacies. Her husband ... admitted such a rumour about his wife’s conduct to exist. Therefore he [the priest] was deemed to have reason to set her away from church until she would discard such practices.’<sup>46</sup>

This case already portrays concern about religious deviancy, although the woman herself was not charged with anything in court. It is clear from the context that the woman considered herself a good Christian and entitled to communion. Presumably, being a good Christian meant that she also thought of herself as a Lutheran, but, since it had been only three decades from the end of John’s irenic efforts at the Uppsala meeting and even less since the bloody purge of Charles’s ascension, it is possible that she had acquired her religious ideas at the time when Lutheran and Catholic practices were not wholly incompatible.

The secular court concluded that the parish priest's procedure was in accordance with the Church Ordinances of 1571 and 1606, and therefore acquitted the priest. The woman, however, was ordered to clear the matter with the priest: confess and be absolved, then she would receive communion again. No punishment was imposed in the secular court, nor were any charges against her formally presented. This was not necessarily odd in the Finnish context: until the 1640s, superstition and magic were rarely given a secular punishment. Sometimes a public confession was thought an appropriate remedy, and on occasions the secular courts turned the matter over to the church court institutions (either the local church court, the cathedral chapter, or parochial visitations by the vicar or the bishop). At this time, none of these institutions had the legal option to impose a secular punishment. The offenders were usually banned from communion until they mended their ways, confessed, and were absolved. Sometimes, and increasingly so by the midseventeenth century, the secular punishment of fines was also an option. However, only two of the records that mention rosaries also mention a church punishment.<sup>47</sup>

Later on, hints of non-conformism surface. Ten years after the case in Huittinen, a woman in the neighbouring parish of Ulvila was fined three marks for 'practising mariolatria during the times of church services and therefore staying away from church'.<sup>48</sup> This was a secular punishment ordered by a secular court, although the fines were to be paid to the church. In addition to this, the woman was to be sent to the cathedral chapter for confession, absolution, and some spiritual guidance – there is no record of how this was organized, but it is likely that the cathedral chapter delegated this task to the local priest. This woman already considered her practices alternative to those of the church, and although it is quite possible that she did not consider them mutually exclusive, she was treated as if she did. Nevertheless, some people seem to have had reason to think that similar practices were still quite compatible with Lutheran customs: in the mid-1640s, the vicar of Huittinen, along with some of the parishioners, indicted the former vicar of the neighbouring parish of Punkalaidun for organizing rosary meetings and collecting alms for yearly meetings and processions possibly related to blessing the fields and the harvest.<sup>49</sup> Later in the same year, a group of women were indicted for having held a meeting or a 'resolia' at home. They had read a sequence of prayers – 'The ten commandments, the credo, Our Father each nine times on their knees' – prepared and enjoyed a dinner with beer on the table, and performed a rite during which they struck iron on flint stone.<sup>50</sup> These latter cases took the form of actual

magic trials with meticulous interrogations. The long records also provide the main material for analysis below. Still, heresy as such was not mentioned, and despite the meticulous investigation, the punishments were merely fines.

What may be significant is that almost at the same time, at least in the 1620s and 1630s, in Sweden proper, people were executed for apostasy and treason if convicted of practising and confessing the Catholic faith.<sup>51</sup> In Finland, however, the social background of the people involved was different, and there was less direct foreign influence involved: the peasant rosary users had not been studying abroad and were most likely not connected to the Polish royal court. The courts in Finland rather seem to have carefully avoided even hinting at heresy or apostasy, danger or treason; they rather speak of 'old wives' and ignorance. The secular and ecclesiastical judicial authorities in Sweden cooperated and competed. The crown had already sought to broaden the jurisdiction of secular courts over the church courts in the Middle Ages. During the sixteenth century, the same trend grew stronger so that secular courts also came to have precedence in sentencing church punishments. The initiative that the church legally held often meant the local vicar would act as a prosecutor in a secular court. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, it was still the custom that most often matters of minor religious deviation were dealt with by the church courts or visitations. The secular courts had a right to deal with them if the court heard about such rumours, but they rarely did so, unless forced to do so by direct formal accusations. The system was still more accusatorial than inquisitorial.<sup>52</sup> Therefore, the rosary practices were not cases in themselves – they were recorded by accident, because somebody took the issue to the secular court.

Within a couple of decades, superstitious religious practices became an issue in themselves; the limits of these practices in terms of heresy, witchcraft, and blasphemy were vague. Prosecutions of 'superstitious' behaviour came to take place most often in secular courts, although the processes could sometimes begin with initial inquiries in church courts, after which the actual investigation was handed over to the secular courts.<sup>53</sup>

The attitudes towards superstition and Catholicstyle practices grew harder with time, and the frequency of trials grew exponentially, especially during the second half of the seventeenth century. Nevertheless, in Finland – unlike in many other parts of Europe, including north Germany or even in Sweden proper – superstitious beliefs and practices rarely received very harsh punishments in courts if they were not connected to harmful witchcraft and diabolism. Indeed, it seems that as

the number of trials grew, the punishments became more lenient.<sup>54</sup> The superstitious practitioners were often sent home with a fine to pay or a warning to improve their behaviour.

This is an example of the incidents that makes me think the judicial system in Finland was, to an extent, different from Sweden proper throughout the seventeenth century. The punishments were more severe in Sweden proper for many crimes, religious ones being a major part of the phenomenon, and this seems to hold true for certain kinds of violent crime, and also chastity crime.<sup>55</sup> I would suggest that, despite the different parts of the country following the same legal codes, and a system of central control of the local courts beginning to be established from 1614 onwards (such as the Court of Appeal in Turku from 1624), the courts in Finland held more restitutive aims than those in Sweden proper, which may have held more punitive aims. The courts in Finland kept advising, admonishing, and birching people, then sending them home again for crimes that in Sweden proper seem to have merited hard fines, imprisonment, and even capital punishment. It was in this manner that the courts forced people into compliance and coexistence. Although the issue still needs further research, it seems in the case of superstition trials in Finland, this was a pattern that the populace obviously knew, and that allowed the accused considerable freedom of action in the courts compared to those living in areas where one's life could be at stake. As far as the religious climate and lived reality are concerned, this also meant that Finland was pragmatically pluralist while being theoretically confessionalist orthodox Lutheran.

According to current Finnish scholarship, the rosaries in seventeenth-century Finland were an expression of the cult of Mary connected to northern German guild piety, which is said to have gained a foothold in Finland only shortly before the Reformation.<sup>56</sup> For most contemporary scholars, they represent remnants of medieval Catholicism, and a part of traditional religiosity.

In other parts of Finland, the veneer of medieval Christianity has traditionally been considered thin – mistakenly, as has been argued.<sup>57</sup> In the south-western part of Finland, however, medieval Christianity was well established. Lower Satakunta was the operative area of the Franciscan Order in Rauma, whose brethren preached devotion to the Virgin Mary in the area during the late Middle Ages and only left their convent in 1538. Before the Reformation, people from Lower Satakunta attended the church of the Brigittine cloister in Naantali, close to Turku. Even after the brethren left Rauma, their church – with elaborate imagery of the Holy Virgin on scenes from the childhood of

Christ, the passion, and finally the coronation painted on its walls and ceilings – remained in the use of the local parishes in a town that was relatively frequently visited by the populace of the area. The importance of the Franciscans was not restricted to preaching: the convent owned land and had various other economic contacts in Ulvila. There is even evidence of longterm influence on local personal names: for example, names like Frans and Clara seem to have been remarkably common in the area, even during the seventeenth century. The Brigittine and the Franciscan Orders emphasized Marian mythology in their spirituality.<sup>58</sup>

Nevertheless, guild piety was part of late medieval (since the late thirteenth century) religious life throughout Europe, but it gained importance in the towns of the Baltic area only in the late medieval period. The first signs of its spread to the small towns of the Finnish coast seem to be from the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries.<sup>59</sup> Could guild piety have established itself in such a brief time to such a degree that its influence could still be seen more than a hundred years later, after a period of religious turmoil and purging? Rather, I would suggest that the rosary customs in Satakunta would be better understood in the context of the Counter-Reformation efforts and perhaps also the place of Mary in the Lutheran Church in Sweden and Finland. The Counter-Reformation efforts around Rauma and Pori, with a new Catholic emphasis on religious materiality, visuality, and tangibility, rather than a shortlived phase of medieval guild piety, produced the rosary cult in Satakunta. Mary's place in Lutheranism allowed it to spread and survive.

Indeed, although the rosary was an important element in medieval Catholicism, the Counter-Reformation turned the material culture of the sacred into an even more important religious key. The circulation of rosary beads increased significantly from the early sixteenth century. Beads were massproduced and became a success especially among women in cities like London and Paris, and also in the German cities. The importance of material relics – along with secondary and tertiary sacredness carried in objects that had touched previous holy objects – grew. Rosaries were among these objects. The Holy See promoted the use of the rosary, and the Marian devotion of which the rosary was a part, by selling and distributing rosary beads blessed by the pope. Saints and wellknown nuns also distributed rosaries; it was claimed that their power was increased as a result of personal use by these pious individuals. Congregations and confraternities of the rosary emerged and narratives of the miracles performed by the objects abounded across Europe. The rosary was a beloved example of small religious, apotropaic

objects that were kept and circulated in domestic interiors and among lay people. They were thought to have healing and protective power, and they were among a number of small objects and words that made the difference between magic and prayer, although not for everyone in the same way.<sup>60</sup>

Rosaries, like other small objects that carried sacredness and which one could carry along, hide, and take out were also especially important for people and groups in minority situations: for Catholics in the Netherlands for example. These small objects had the power to turn living spaces into sacred spaces and to signify identity when public display was prohibited.<sup>61</sup> This context gives special meaning to Johannes Jussoila's letter, in which he sent his family his regards from Rome, exhorting them to join him there since Rome showed fulfilment and justification. In a fervent letter, he sent his family a rosary, instructing his family,

On the representations I now send you, I have written the names of all the Martyrs of God. If you have difficulty in remembering them, look at the back, and you will find the answer written there for you to consult. When you have the print (or the *granum benedictum* as such representations are called) in front of you, you will receive forgiveness for all your sins, if you recite five Aves and five Paternosters. This is the reason why I have sent you so many representations or *Grana benedicta*. Recite the Rosary and take care that every single one of you procures one of them. Keep them with you at all times and recite, every day, five Aves and five Paternosters.<sup>62</sup>

A note of closer instructions to his brother on what indulgences were attached to the recital of the rosary and how to use it followed in the letter:

... you commence by making the sign of the cross and crossing yourself in the name of the Holy Trinity. Then, before starting with the large black bead recite the paternoster, meditating on the Holy Trinity. If two beads are coloured black and white, recite three Aves. The green bead is in honour of the Regina of Sweden. Keep reciting prayers to her, say one Ave to her. The red bead is in honour of the reigning Queen. Now recite one more Ave. Then meditate on the Holy Trinity. After that follows a large bead; now recite the Creed. To begin with you must realize that, when you recite the Miserere, and commence with, say the dolorosa the first decade of beads are all

Aves, and the theme assigned for mediation is Christ in the Garden sweating blood. Then follows the Paternoster. The second decade of beads are all Aves; the theme for meditation here is Christ being scourged by the soldiers. Then follows one Paternoster. The fourth decade of beads are all Aves; the theme assigned for meditations being Christ carrying his cross out of the city of Jerusalem. The fifth decade of beads are all Aves; the theme for mediation is Christ on the cross. The sixth decade of beads are all Aves. The theme for mediation being your family and at times your deceased mother and grandmother. You must pray that they are in Purgatory. God almighty will release them for the sake of His passion and death and through the intercession of Mary and of the good Saints. Finally comes the last decade of Aves and one Paternoster. Follow this manner of procedure for the next recitation of the Miserere, as I have already instructed you on the Rosary. Valetote.<sup>63</sup>

The detailed instruction in the above letter, from a son to his family who already was Catholic-minded, suggest that the rosary cult was not widely spread in the area before the Counter-Reformation had its influence there, but it also portrays a catching fervour. In the minority position endured by Catholics in Rauma and Pori, they too may have clung to their rosaries expecting – and experiencing – smallscale miracles. The court testimonies describe Mary as a protector and intercessor: processions in her honour were performed annually to ensure a good harvest. One of the cases also portrays a miracle or an answer to a prayer: the ‘resolia’ of the women in Huittinen, performed in order to cure the eyesight of one of the women, was a success: her eyesight improved.

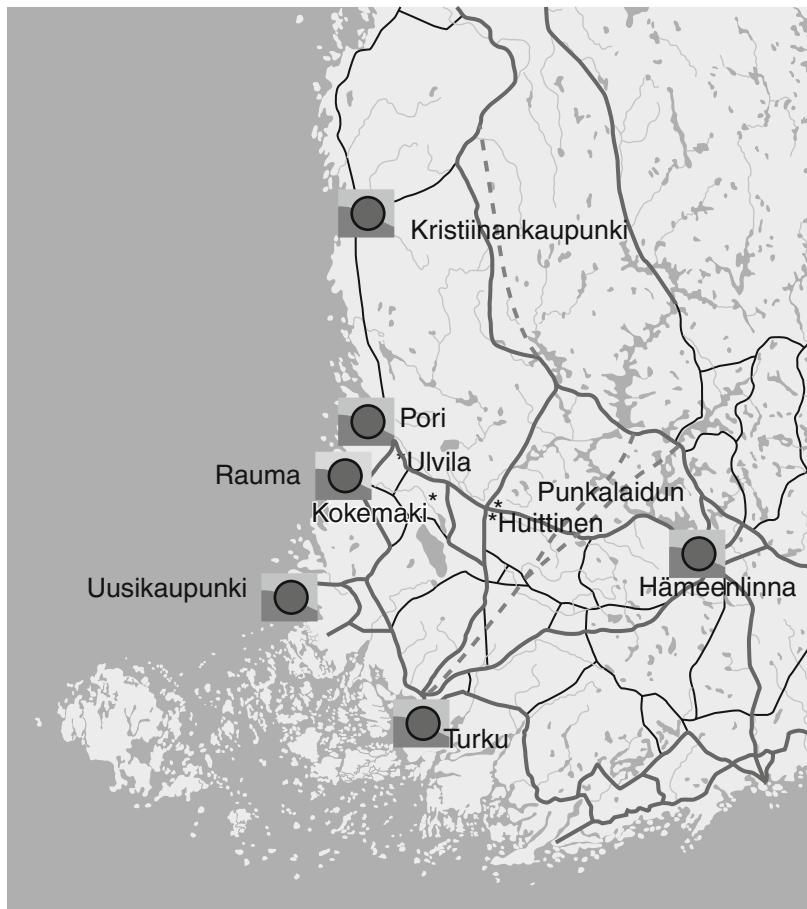
In the Catholic tradition, Rosaries are and were in the seventeenth century essentially a form of Marian devotion, the themes of which ranged from suffering and death to the glories awaiting the devout in heaven. Formally, Lutheran teaching had dropped almost all of the medieval Marian mysticism: in Lutheran sermons, she became first and foremost an example of humility and obedience. Mary did not lose her place in the early Lutheran teaching – nor in much of the later one – but she changed from the divine intercessor to an exemplary obedient housewife. Her pictures and statues were not necessarily removed from the Lutheran churches, but new meanings were gradually and slowly attached to them, and during the seventeenth century a new model of imagery was added. Bridget Heal argues, however, that in areas where Lutheranism was fairly secure and where there was little denominational competition, Marian piety could remain important. Where confessional

friction arose, Mary often became a significant marker of confessional identity and loyalty, honoured, loved, and worshipped by some and mocked, desecrated, and blasphemed by others. Catholic competition made the Lutherans more ready to reject Mary, while Calvinist influence sometimes drove them to the opposite extreme, manifested in an attachment to Marian images and devotions.<sup>64</sup>

A similar development may perhaps be seen in the Finnish case. Bishop Ericus Erici Sorolainen Sr, in his sermon collection *Postilla* –20 years after the Uppsala meeting, where he had had to recant from his support for the Red Liturgy – dismissed rosary practices along with a number of other ‘papist delusions’ (for example, the elevation of the Host and the use of salt and candles) as an outward performance only: ‘when they can read a hundred and fifty Ave Marias and fifteen Our Fathers ... and they get a lot of indulgences and their sins forgiven no matter how far away their minds can be’.<sup>65</sup>

Nevertheless, if Marian devotion was shunned, Mary herself had a place in the Lutheran Church and in the sermon, too. Sorolainen himself used Mary as an example to all poor people – as did Luther and other preachers – in an extremely emotional sermon by elaborately describing how she humbly accepted the fate given to her and her Son, and accepted that she should give birth to the Son of God and give Him up to fulfil His mission. Mary submitted to her calling and, against all adversity, was taken care of so that God’s plan was fulfilled.<sup>66</sup> However, whereas the role assigned to Mary in Lutheran teaching is clearly different from the one assigned in the medieval affective meditation, it is less clear that this changed the way people thought about Mary. The themes of motherhood and suffering for one’s children were repeated over and over in sermon texts, including those of Sorolainen, producing an effect not dissimilar to medieval affective meditation.

Although all the court cases mentioning the rosary cult come from a relatively small area in Lower Satakunta (see Map 3.1), folklore stories and poetry about Mary have been collected across far larger areas of Southern Finland and later on in Tavastia, although they are difficult to date.<sup>67</sup> The concentration of the court cases in one geographical area may simply be a result of one eager judge or a diligent court scribe. It can generally be noted that scribes performed their duties with varying zeal. It seems nevertheless that the cult of Mary had acquired and retained a more defined form in Satakunta than elsewhere in Finland, centring on the Rosary instead of merging with other religious festivities or mythology as it did elsewhere in Finland.



Map 3.1 Lower Satakunta and places where the rosaries were mentioned (asterisks)

The emotional place that Marian devotion held in Lower Satakunta after the Reformation seems to have been enhanced by the visual position it had attained during the late medieval period. As in most Lutheran areas, the Reformation in Finland included no wide-ranging iconoclasm, and most of the murals in Finnish churches were not painted and chalked over until the eighteenth century; instead, they were left to be seen and contemplated by the populace, although new meanings were attached to them. In the artwork painted during the seventeenth century, Mary was no longer the Queen of Heaven or even an intercessor between the sinner and God, but rather the exemplary

mother of baby Jesus. However, the older statutes and paintings – often presenting the Virgin with the baby Jesus, or in a trio with St Anne – were often retained in the churches alongside the newer ones. Mary and Anne emphasized the femininity of the religious experience of women and made it both symbolically and pragmatically stronger by emphasizing child-bearing and childcare as well as the chain of kinship. By including both a young and an old woman, the images picturing Saint Anne with Mary and Jesus also widened the range of figures with which to identify.<sup>68</sup>

Of the three parishes in which the rosary cult was recorded, the parish of Kokemäki hosted a church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. It was, however, a wooden church, apparently with no paintings. Likewise, the churches of Ulvila and Huittinen seem not to have had interior wall paintings, but both hosted a number of statues, or at least an altar cabinet with several figures of saints. Although no statue of Mary alone has survived or has been recorded, both churches included an arrangement with St Anne. In both churches, the altar cabinets seem to have been in use until the eighteenth century. Mary seems to have held a role between Lutheranism and Catholicism perhaps closer to Counter-Reformation Catholic than Lutheran culture. Perhaps most importantly, people did not stop imagining Mary as someone with whom they could form a personal relationship.<sup>69</sup>

Traditional religiosity is not often treated as a form of personal feeling or faith, but rather as a culture or religion of outward deeds in a bargaining religion. Herein lies a misconception, however, which may originally result from a misunderstanding of modernity from an Enlightenment perspective, and which may have been maintained by the separation of early modern and medieval studies. Historians of medieval religions have long pointed out that the rituals of traditional religiosity were invested with a multitude of personalized signs, gestures, and deeds.

I will next try to show how the actions and deeds created the religious experience and emotions. For their practitioners, these actions were not merely outward gestures and deeds; they carried personal commitment, faith, fear, and consolation. To connect the material object of a rosary to emotion and gender, I have used concepts developed by several medievalists. Especially useful is Sarah McNamer's concept of devotional meditation practices as intimate scripts: these practices were exercises designed to be performed to create a certain affective response in the performer (and his or her audience).<sup>70</sup> The rosary beads can be seen as a physical, illiterate script which was supposed to bring to mind

certain prayers, themes, and emotions. Nevertheless, the early modern evidence is very different from the medieval Liturgies of the Hours in its nature; it must be interpreted in a different textual context, and this context also influences not only the expression of emotion carried by the text, but also the experience of emotion conveyed by it.<sup>71</sup> In medieval and early modern Catholicism, rosaries were perhaps the most important form of material aid that pre-Reformation women and men used religiously for experiencing and practising their devotion: alongside rosaries, dolls, embroidery, and paintings or drawings were also used to build a personal relationship with the sacred, represented by Mary and her Son.<sup>72</sup> The rosary was at the same time a tangible form of devotion, accessible even to the illiterate and unlearned, and a form of affective meditation for the learned with time on their hands. Medieval religiosity in the west is usually thought of as emotional, and there has been a considerable amount of historical work done on traditional affective religiosity.<sup>73</sup> The same cannot be said about work on early modern Protestantism, except perhaps about some works of eloquent, learned religious writing.<sup>74</sup>

The devotional literature of medieval Catholicism has been interpreted as intimate or affective: the works are quite literally directions for the performance of feeling, and through that performance to the experience of feeling. By performing certain exercises, by repeating certain words that could function as 'emotives', by gazing at images, and by picturing narratives, people were immersed in a devout and godly feeling. Medievalist Sarah McNamer refers to William Reddy's work, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotion and Its Elucidation of Emotives*. Emotives are often first-person, present tense emotion claims, that potentially, but not always, function as performatives. They are instruments for directly changing, building, hiding, and/or intensifying emotions, directing the affective response, and even prescribing the gestures that generate compassion ('behold him!', 'embrace him!', etc.). Some emotives stage detailed, vividly imagined scenes from the Passion, while others include apostrophes, exclamations, deistic rhetoric ('here, there', etc.), and the regular use of the dramatic present.<sup>75</sup>

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Lutheran teaching of Sweden and Finland had dropped almost every aspect of Marian devotion, especially the mysticism related to the rituals of the compassionate meditation of the suffering. Emotion existed and was solicited in Protestantism as well, with both Christ's Passion and His mother's suffering.<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, Mary was turned into an example of

motherhood and humble endurance in pain and suffering, especially around the Annunciation. In these circumstances, it would be reasonable to expect rosaries to have been used by women in particular, and to have been attached to the feelings of mothers and children, especially the fears and vulnerabilities associated with childbirth and infancy.

At first sight, the court records look totally unsuitable for an interpretation of medieval affective meditation. Indeed, the lack of any emotional implications, let alone direct emotive descriptions in the court records, is striking. Although court records may often include remarks of emotional signs or straightforward emotive reactions or rhetorical means written down by the scribe – notes of tears, crying, shouting, and kneeling down – such expressions are missing in the rosary cases. Rather, the record emphasizes the distance of emotions from the practices. The first cases are especially declarative. The records simply noted that a string of stones was included in an inventory list of a disputed inheritance and that the wife had had the reputation of practising a Marian cult. However, this is rather misleading: the court records have a different purpose from the medieval devotional literature, and the emotives they use also tend towards that purpose. The *raison d'être* of the court records was to supervise the rule of law in the country and to create a sense of rationality in the operation of the court in the eyes of the intended readers of the records, that is, the Court of Appeal judges. This could not be successfully done by eliciting affective religious experiences but rather by doing the opposite – by creating images that suggested the court was detached from the follies of the ignorant subjects. If one then looks for the emotives that were used to bring forth this feeling, it is noteworthy that the court records frequently refer to rosaries as something that 'old wives in the time past'<sup>77</sup> practised: an outdated practice of ignorant and unimportant people.

Other cues designed to bring forth a sense of superiority and professionalism also punctuate the text. Since they were designed to create calmness and distance, they are also flat and abrupt, the very opposites of the exclamatory emotives of medieval affective meditation. Whereas the latter often led the reader and performer on, so as to put themselves into the performance and into the story, the court-record scribe usually cut short the stories told in the testimonies, adding notes like 'the aforementioned' or 'as noted before', which effectively prevented any such empathy with the witnesses' testimonies.<sup>78</sup> The object of empathy is the authority of the superior legal system, not religious experience.

It is important to think about the genre and purpose of the court record as a text to reveal the first set of emotives used in it. Nevertheless,

as long as the focus of analysis is on the text, the nature of the rosary as a material object remains rather intangible. Indeed, the objective materiality of the rosaries was often lost in the descriptions of the trial court records, since people tended to get rid of suspicious items when facing trial. No rosary was confiscated or brought to court. On this level of analysis, the only thing left of the object that created emotions is the text describing it. Therefore, the inherent qualities of the object in itself have been lost. We have no personal contact with it or the emotions it conveyed, and no knowledge of it – its looks, its materials, and its feel. Instead, we are only given a verbal description by an unsympathetic scribe. And, since the court record generally seeks to abstract and detach, the rosary, too, remains abstract.

Instead of approaching the court records as a single text, they can also be read as layers of narratives about the operation of the court and as people's testimonies embedded within each other. On the narrative level of the testimonies, the records include descriptions of the rituals and events that had led to the charges being brought and a case to be investigated – that is, in these cases, the actual rosary practices. To put it more tangibly, the records include narrations of how certain people prepared an event of prayer, cooked an offering meal, came together, ate, drank, and read their prayer on the rosary, walked in procession around the fields or stepped 'with iron on flint stone', how they left for home, and where they spent the night. The text and words describing them are still the same, constantly interrupted with flat and calm legal jargon, but the events that are described consist of deeds and actions that represent – at least partly – the aims and values of the participants in those actions. They include performed emotives and thereby the emotions performed, created, and experienced by the people who used the rosaries.

Contrary to expectations, motherhood and childbirth – which were so clearly present in the Lutheran teaching and in the iconography of the churches, and in medieval affective meditation – were not at all present in the descriptions of early modern rituals. More generally, however, protection and compassion for suffering was present. This is very clear in the case of the women in Huittinen who explained that they had performed the rosary rites in order to cure the eyesight of one of the village women. They also described having prepared a meal together, eaten it together, and performed the rite together. Compassion and a prolonged feeling of community seem to have been essential. Working together for the benefit of one person also creates a feeling of protection for that person and a feeling of communal responsibility

for the other participants. It marked a new place in the community for the woman with ailing sight as a person in need of and an object of charity and a member of the community who was entitled to support. Moreover, this marking of the new place was established in everyone's understanding of the community by common emotion. Likewise, many anthropologists have pointed out that eating together is used to create a sense of belonging together. In this case, it is likely that the cultural codes related to eating were supported by the very bodily satisfaction of a good meal and the ensuing sensual pleasure, which was perhaps all the greater because offering meals usually included fresh meat, which poor people enjoyed only rarely. The healing process was acted out on the body,<sup>79</sup> but the tangible communal care and bodily satisfaction together might have been intended to create emotional relief. This in turn connected the shared emotion to a personal emotional experience of sacredness: the women all concluded that their friend's eyesight had indeed become better after the ritual.

Similarly, communality and sense of belonging seem to have been important for the company in which the vicar of Punkalaidun had practised his rosary meetings. These meetings were of a different kind than the women's: these were not measures taken against a specific adversity, but yearly processions meant to prevent disasters. Therefore, compassion was not yet necessary. A sense of belonging, but also of order and hierarchy, was essential: the stories mentioned whether only farmers were present or the servants as well. The story from Punkalaidun does not mention what different people did, but in other yearly celebrations, the servants were usually given different roles from the masters, and sons and daughters were given different roles from those who had married into the house, and so on.

The narratives on the level of what had happened in the rituals are sometimes very tangible and illuminate the materiality of the ritual for the reader. With a description of eating, drinking, and praying, the reader of the text can start imagining some of the materiality of the objects related – like the passing of food to others at the feast tables and the inevitable touching of the rosary during the rosary prayers – that were not explicitly mentioned. Whereas we still know very little of what the rituals looked like – the strong visual element of the premodern religious life is missing in my sources – it may be possible to enter some of the bodily sensations of touching, feeling, and sensing weight, the warmth of a fire, or the coldness of iron, and hunger and satiety. The bodily sensations point back to the materiality of the rosary rituals. The ritual dinners and commemorative toasts, the stepping 'with iron on

flint' that the witnesses in these cases spoke of can be interpreted as bodily, performative gesture-emotives, comparable to those in the medieval affective scripts. These are different from the literary techniques presented by McNamer and Reddy, but this is to be expected: they were the performative techniques of a non-literate, bodily, and tangible culture. They were intended to bring forth a sense of belonging, communality, and compassionate suffering or relief.

Compassionate devotion and the popular versions of Marian devotion have often been portrayed first and foremost as women's devotion. Although usually written by men, the literature was explicitly written for women. Therefore, as McNamer puts it,

Recognizing that gender performance became an enduring, core mechanism for the production of this emotion not only helps to explain the historically specific social and ethical functions of compassion in late medieval England, it also helps expose emotion-driven fractures within so-called traditional religion – especially in the meditative practices of powerful lay men – at the cusp of the Reformation.

Compassion, as scripted in and through meditations of the Passions, was largely a gender performance: to perform compassion was to feel like a woman.<sup>80</sup>

In the Baltic region, however, even before the Reformation the Liturgy of the Hours and Marian rosary devotion had already taken the form of confraternal devotion including both women and men. In light of this, it should not be surprising that the court records of the first cases present the rosaries as 'an old wives' thing; this reflects the pejorative purpose of the records rather than the actual sex or gender of the practitioners. Whereas feeling like a woman was not a disparagement in religious language, since to the congregation it referenced Christ's bride in the mystical union of the two, in the professionalized, masculine atmosphere of the court records context it was pejorative: the old wives' rosaries were not deemed important. The rosary practices became worthy of a longer description in the court records only when they became an aspect of the misconduct of a professional clergyman.

However, the other case in Huittinen in 1646 is rather revealing in the matter of gender performance. In this case, the former vicar of Punkalaidun was first indicted for organizing rosary meetings 'with old women' and collecting alms for yearly meetings and processions that were possibly related to blessing the fields and the harvest. The wording

suggests femininity. Looking at the testimonies, however, they give a different gender picture. While the vicar denied everything, one male farmer of the parish admitted having spent two nights at such meetings with three other men and 'their people'. One of these men denied that he had participated, and the others were not present to admit or deny any part in the meetings, so the matter was left unresolved. A description of what began as the outdated ritual of old wives was eventually presented as a regular function of male village farmers: possibly essential to their masculine sense of responsibility over the homestead, the kin group, and the household order, as masters of their household, the servants, and 'their people'.<sup>81</sup>

It seems evident that gender was nevertheless an important part of the rosary practices in their very communality. It appears that, with the exception of the vicar, men performed their processions with other men, and women with other women. The practices supported a gendered sense of belonging. This belonging, however, was not so much tied to the obvious gender models of Marian devotion, either as a suffering but glorious mother or as a humble servant of God. The gendering of rosary practices and the emotions acted out in them were much more directly related to other people in the immediately surrounding community. Compassion for a neighbour with failing eyesight was not sought through imagining Mary's suffering, but through tangible work with the rest of one's neighbours to begin the charitable care in terms of the food, clothing, and company that a member of the community needed. Compassion was a decent woman's feeling, but it was also the feeling of a woman in a certain tangible social and geographical religious group. Men, on the other hand, did not perform the rituals for producing compassion; their rituals were for reproducing appreciation and a sense of being in command.

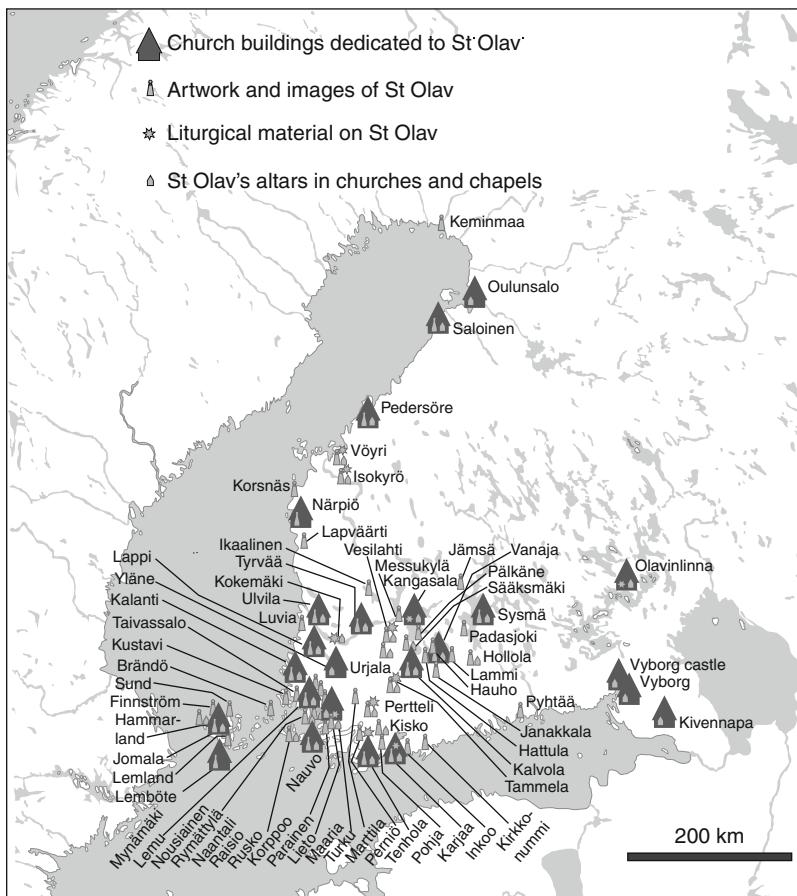
The court records of cases of rosary practice show that Marian devotion channelled religious feelings in seventeenth-century Finland and that the experience or performance of these feelings had not changed as much as church teaching on the subject had. In reading these emotions, however, one must take into account the nature of the source material: court records were not meant to create a religious affect, but rather the opposite. Therefore, they create emotions that support the authority of the legal system. The materiality of the rosaries themselves is abstracted in the court record texts. Something of the materiality, and the emotions carried by it, can, however, be read from the narratives in recurring topics and repeated remarks: these methods of creating religious emotions used by the people were bodily and physically active

techniques. The emotions thus created spread across a wider range than would be suggested by the interpretations of (medieval) Marian devotion, from displays of indifference and detachment to compassion, building a feeling of communalism, and belonging.

## Saints' Days and Celebrations

A second type of court case referred to Catholic practices in later seventeenth-century Finland, namely the celebration of irregular holy days, mostly saints' days but also other, apparently older holy days. The 1571 Lutheran Church Ordinance had relinquished, among others, the popular saints' days of St Henrik (Henry), a (probably apocryphal) bishop who was reputed to have accompanied St Erik, the legendary Swedish king, who led the first Christian crusade to Finland; St Olavi (Olaf, a Norwegian martyr king); Mary Magdalen; St Lawrence of Rome; St Catherine of Alexandria; St Clement; St Nicholas; and St Anna; as well as St Erik (the aforementioned Swedish king) and St Bridget of Sweden. Of these, the days of Mary Magdalen and St Lawrence were rehabilitated in *Nova ordinantia* 1575, but changed back into half workdays at the beginning of the seventeenth century by Charles IX. As Maps 3.2 and 3.3 show, especially Olaf and Henry had been very popular in Finland.<sup>82</sup>

The attitude of the sixteenth-century church leaders towards the saints' days was evidently not unanimous, and the measures taken did not send a strong message, at least to the parishioners. Some 150 years after the Reformation began in Finland, a campaign of educating and punishing people to remove old superstitious customs began. As part of that campaign, the celebration of 'irregular holy days' received new attention and the celebrations were recorded in various church and episcopal visitations and secular court documents. In 1670, the Provost<sup>83</sup> of Paltamo in north-eastern Finland wrote a visitation record in which he lamented the parishioners celebrating the rituals of 'Olavi's Lambs, Kekri's Lambs, Catharine's Toast, Tapani's Toasts, Ukko's Toast, etc.'<sup>84</sup> These were, as the vicar claimed, the rituals that the parishioners' forefathers had celebrated: they were outdated, Catholic, and pagan, not proper Lutheran festivals. Although the rituals described in these cases were condemned by Mikael Agricola in the mid-sixteenth century, if not earlier, in practice they had not been punishable offences, nor had these customs met with serious opposition from the parish clergy before the mid-seventeenth century. In current Finnish historiography, the saints' day rituals are usually presented as examples of late Christianization and slow Reformation, with modern Lutheranism finally penetrating



Map 3.2 Medieval dedications to St Olaf in Finland

Source: Knuutila 2007: 72–3.

the popular sphere during a forceful campaign by the authorities in the late seventeenth century. I will not enter that discussion at this point, nor will I discuss dichotomic differences between the 'elite' or theological or authoritative religion and 'popular' religion. Rather, I will first read the descriptions of the saints' day celebrations to see how they gave expression to and created religious sentiments and thoughts in the life of the laity in early modern Finnish society. My focus is on the lay experience of religion, expressions of religious sentiment, and the social or cultural meaning of the celebrations.



Map 3.3 Medieval dedications to St Henry in Finland

Source: Knuutila 2007: 72–3.

In the later part of the seventeenth century, religious errors and misdemeanours,<sup>85</sup> like the celebration of saints' days, were dealt with by both pastoral and episcopal visitations and by the secular lower courts. The initiative seems usually to have been taken by the upper clergy in the visitations. The episcopal orders prescribed that matters like superstition should be taken up in visitations (among other things), and that the parishioners should be cautioned and advised. The visitation descriptions of the saints' day celebrations are usually fairly short. The visitation records consist of the vicars' notes and description of the state of the parish. If anything interesting took place and spiritual guidance was not enough, the matter was reported to the secular authorities for full investigation.<sup>86</sup> This seems to have been the procedure followed

for handling the irregular saints' days or similar rituals in the secular courts. Whereas a majority of witchcraft and magic cases were initiated by neighbours against neighbours, the cases involving of irregular holy days were all – at least formally – initiated by either the local clergy or the provost, and most often the court record includes a note that this proceeding had developed from an issue taken up in a previous visitation.

The secular court sessions were held three times a year, and the parties to each case were summoned beforehand to give their own testimony. The sessions were public events at which the populace was expected to attend. They were also a regular form of entertainment, not only for the spreading and obtaining of information about the affairs of the realm and the parish, but also for seeing friends and relatives, drinking ale, causing a nuisance, and taking part in the evaluation of contemporary affairs. Diaries from the secular court cases against the celebration of irregular holy days and saints' days include the various parishioners' descriptions of how they or their neighbours celebrated the holy days. Some of these descriptions were more open than others and they were recorded in varying detail. A general pattern of what went on both in the celebrations and in the trials against them can be reconstructed from the descriptions.

The celebrations of saints' days can be seen as part of a system that constructed and organized the relationships between the sacred and people as well as between people in an 'economy of the sacred'<sup>87</sup> in the Finnish lay culture. The sacred and profane were marked through recurring rituals and celebrations, rites of passage, and calendrical or seasonal celebrations. Many of these festivals were saints' day celebrations. The sacred was also marked with more shortterm visual and sensory cues: altars, candles, jewellery, flowers, incense, and so on, and these too were used on the saints' days, although the information given in the court records is distorted by the secular interpretation. What do these records reveal about the construction of the sacred in early modern Finland?

A case from the rural district court of Jääski, from 1686, serves as an example. There, a number of things in the religious habits of the parish that had caused general disturbance were taken up by the recently appointed vicar, *Magister* Pahl Heinricus, as part of his project to clean up his parish. At first, Heinricus had enquired after the parishioners' religious habits in the course of a pastoral visitation, and, having become concerned enough to take action, he took various matters to the secular court. Most of the individual complaints related to selling and buying beer at the time of the church services. Nevertheless,

the ways in which a few parishioners celebrated various (officially) non-Lutheran holy days, especially St Catherine's Day, the Feast of Corpus Christi and St George's (known in Finnish as *Yrjö*) Day, took up more time and pages than any other matter at the session.<sup>88</sup>

The saints' days obviously served as systematic calendar markers in the cycle of the year: the dates coincide with important moments in the annual cycle of agriculture and cattle rearing. St Catherine's Day (25 November) marks the end of the harvest and the slaughtering period, and the beginning of the indoor season – the long, dark, and icy winter. It is perhaps of interest that All Souls' Day is far less visible in the material. The Feast of Corpus Christi took place on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, usually in mid- or late June, which was the starting point of the haygathering and berry-collecting season, when nature starts to bear fruit and the first harvests took place. Midsummer was its alternative and sister festival. St Olaf's Day (29 July) was the end of this season and the start of grain harvest. St George's Day (23 April) signified an early start of the spring before Walpurgis on 1 May. However, there were also alternative, astrological days, such as midsummer or the equinoxes, so these festivals should not be considered as mere markers of the agricultural seasons; they had multiple functions that certainly included religious meaning.

The holy-day celebrations also included a range of more temporary ritual markers that set them out from the ordinary, as either suspicious or sacred, for the people who observed or took part. A story from Jääski serves again as an example.

In Jääski in 1686, a villager named Tuomas Pullinen testified against his neighbour and incriminated himself at the same time by explaining that he knew of his neighbour's practices because

he did well celebrate the same Corpus Christi and St Catherine's days, by putting on his best church clothes, and drinking special beer, with no strangers or servants but only those born at home or their own folk. Furthermore, Pullinen said of his celebration on St Catharine's Days that he slaughtered a lamb and cooked it as a dedication to God.<sup>89</sup>

The neighbours also admitted to celebrating St George and St Olaf with special ale. Usually the celebrations included psalm singing and prayers. In a couple of cases, the lay people were also reported to have celebrated an 'irregular Mass' – these descriptions include elements of blasphemy, although at least one of these celebrations seems to have been done in

all earnestness.<sup>90</sup> These are all features that also emerge in other types of magic and could be considered suspicious under certain circumstances. These features also likened the celebration in various ways – by dress, and singing and by prayer – to the celebration of holy days in church.

The special beer or ale was also a reference to the ‘toasts’ mentioned earlier. Toasting in honour of the Virgin Mary or the saints had been an important part of convivial piety throughout Europe, and especially in the late medieval Baltic region, most importantly Livonia,<sup>91</sup> but ritual toasts were also offered to Ukko and possibly other non-Christian deities. The toast to Ukko was a special feature in the Tavastia region, intended to bring about rain in dry summers. Those toasting were seldom described as settling for one toast; the amount of drink consumed was thought to procure a corresponding amount of good luck and protection.<sup>92</sup> A special meal was also a common feature: a lamb or a calf was slaughtered and prepared beforehand to be consumed in honour of the saint, especially St Catherine or St Olaf. Sometimes the meals took place in the cattle sheds, sometimes in the house, and sometimes these included presentations in specially built or ad hoc offering places.<sup>93</sup>

The syncretistic mixture of religious reference to Catholic guild piety and saints as well as to non-Christian deities, and their very loose connection to modern forms of the Lutheran Lord’s Supper or Eucharist, have led to discussion of the meals and toasts as part of the animistic culture of Finland. Both the meal and the ale were symbols that had carried multiple meanings throughout the late medieval period and did so also in early modern Protestant culture. Both referred to the communion and to more secular celebrations, as well as also to a variety of traditions that never sought to distinguish the sacred or the sacramental from the secular and mundane in the way theologians insisted. Whereas there is currently rather a lot of scholarly insight into the medieval and Tridentine Catholic concepts of communion, works on the Protestant concepts of communion have only recently proliferated. There are, however, a number of works that make use of ritual theory to examine the physical spatiality and setting as well as the gestures and visual cues of the Protestant communion service.<sup>94</sup> One of the visual cues suggested by Luther was the arranging of communion at the front of the church so that the communicants could be seen by all the congregation.

Both the Lutheran and Catholic reformers strove, at least on the theological level, for a more individualistic concept of the communion, one oriented towards the relationship between the individual and God. At the level of praxis, many studies of the Lutheran Lord’s Supper (and the Tridentine Catholic communion) have shown that the laity’s dedication

to the social and collective aspects of the communion continued. Seen in this light, the saints' day celebrations could be interpreted as a lay substitute for a range of communal practices alongside the communion. There were other practices like it, for instance a number of meals and toasts in late medieval Catholic culture, many of which never disappeared in the Reformation or the Counter-Reformation, perhaps least of all in the former. A visit to the local alehouse together with neighbours and relatives was a Sunday event for many rural and small-town regular churchgoers, as were baptisms, weddings, and funerals.<sup>95</sup> In areas like Sweden and Finland, where proper alehouses were few and far between, drinking at the temporary stalls of the unofficial beer sellers near the church – frowned upon but irrepressible – served much the same purpose. The unofficial celebrative meal in honour of the saint may also have reflected the Catholic practice of distributing the *Eulogiae* or blessed (non-consecrated) bread at the back of the church at the end of the mass. As the bread was not transubstantiated, consuming it unprepared and unworthily did not pose the same danger of desecration as the real communion bread. It allowed the laity to play a part in the social side of the communion, partaking in community activities enhanced by the common sacred event.<sup>96</sup>

I would suggest, however, that rather than being seen as a substitute for a lack of communal and social aspects in the Lutheran Church service and communion, taken from either the medieval or Tridentine Catholicism, the saints' day meals should be seen as a syncretistic extension of the various social and communal aspects that were retained in the Lutheran teaching on the Lord's Supper. As Amy Nelson Burnett recently demonstrated, Lutheran teaching did not deny the social aspects of communion or the unity between the parishioners who took part, or even those who only witnessed the communion of others. In this respect, as in many others, Lutheran teaching deliberately allowed for the continuation of medieval practices and concepts, making suggestions rather than prescriptions. The many forms of communion of the late medieval church continued in the Lutheran Reformation, although the emphasis shifted. Along with the individuality of communion, Luther emphasized the importance of common worship. It was supposed to be an orderly, public, reverent assembly, held in a properly appointed place: 'one cannot and should not appoint a special place and location for each individual and one should not seek out secret corners to hide away, as the Anabaptists do'. It was not merely a matter of practicality, although the masses did need control and a large building to house their number, but even according to Luther, the prayers

of the many were more likely to be heard than those of just one.<sup>97</sup> The communicants were asked to come to the church before everyone's eyes, so that all could see who they were, and they were encouraged to make peace with the community even if the lack of a communicant's purity at communion no longer constituted his or her eternal damnation.<sup>98</sup> Although clearly different from the Eucharist, and although taking place secretly in private farmhouses, the laity's celebration of the saints' days seems to have taken advantage of the experience and concept of a meal as a religious integration both between men and the divine and between men and other men offered by Lutheran practice and teaching.

There was a social aspect to the laity's saints' day celebrations as well as in the church communion; they were differently organized for different individuals. For some of those who partook, the relationship with the divine was more pronounced, and for others the social activities were of greater importance. Both Protestant and Counter-Reformation Catholic teaching thought it important that communion should be frequent, but in both Catholic and Protestant areas it remained common for most of the parishioners to take communion only once to perhaps three times a year. Although it has been often noted that many people felt no need to stay in the church during the communion after the consecration of the host and the wine, people did expect to see the consecration in both Catholic and Lutheran churches.<sup>99</sup> The witnessing of the communion – and, in Catholic areas of the consecrated wine by the laity – by non-partakers can be likened to the manner in which only men and only 'those born in the house' partook in the saints' day meals as a sacramental gaze, to use the term coined by Scribner.<sup>100</sup> Both still allowed the non-participants some part in the activities and served to organize the relationship between men and the divine, as well as between the men born in the house and other people. Both also created a hierarchical tension between the participants and the onlookers.<sup>101</sup>

The most typical form of saints' day celebrations consisted of refraining from regular work – a type of celebration and honour given to holy days by the Christian churches, and especially to saints' days as holy days by the Catholic Church. The court records describe refraining from work as a self-evident part of the celebration. For example, during the interrogations in the parish of Jääski, the defendants are very bluntly recorded as having 'refused to work' during the Feast of Corpus Christi and St Catherine's Day, with no further explanation as to whether or how they were asked about it. Certain kinds of work could, however, form part of the celebration. Later on in this court case, the neighbours mention that the defendants celebrated St George's Day (23 April),

when they performed rituals and letting the cattle out to pasture.<sup>102</sup> Other sources also describe cattle being ritually led to pastures in late autumn (e.g. November) or in early spring, when there was still snow on the ground, in order to facilitate the spring and the pasture season.<sup>103</sup> Though the Jääski record does not explicitly name any rituals here, other sources describe the blowing of horns, tying bells around the necks of cows, lighting a fire under the cowshed door,<sup>104</sup> and a ritual gate being made of one or two young trees, either birch or rowan, bent and tied together to form an arch. Some later folklore sources describe the cattle being led through such a gate over which the mistress of the house had spread her legs.<sup>105</sup>

The observation of the Sabbath was strictly enforced: one should refrain from ordinary work, except for what was necessary for feeding and milking the cattle and keeping the livestock and the humans in the household warm. Attending church services was a duty enforced with varying enthusiasm and success: usually no one cared about a few absences, but if someone stayed away for years on end or did so to avoid conscription – or attracted any kind of public attention through their absence – the individual would be prosecuted. Indeed, staying at home on Sundays in order to work was certain to draw negative attention. This made refraining from work an important sign of the holiness of the day in the Christian setting, even when the day in question was not a Lutheran holy day or prayer day (in Finnish, *rukouspäivä*) during which a church service would have been provided.

For the study of lived religion in a lay context, it is essential to understand that religion was not just a coherent and ordered structure of learned dogma, nor mere outward ritual; it was also an experience and an emotional performance, a 'living out' of the concepts of the world and relations with the sacred that were sometimes inexpressible in words. That performance was partly private or individual, partly public, communal, and shared. In the surviving evidence, the communal and the shared and public nature dominates – indeed communality has been considered one of the key elements of traditional premodern religion – but its dominance in the source material may also reflect the fact that few lay people wrote down descriptions of their religious sentiments and experiences unless they had an audience in mind. Consequently, someone else had to be involved for any historical source material to be created. Thus contextualized, the trials held against superstition and/or saints' rituals at the height of the confessionalization of the second half of the seventeenth century can be treated as material that tells us of the religious life and sentiments of a wider cross-section

of the people than just a few dissenters. Religious diversity and flexibility in accommodating different viewpoints and practices – one might even say tolerance – seems to have been essential in the religious atmosphere of an era that has also been termed ‘the age of persecution’. Religion as it was lived out in daily life and personal encounters with other people was different from the dramatic disruptions of the witch-hunts or religio-political wars and massacres.<sup>106</sup>

The saints’ day celebrations, unofficial and performed outside the church as they were, brought the sacred home from the church. According to various historians, from Robert Muchembled to Steven Ozment, the understanding of the sacred underwent a change in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. This change consisted of a sharper and more marked distinction between the sacred and the profane, or the holy and the mundane.<sup>107</sup> The change has since been shown to be less dramatic, unless it is taken to mean that fewer things were considered sacred than before, and the marking of the sacred took place in a different way in Protestant and in at least pre-Tridentine Catholic circles.

At first glance, the rituals of the saints’ day celebrations relate to the most basic needs of daily life. This was not a form of worship that was performed in a special place reserved solely for that purpose; it was conducted in one’s own house, in one’s own cowshed or in one’s own fields. And even though the practitioners put on their best clothes to perform the rituals, the rituals themselves concerned daily tasks relating to food and cattle. It is fair to assume that this close connection to the means of livelihood raised the importance of religion. Perhaps it is not too far-fetched to suggest that at least some of the farmers may have seen the ritualistically performed tasks of daily life as an application of Luther’s ideals of vocation and turning all daily work into a calling, a task through which God was served.

In the wake of the work of British historian Eamon Duffy,<sup>108</sup> the Swedish historian Göran Malmstedt discusses traditional religion as a bargaining religion of outward performances that were supposed to mechanistically produce salvation and divine protection or retribution. One way in which the irregular saints’ day rituals complemented the official rites in church was that the people took active part: they performed the rites, whereas in church they were expected to restrict themselves mainly to a passive role.

While the clergy often complained that the parishioners did not listen carefully enough, attend to the sermon, or understand the Bible humbly enough, it seems that the religious rituals that interested people most were those that involved their participation and performance

rather than simply listening and watching. Within the official space of the church, the Eucharist was the most important part of the service for both the populace and the clergy, while witnessing the consecration (and, at times elevation) of the communion bread and wine was considered to be of the utmost importance. Nevertheless, at other points the parishioners were not satisfied with simply sitting in their pews and listening carefully to the sermon or liturgy. The liturgy offered some antiphons, but at times the congregation did not accept a passive role, instead echoing the priest's words and song, or repeating the prescribed lines multiple times.<sup>109</sup> The congregations also rose and knelt more times than asked, and made the sign of the cross and bowed to different crosses and statues in or around the churches.<sup>110</sup> In some parishes, there were traditions of annual offering days, when people walked about during the sermon to place coins or other offerings, like animal skins, in the offering boxes, or threw them on the altar – or even, as in some descriptions, hung them on the chandelier.<sup>111</sup>

In other words, active religious participation was important to the parishioners. This is not only a matter of the importance of performing the correct religious rites in a bargaining religion, but also about claiming religious actorship and subjectivity. It is true that at some points this subjectivity could be representative: one did not always have to take part personally in the action, and one could send a representative, such as a neighbour or a household member. However, representation in household and kin matters, as well as matters concerning the whole village, was an accepted principle in secular matters, so why was it not also in the religious matters that concerned those same communities? The more personal the matter, the greater the duty it was to take a personal part in religious activity.<sup>112</sup>

The participants in the saints' day celebrations drank beer, slaughtered an animal, cooked a meal and ate it. They let out their cattle in a specific way and knelt down in prayer. The farmer's own cult was one of tangible action and performance instead of one of words. It is significant that both in church and on the irregular holy days, a meal was at the centre of the ritual and of the worship.<sup>113</sup>

Various levels of religious actorship are evident in the saints' day rituals. Most of the rituals were performed by men, although presumably (it is not mentioned) the meals would be prepared by women. Women and children were reserved a place standing and watching nearby, except in the rituals for letting out the cattle. Although the examples cited above give little detail on these specifics, the court records detail the use of magic in the letting out of the cattle, and women and children played

a major part. Children made a noise with rattles and horns to frighten away beasts and bad spirits, while women led the cattle out over a fire or stood over the gateposts with their legs spread to bless the cattle.<sup>114</sup>

As they relate to daily work and livelihood, the rituals also reinforced a sense of belonging to a certain community in which the work and rituals were performed. Here again, the unofficial rites seem to have complemented the official ones. In the church services, and especially in the communion, the unity of the whole parish was enforced, with both past and future generations being symbolically present. This was important for both the parishioners and the realm, but the unofficial celebrations put smaller communities at the centre. These were rituals where members of the village or, more often, the family, were separated from others and marked as belonging together. Again it is no coincidence that the rituals all centred on a shared meal, for sharing a meal is universally thought of as a mark of unity. It is striking that many of the descriptions note – as does the one from Jääski – that in the household rituals only ‘those born in the house’ participated, instead of the whole household with servants, live-in workers, and more distant relatives – sometimes even the spouse that had moved in was left outside. The rituals thus marked not only the external boundaries of the household but also those within, the boundaries of kin and family. In marking and enforcing the community, the private celebration also enforced the hierarchies within the household in a way comparable to seating orders in church.

Communality is an oft-noted characteristic of premodern religiosity.<sup>115</sup> Communalism was enhanced by tying the religious together with the mundane, especially with drinking. For instance, C. Dixon Scott suggests that attendance at the church service accompanied a visit to the ale house, which integrated communities, villages, and kin.<sup>116</sup> In rural areas with no alehouses, drinking during the celebration served to integrate the household. Nevertheless, an equally general notion is that both the Lutheran Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation strove towards more individual and personal or individualistic commitment and involvement in religion, as a more ‘modern’ form.<sup>117</sup> Since the Reformation, when theologians and ideological leaders propagated personal forms of piety, the communalism of religious action has usually been sought in village festivals and the like. Nevertheless, the Protestant leaders’ quest for a New Jerusalem, a society of the righteous, and the fear of God’s punishment falling on the whole of society because of one sinner all worked to reinforce the communal. On the other hand, the fact that some parishioners both held on to old customs and created

new ones in the face of disapproval or prohibition not only shows a degree of individuality and personal involvement, but may well have encouraged the growth of individuality. In any case, in the early modern saints' day rituals, the personal and the communal were inextricably interwoven, and one could not exist without the other.

The economy of the sacred should be understood as a structure in the sense that it is not merely a collection of changing and unrelated relationships, but a system within which and by which the relationships between this world and the transcendent world are maintained. Many scholars argue that in premodern religions this happens through a certain bargaining with the supernatural, a *do ut des* mentality upon which a comparison to modern religiosity renders a mechanistic tone. The critical or even pejorative tone of much of modern scholarship that describes the medieval and 'long Reformation' religion as mechanistic echoes the often propagandist rhetoric of the reformers in the sixteenth century and the generations of clergy that followed after them. The tone has been criticized by both medievalists and early modernists from the perspective of studying religious experience and emotion. The rituals of traditional religion were not empty of meaning, feeling, or personal, internal involvement – and often a successful bargaining with the divine required exactly just that.

In Sweden and Finland, as in many Lutheran areas, the places and customs of the sacred in the medieval church were adopted and put to use very much as they were. Various reasons for this have been suggested, for example, the moderateness of Lutheran theology, the middle ground adopted by Lutheranism, the clear social conservatism expressed by Lutherans, and obviously the wish of people to avoid either conflict with the establishment of neighbouring denominational powers or the alienation of conservative parishioners.<sup>118</sup>

A pertinent question concerning the saints' day rituals has been whether they were remnants of Catholicism or even some older pagan religion in Finland, and what their importance in contemporary religious culture was. I have chosen to represent them in connection to the Counter-Reformation here, although these events took place in different areas from the Counter-Reformation heartlands in Finland – but not so far away from Vyborg, the other centre of religion and trade in Finland, which probably was well aware of all the important trends in northern Europe (see Map 3.4). Nevertheless, I think the Catholic customs had a certain Lutheran character.

In contemporary religious teaching, saints and sacrifices were condemned as Catholic practices. These condemnations have frequently



Map 3.4 The approximate area where the irregular saints' days would be expected to be found, places mentioned in this work as sites of irregular holy-day rituals (asterisks), and seventeenth-century towns

been seen by some historians as an indication that the saint's cults may still have been fairly popular in seventeenth-century Lutheran Finland. If compared to the material from the secular lower courts, however, it appears that traces of the cults of saints and other Catholic practices condemned by either the Uppsala Council of 1595 or the

Örebro Ordinance of 1617 did appear in the courts, but that until the latter half of the seventeenth century not much effort was put into suppressing the practices or beliefs included in them. On the contrary, for example, church murals and statues depicting not only Mary but other saints were still shown in many churches. When efforts at suppressing the saint's celebrations led to court trials in the latter half of the seventeenth century, certain rituals were placed on a saint's day because they were or had been part of a Catholic saint's cult, but more often a general magical rite – one that would have been performed anyway – was placed on a convenient day in the calendar and noted down as a saint's day. There are clearly many layers of cultural development present in the saints' rituals. The ritual celebrations and offerings on saints' days must not be considered only as remnants of Catholicism in Lutheran Finland, nor even as remnants of pagan religions, although they have traits of both. They must also be considered as part of seventeenth-century Lutheran religious culture.

The narratives depicting what happened in the popular saints' day rituals tell of genuine religious sentiment and eagerness to take part personally in tangible religious worship in one's own home – perhaps more so than the services offered by the church. The celebrations reveal ways in which the Lutheran laity of the seventeenth century constructed the sacred, using and appropriating to their daily needs the methods they had already seen and experienced in church. The narratives also tell us of the social forms and rules of lived religion: the rituals were performed by (male) farmers and husbands, the mistress of the house taking part at times, and watched by servants and the young. A social hierarchy can be seen in them, which reflects not only the general division of work in rural households or that taught in the catechisms, but also a hierarchical tension between the relationships of the participating men and the divine, as well as the participating men and other people. As such, the saints' day celebrations appear as an appropriation of Lutheran teaching for the daily life needs of the parishioners, allowed by the essentially conservative nature of Lutheranism.

## **The End of Catholic Influence in Finland**

A tightening control has been presented as one of the characteristics – if not the main characteristic – of the early modern Finnish, Swedish, and Lutheran (or even confessionalist) religious climate. As scholars like Göran Malmstedt from Sweden and the Finnish historian Miia Kuha suggest, 'popular religion' as distinct from elite or theologians' religion,

was repressed, but traditional forms of religious ritual survived or even flourished where control of manners and behaviour was impossible. Monica Weikert prefers to emphasize control of interpretation rather than control of behaviour and custom: when the right of interpretation was left to the clergy, the custom could and probably would be accepted, when not, the clergy would try to repress the custom.<sup>119</sup>

Below, I will question the force of the campaign to eradicate superstitious practices, but focus more on the role of the saints' day celebrations as part of the laity's lived religion. In the wake of Scribner,<sup>120</sup> many Finnish scholars have explored the dynamics between popular and elite religious views and customs, albeit mostly as background to another research theme, usually something more traditionally social science-oriented, like the history of crime, hierarchical family relationships, or more generally, 'mentality'. The conclusion in recent historiography has been that whereas the 'populace' seems to have considered themselves fully Christian, there was a considerable gap between their concepts of Christianity and the elites' or the authorities' concept(s) of it.<sup>121</sup> Whereas the Swedish Reformation was officially implemented very fast at the top level of society, changes in religious practice were often even slower than those described by Eamond Duffy in England.<sup>122</sup> Historians have thought this probably applied to the whole of the populace, but even more so in peripheral regions. 'The further away from the heartlands, the more surely old, even pre-Christian beliefs and customs reigned rampant', writes Esko M. Laine, a church historian, citing as an example the secular and religious authorities' determined but largely ineffective campaign against irregular holy days in Northern Savonia from the late seventeenth to the late eighteenth centuries.<sup>123</sup> The development of folk education in the form of sermons and catechisms and the rise of court trials to suppress these popular customs would seem to bear this out.

Nevertheless, the campaign seems to have been less determined than current historical study leads us to believe. From the evidence of the material from the lower secular courts, it appears that until the latter half of the seventeenth century, not much effort was put into suppressing cults of saints or many other Catholic practices condemned by the Council of Uppsala in 1595 or the Örebro ordinance in 1617 – or into suppressing the beliefs behind the practices. As mentioned, murals and statues depicting both Mary and other saints were still shown in many churches.<sup>124</sup> When efforts to suppress celebration of the saints led to court trials in the late seventeenth century, the total number of court cases that actually name such celebrations remains low.<sup>125</sup> Church

visitation records double the number of records, but not necessarily the number of cases, since they often talk about the same cases. Other related superstitious celebrations and similar rituals – such as putting the cattle out to pasture in specific ritual ways or cooking specific meat dinners for curing illnesses<sup>126</sup> – come up more often, but they lack any explicit mention of the saints or fail to mention saints' days or indeed any other irregular holy days. Most of the calendarbound magic in Finland was performed on the most powerful calendar markers, which also found their way into the Lutheran liturgical calendar. There were also magic trials where a clear calendar day was noted – Easter, Christmas, or even a saint's day or a certain Sunday – but the contents of the magic rituals were markedly different from celebrations of 'irregular holy days'. Of course, these types of court cases may still be connected to irregular holy days, and it is possible that the religiosity was simply downplayed in the court record or in the testimonies. However, there is at present no way of proving such suppositions. Rather, it seems that the saints' days were dealt with in courts as a specific, exotic form of superstition and described as such, distinct from other forms of magic.

The relatively small number of court cases may reflect either a relative lack of importance and spread of the customs and phenomena in question, or a lack of enthusiasm in prosecuting the customs. It appears to me to be a combination of both. When folklorists started to collect material in the nineteenth century, the themes of the old celebrations of Ukko, Kekri, St Catherine, and so on, seem to have come up often. Admittedly, the collectors may have prompted the stories with leading questions, and the stories were always told as something that used to be practised or believed by earlier generations rather than the storytellers themselves. Still, it seems that the customs were widespread enough for the storytellers to come up with similar material.<sup>127</sup> This indicates that there is a disparity between the scarceness of the court cases in the seventeenth century and the supposed popularity of the old practices before collecting the materials in the nineteenth century. Yet it is hardly likely that these customs should have risen in popularity during an era marked first by religious confessionalization and then intense secularization, rationalism, the Enlightenment, and finally the beginnings of industrialization. The probability is that the practices were more widespread during the seventeenth century than the number of court cases suggests. Furthermore, the source material describes the customs and beliefs as widespread.

In the Jääski case of 1686 that was taken as an example earlier in this chapter, a phrase used frequently by both the accusers and the defence

was that they practised what was commonly done, or what many people did in the region. The vicar and several other witnesses also testified that 'these and other superstitions were common in the area'.<sup>128</sup> Provost Cajanus of Savonia, like the clergy in other visitation records, often laments the 'superstition generally practised in the area'. The same happened in all the eastern areas of the Swedish realm: in Livonia in 1637 and in Estonia in 1667–68, organized visitations likewise discovered that almost every parish had some sort of tradition of idol worship and sacrifice 'on hillocks and in valleys, near chapels or chapel ruins'.<sup>129</sup> Whereas such a claim can be dismissed as rhetoric to a certain degree, the farmers in the secular court records cited above testify to the same. It seems, therefore, that such practices were more widespread than the court trials designed to suppress them. In other words, court cases seem underrepresented in comparison to the actual spread of the custom: one must draw the conclusion that the campaign against these practices was far from determined. In the seventeenth century, it actually appears mild.

The matter is more complicated than this, however, because 'old remnants' of Catholic customs also received a different kind of importance during the second half of the seventeenth century, not as a religious problem – as superstition to be prosecuted – but as part of a national project of gathering the cultural heritage and history of the Swedish realm as it was constructing its image and identity as a great power and a great nation. Historical and mythological 'heritage' became important. In 1666, a decree was issued to the effect that the parish clergy was to collect and report information on historical things in their parishes, such as statues, silver, ruins, and other remnants of the Swedish past, as well as stories relating to them. This included information on worship and the saints of the Catholic period. Writing the reports put the parish clergy in a difficult position, as they were being encouraged to find remnants of cults and customs that were not supposed to exist anymore.

Many members of the clergy decided to historicize the stories on Catholic saint cults and miraculous statues by stressing that these stories 'used to be told by old men', although often 'one could still see the erosion on the ground' where people used to gather for the Creeping to the Cross or kneeling before saints and crosses. In a largely oral culture, the distance that could be created was limited to a couple of generations, so that other methods of alienation or ridicule were used, while sometimes the items were described as dangerous. Nevertheless, they were given some importance, since they were enquired after by the central government as part of the clergy's official duties.<sup>130</sup>

The result of the antiquity collections was very probably that the attitudes of the clergy were influenced by this process, and that they began to think of the customs in a more ambiguous way. A similar process was occurring among the students and teachers of the Royal Academy of Turku, where the clergy of Finland were trained. A shift from religious to historical evaluation occurred and encouraged the collection of folk songs, poetry, and stories; although this development seems to have taken place later, the results were still often reported in ambiguous tones.<sup>131</sup> In addition to the religious evaluation, where the customs of saints' day celebrations were unorthodox, and despite their possible benefits being ultimately repressed (to be discussed later in this book), the clergy began to think about the customs as the historical evidence of a great nation, as something that should be found, recorded, and preserved.

Various historians have argued that Catholic influences survived in the remote areas of Sweden, where the learning of both clergy and laity was more deficient or where the populace was still beyond the tightening control of the authorities. I have pointed out the relative deficiency of that control above. As a comparison between Maps 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 shows, the area for medieval cults was not the same as the early modern celebrations. A good number of these court cases took place near towns, and – with the exception of Paltamo – in densely inhabited areas. Most of the saints' day rituals took place in the relatively rich and relatively highly populated parishes on the Karelian Isthmus near Lake Ladoga. More importantly, they took place rather near to the governmentally and economically important towns of Vyborg and Kexholm. Although the economic success of Vyborg varied over time, there were periods when it was even more thriving and well connected than the Finnish governmental capital, Turku. Not only was local gossip exchanged there, foreign visitors influenced the atmosphere as well. Moreover, Vyborg was one of only two episcopal seats in Finland, covering the whole of eastern Finland. Parishes close to it cannot be regarded as remote enough to escape the control of the church authorities. They were on the easternmost borders of the Swedish realm, but even from the perspective of Stockholm, they would not be considered peripheral. At the time when the Thirty Years War had made Sweden a great power, the easternmost areas had ceased to be points of critical contest; they had simultaneously been bound closer together with the rest of the realm through the building of an extensive infrastructure of travel and postal routes, information, and government.<sup>132</sup> In the seventeenth century, the saints' day celebrations were not a phenomenon of the remote backwoods where

there was neither new learning nor control, but of the relatively central areas, where everything else of importance happened as well.

It is true that the rituals appear to have lasted longer – throughout the eighteenth century – in the real periphery of Northern Savonia. The areas around Lake Ladoga, where many of the seventeenth-century cases took place, were annexed to Russia in 1721. Consequently they are not represented in the Swedish source material after this, surfacing only in the nineteenth century when the whole of Finland was annexed to Russia and the would-be nation of Finland started to search for its national identity. The Russian authorities were not as keen to attack deviance from Lutheranism as the Swedish authorities were, and thereby they allowed the survival of the old poetry but also produced less material about it before the collections of the Finnish nationalists in the nineteenth century. Notwithstanding, the seventeenth-century saints' day rituals were not solely the customs of the peripheries.

A further observation is that the seventeenth-century saints' day rituals were not restricted to the poorest and presumably most ignorant members of the populace. Rather, they were freehold-owning peasant farmers, often relatively wealthy ones. For example, in the Jääski case, the first offender, Berend Tappain, was a local peasant farmer and a juror in the court. In Sweden, most peasant farmers were freeholders, passing on hereditary rights to their houses and farmsteads to their descendants as long as they could pay their taxes. At the end of the court session description, when the parties had been sentenced to fines and the sentence was referred for the approval of the Court of Appeal, the records also note that both parties were 'well able to pay their fines'. This was not always the case, and monetary fines sometimes had to be commuted to corporal punishment: consequently, the ability to pay is testament to relative prosperity.<sup>133</sup>

In this society, the freehold-owning peasant farmers had an independent status and a selfevident right to take part in managing the realms' affairs in the Diet. More importantly for themselves, and perhaps also for the assessment of the court cases, they held the right to take part in local affairs in parish meetings and court sessions. The office of juror was, in the Swedish secular courts, a position of trust in the community, the same men held it from one year to the next and they were often used as local experts in court, not only having a say in how matters should be judged, but also acting as tools of the crown in carrying out both court decisions and all sorts of other local government business. Thus, Tappain seems to have been a prominent member of the parish community.<sup>134</sup>

While this group of people are now often referred to as 'the peasantry', at the time they distinguished themselves from the rest of the rural folk as 'the settled folk' – *bofast bo(e)nde* in Swedish or *talonpojat* in Finnish (literally meaning 'sons of the house'). Their status was thus different from the village poor or the landless workers, and the odd-job men and women who did not even have a yearly work contract but combined a number of short-term jobs with semi-legal services or handicrafts. The *talonpojat* were the better-off stratum of the rural non-gentry.<sup>135</sup> They were certainly not ignorant by contemporary village standards, although standards were changing and ignorance is always determined by someone who at least pretends to judge from above. A good few farmers and nameless villagers were familiar enough with court work to know what they should deny, and had probably heard of the matter at hand and prepared their defence in good time, since the same matter would have been first taken up in the visitations.

There was certainly a campaign against superstition and for religious uniformity, but that campaign was not itself uniform. The clergy reacted to the saints' day celebrations in varying ways – not all seem to have embarked upon prosecutions. Others seem to have turned a blind eye and labelled the customs as outdated and no longer in serious use.<sup>136</sup> There are also some references to priests encouraging these practices, although they are ambiguous. Even the Jääski case refers to the villagers practising 'only what they had heard preached from the pulpit', although their interpretation of the sermon may have differed from the vicar's.

Was it a new generation of better-educated clergy who attacked these customs, while the older, less well-learned and perhaps more lax priests condoned the old habits? It happens that many of the visitation records that describe the irregular holy days were also written quite soon after a new vicar had arrived in the parish, and the same records often include a number of other lamentations about the ignorance and poverty of the parishes, sometimes even of the negligence or worse abuses of the previous clergy. However, such lamentations on the superstition and ignorance of the parishioners also had their purpose as part of the identity work of the clergy: it was the rhetoric each generation used to argue for the necessity and hardship of their work. In eastern Finland, the clergy who attacked the saints' day rituals were often the Uppsala-educated bookish sort of clergy rather than those of short training in Turku who had had long careers in parishes. Rather than the amount of knowledge on theological points, the differentiating factor may have been the different personal focus, either on learned theology or on practical pastoral

work. The members of the clergy who had lived longer in the parishes saw the importance of their work as catering to the needs of parishioners and protecting the liveliness of religious life. They saw such forms of religious life as the irregular holy days as complementary, rather than in opposition, to the pursuits of the church, the Reformation, or confessionalization. The episcopal guidelines often allowed for both lines. Even the Bishop of Turku, Johannes Gezelius – who frequently warned against what he referred to as ‘papist superstitions’ and who is usually considered a hardline confessionalizer by seventeenth-century Finnish standards – included in his directions guidance condoning traditional superstition, which he called ‘established old customs’, when it was not downright harmful and when the repression of these customs could cause disruption. Gezelius gave only a couple of examples of the papist superstitions not to be tolerated, and they relate to communion: Gezelius suggested that Catholic conceptions of full transubstantiation might be counteracted by using white wine at communion and urged the clergy to ensure that consecrated communion bread or wine did not fall into the hands of practitioners of magic. Pastoral considerations of social peace outweighed theological dogma.<sup>137</sup>

It seems to me that whereas court proceedings against these religious practices have usually been taken as evidence of a tightening grip on popular religiosity – of a widening gap between popular and elite cultures and a persecution of the former – the scarcity of the same proceedings may in fact indicate tolerance, or perhaps even the support and participation of the clergy in the very same religious customs. I would like to suggest that the saints’ day rituals were a part of traditional lay piety that the lay parishioners felt essential, and which the clergy and local authorities did not efficiently repress. As some studies from Protestant Reformation and Catholic Counter-Reformation Europe show, a sizable part of the clergy also embraced the traditional customs, whatever their seeming incompatibility with official dogma. Instead of superstition, they were seen as a channel of real piety. Therefore, the local clergy often tried to appropriate the old customs rather than extinguish them. As Susan Karant-Nunn points out, whereas the Protestant leaders may have had the desire and a theological reason to eradicate rituals through the suppression of superstition, the parish clergy catered for the needs of the people they served.<sup>138</sup> As such, this tradition should not be considered as opposition to Lutheranism, but rather as a living part of Lutheranism in seventeenth-century society.

A pertinent question concerning the saints’ rituals is whether they were remnants of Catholicism or even older religious, perhaps

pre-Christian beliefs in Finland, and what their importance in the contemporary religious culture was. Folklorists and historians have given special functions to these rituals as a mixture of Catholic and pre-Christian cultures. Ukko, mentioned earlier, was the name of the most important god of the Finnish preChristian religion, the deity of rain and thunder. The toast to Ukko is supposed to have been a spring ritual drinking festival involving beer to prevent droughts. Folklorists have concluded that the drinking was originally accompanied by songs in the archaic Finnish poetic metre, but if that was the case, they had been replaced by Christian hymns by the time the first documents were written. Kekri was likewise supposedly an old pre-Christian harvest festival, celebrated by ritual eating, possibly a sacrificial meal of lamb at the end of the pasturing season and the turn of the agricultural year. Olavi was the Finnish name for the Norwegian martyr King Olaf, whose festival was at the end of July, also taking on features of the old harvest festivities. *Tapanin päivä* was the day of St Stephen, and in Finnish culture also the day of visiting friends and travelling after Christmas, a toast being drunk with a meal in the stables by the men only to ensure good luck with the horses.<sup>139</sup>

It is evident that the celebrations were a mixture of various religious influences. One should be extremely cautious, however, in attributing any features to a 'pre-Christian' religion. As is widely known, Ukko, the pre-Christian Finnish God of heaven, rain, and thunder (and possibly war) had acquired features from Christianity before he became the 'main' God. Sometimes, as in a case from Hauho, Ukko was also presented as one of the forces or actors that worked under God's command, and Ukko's toast could also refer to the protectors of sowing, be they animistic spirits or Christian saints like St Urban. The same is true of Kekri; it had acquired some aspects of the All Saints' Day's celebrations, which took place at roughly the same time. Indeed, in the sources there is unlikely to be any 'pre-Christian practice' that was not strongly influenced by Christian elements. On the other hand, it is equally clear that the saints' day celebrations had taken on features that derived from the local and traditional needs of rural society. These were calendar festivals applied to the needs of a northern agricultural society; they abound in hierarchical settings, there is much eating and lighting of fires in reference to the sufficiency of food, warmth, and light, and so on. Travel to sacrificial places is also sometimes recorded, but these rituals away from the home lack the sort of domesticity and intimacy of devotional rituals in the medieval cults of saints. There seem to be reasons for this: the regular calendar celebrations were often male events, which

may account for some differences in the expressions of intimacy, since intimacy between men and between women was different. Different ways of personalization can be seen in the more ad hoc type of saint's celebrations women resorted to when they found themselves in a situation of special, pressing need. The most striking feature, however, is the apparent lack of reference to the personal qualities of the deity or saint in question: the calendar rituals on the saints' days – or on Kekri or for Ukko's toast on midsummer – do not refer to the personal qualities of these saints or deities; they rather take the role and personality of the deity or saint for granted.<sup>140</sup>

Equally ambiguously, folklorists and traditional church historians have claimed that the rituals of Ukko and Kekri were most clearly pre-Christian, but that the others also show traces of animism, even shamanism, and a cult of ancestors. In the court-record descriptions, ancestors were rarely explicitly mentioned, but there was frequently a note of the cutting down of ritual forests or trees, which may have been places of offerings and sacrifices or the preChristian burial grounds of each household or kin. Cemeteries were sometimes still on the same sites as pre-Christian ones as late as the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>141</sup>

I have chosen to present the saints' day celebrations in eastern Finland in the same context as the rosary cult of western Finland, and I have clearly related the rosary cult to the Counter-Reformation. The saints' days, on the other hand, are not so simple. There were many layers of cultural development present in the saints' day rituals. They clearly contain elements that were not related to either the Reformation or the Counter-Reformation; they seem to point to an older culture. Yet it is possible that they were also influenced by the Counter-Reformation, or at least that the brief period of Counter-Reformation helped them to survive longer. Nevertheless, the ritual celebrations and offerings on saints' days must not be considered merely signs of Catholicism in Lutheran Finland, nor as remnants of pagan religions, although they contain elements of both. These traits had been inextricably mixed and given new meanings by the seventeenth century. In the context of the conservative nature of Lutheranism and the pragmatic pluralism of the religious climate in Finland, these customs had been Lutheranized. As such, the saints' day celebrations tell of a lively, tangible religious atmosphere in which people personally took an active part, instead of merely watching and listening to the minister in church. They also tell us of local initiative and religious creativity rather than tradition, dogma, and practices that had been handed down either from previous generations or from church leaders.

# 4

## Eastern Orthodox Influence and Its Demonization in Finland

### Official Toleration and Practical Persecution in Eastern Border Areas

Under the terms of the 1617 Treaty of Stolbovo, the provinces of Ingria and Kexholm were ceded by Russia and annexed to Sweden. Thereafter, the eastern part of Finland accommodated two different cultures: the Lutheran one in Savonia and Vyborg Karelia, and the mixed Lutheran and Russian Orthodox one in the annexed areas. These cultures came to influence each other much beyond the border regions (see Map 4.1).

The recently annexed areas were of considerable size: the county of Kexholm consisted of the areas north of Lake Ladoga along the lines that would later form the borders of Finland and Russia from 1812 to 1940. Ingria was the name of the coastal areas South of Lake Ladoga, where St Petersburg is now situated. After the annexation, three kinds of people lived in the areas. First, there was the population who spoke Finnish and practised Lutheranism. A considerable proportion of this group had lived there even before the annexation. Especially in the province on Kexholm, Lutheran Finns and Swedes had been encouraged to move to the unpopulated areas and settle to the east since Gustav I's times as a part of a non-violent politics of geographical extension. Both the crown encouragement and the settlement of Swedish newcomers in the areas of Kexholm grew increasingly frequent after the Treaty of Stolbovo. As the unpopulated areas were not always unused, nor necessarily very far from populated areas – and as the agriculture of the areas was often semi-nomadic slash-and-burn cultivation, where relocation was frequent – this caused conflicts of interest with the second group, the Russian Orthodox who spoke a Karelian language very close to the Finnish language. The two groups had no difficulty



Map 4.1 The eastern areas annexed to Sweden and the places discussed in this chapter

in understanding each other language-wise, but their understanding of ethnicity or loyalty to a certain ruler was largely built on the basis of religion: the Lutherans were understood to be Finnish, and thereby Swedish, whereas the Orthodox population was understood to be Karelian or even Russian. The third group comprised a Swedish- and German-speaking Lutheran elite authority consisting of civil and military officials and manorial lords. Although largely put in their place by the Swedish occupiers, these overlords were often called 'Saxa' by the more humble subjects. The other meanings of 'Saxa' are 'traders' and 'German', which point to the origins of the lords not only in Sweden proper but also in the Baltic and German areas: many of these lords had come either directly or by establishing trade from Vyborg and Ingrian towns. According to historian Kimmo Katajala, who has studied the political culture in the county of Kexholm, it is also possible that a small Russianspeaking Russian minority lived in the area, but the existence of such a group cannot be verified in any of the existing source material from the seventeenth century.<sup>1</sup>

Eastern Finland – including the new areas – was rural and agricultural, with a relatively high number of small towns that remained small even though Sweden tried to nurture them. Only Vyborg and Nyen had any international significance in trade. Vyborg was, nevertheless, at times the second largest town in Finland. Vyborg was also the major administrative centre and the centre of the diocese of eastern Finland, which came to include the county of Kexholm, too. The county of Kexholm was characterized by relatively long distances compared to those of south-western Finland, but far shorter than those in Savonia or Ostrobothnia. The northern parts of the province were separated and protected from Russia by the large forest areas to the east of the new borders. Ingria, on the other hand, was closer to Russian influence, which would mark its development in the future.<sup>2</sup>

The government in these areas was organized in conquered areas, and, unlike provinces in Sweden proper and Finland, the conquered areas were not entitled to representation at the Diet. Judicial, and partly civil and church administration were organized roughly according to the same models as in the 'proper' parts of the realm, but in military and political spheres of life they were kept separate. That the church administration was partly organized according to the same models as in the proper parts of the realm meant that a Lutheran clergy – with rights to wages that were collected from the parishes – was introduced to the area. The original population in the area was nevertheless mostly Russian Orthodox. Under the Treaty of Stolbovo, the Russian Orthodox

clergy was forbidden from leaving the annexed areas for Russia. The purpose of the prohibition was to avoid the whole Russian Orthodox population from moving to the Russian side of the new border. This meant the effective recognition and allowance of Russian Orthodoxy within the area of Sweden, although the state was otherwise strictly Lutheran and conversion to any other religion risked capital punishment or at least banishment from the realm.<sup>3</sup>

There was in general a strong emphasis among the Swedish Lutheran clergy on the voluntary nature of faith and conversion. This was, of course, related to the rapid changes in religion in the German principalities, and the stricter position of Calvinism on the subject. This idea was repeated time and again, for example in the Royal Majesty's response to the complaints of the Clergy in 1647: 'But The Royal Majesty does not find it right to use force against those who do not otherwise want to conform to persuasion nor to comply of their free will, nor the inquisition of a person's conscience.' A similar prohibition was often repeated in the different orders given to the authorities in the county of Kexholm.<sup>4</sup>

Obviously, the meaning of not interrogating consciences was limited; it did not include apostates, witches, or treasonous heretics, but it was relevant in the new eastern areas of the realm, at least as long as the Russian Orthodox population in Kexholm and Ingria did not cause open disruption. Similar rights to worship in private were later given for Huguenots and Calvinist merchants coming mainly from the Netherlands. Even Anglicans were given rights to worship according to their liturgy in Sweden. These rights, however, only applied to those who had already been practising their foreign religion before coming to the country and to those who had been born into families practising such religions. New converts had no rights, and trying to convert anyone was subject to punishment. It was a political, social, and economic necessity to impose peace and ensure that the old population in the annexed areas was not only viable but also profitable. Religious concessions and official toleration – or at least sufferance – were an essential part of this policy.<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, there was also a general understanding that although conversion to Lutheranism could not be made compulsory, it should be strongly encouraged. The Russian Orthodox population's right to worship was limited to their own homes and the existing churches and chapels. It was forbidden to build new churches, and the expectation was that the alien religion would die out before new buildings were needed. After the devastation of the war, this might not have seemed an unrealistic expectation.<sup>6</sup>

For the purpose of efficiently organizing the Lutheran parishes in the area – and thereby facilitating the conversion of the Russian Orthodox populace – a new bishop, Olavi Elimaeus, was appointed to the diocese of Vyborg. The diocese of Vyborg had been attached to the diocese of Turku since 1578, but under the circumstances it was felt that the east needed more attention. The diocese of Vyborg also included the county of Kexholm, but not Ingria. There were plans from the beginning that Ingria would have its own superintendent, but they were realized only in 1641.<sup>7</sup>

Bishop Elimaeus was given close instructions, and one item concerned the Russian Orthodox religion:

Concerning the Russians of the county of Kexholm and Ingria, he must proceed as appears especially necessary since these people not only practise the superstitious worship mentioned earlier in this order, but also resist our Christian faith and will not give up their deceived ways to be won by God, namely that he orders learned good clergy to the area, where they know how to act in an even-tempered and gentle manner, teaching and exhorting, and who can promulgate the true word understandably. He must advise these clergy in what he understands as pleasing God if he himself wants to be above reproach.

Also he must choose convenient places where churches can be built so that the barbaric folk can as far as possible be drawn in by divine services and beautiful ceremonies and be persuaded to adopt the truth.<sup>8</sup>

By 1622, the Russian Orthodox population was obliged to visit Lutheran church services every Sunday. While this did not, in an agricultural society, mean that every individual should be in church, it did mean that every household had to be represented. Where the superiority of the Lutheran learning did not make itself sufficiently obvious in church services, the populace was also taught in various other ways. The Lutheran catechism was printed in Russian and in Finnish in the Cyrillic alphabet. Some Orthodox clergymen were persuaded and speedtrained to read and teach the Karelianlanguage Lutheran catechisms, and a number of model sermon collections were also sent to the Orthodox clergy to be read.<sup>9</sup>

While the Russian Orthodox clergy were forbidden to leave the area – as they had to placate and serve the religious needs of the Orthodox population – the Lutheran authorities had hoped to eventually replace them with Lutheran clergy. This proved to be problematic, however.

Although numerous attempts were made to replace the deceased Russian Orthodox priests with reliable Lutherans, or at least Orthodox clergy trained by Lutherans (whatever that meant), this did not work. The parishioners would not accept Lutheran or Lutheran-trained priests, nor did they accept priests consecrated by the Orthodox Church in Constantinople, who would have been more reliable in Swedish eyes than the Russian clergy. Priests trickled in clandestinely from Russia, and, although this was strictly forbidden, no one was able to enforce the prohibition. Once the priests had settled into their parishes, there was no way of unsettling them without causing the disturbances that the Swedish authorities wanted to avoid at all costs. In the Ingrian areas, argues Pentti Laasonen, the want of clergy was worse because the borders were more closely controlled.<sup>10</sup>

Once it became obvious that the Orthodox clergy could not be replaced by Lutheran clergy, the aims of the authorities shifted towards making the Orthodox ceremonies and religious life more Lutheran, with visitations and catechism hearings, prayer days, and so on. Per Brahe, the Governor-General of Finland and the baron of the northern parts of the county of Kexholm, had a radical input in this process, deciding that one should persuade the Russian Orthodox clergy first in order to win the populace around. Brahe's catechism programme continued during the 1650s, and there are some indications that the teaching awoke some interest in the Russian Orthodox population, though people were more interested in learning to read rather than in conversion. In the county of Kexholm, especially in its eastern parts, Russian orthodoxy remained the majority religion. Reactions towards Swedish attempts to press for Lutherization were hostile, including suspicions that lead to verbal and physical violence and accusations of witchcraft aimed at the locals who supported Lutherization. Local relationships were ambiguous. Laasonen claims that although there was tension, there was no open conflict, and open violence between the religious groups – or reports of it to the authorities – was deliberately avoided. Nevertheless, the Orthodox population sometimes seem to have considered the Lutherans fair game, as in a case from the parish of Salmi, where a local peasant let his cattle into the Lutheran priest's wheat field. When reprimanded, he completed the destruction by letting in more animals.<sup>11</sup>

The results of the conversion politics remained scant: few conversions took place, and the Orthodox population entertained ideas of the area being recaptured from Sweden until the Rupture War in the 1650s.

In 1656, Russia attacked Ingria and the county of Kexholm, ostensibly to protect the interests of the Russian Orthodox population, but obviously

also to gain access to the Baltic coast. Sweden was not prepared for the attack, as most of its military power was held up in other real or expected battles in Poland and Livonia or against the Danish on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea. The war was devastating for the population. At first, a panic spread among the Lutheran Finnish population around the borders and the Ladoga coastal areas. The tiny number of military troops left in Finland could not protect the area, and peasant soldiers had to be conscripted locally. These ad hoc soldiers were hastily trained, poorly armed, and inexperienced. Nevertheless, they managed to make some small scale counterattacks against the Russian troops. The Russian military sought to win the support of the locals either by making promises – mostly to the Russian orthodox population – or threats – mostly against the Lutheran population. They were more successful with the Orthodox population, whereas the Lutherans often sought to flee to the Swedish side of the front lines. The Orthodox population, on the other hand, formed spontaneous semi-military groups, attacking Lutheran households, churches, vicarages, manors, and farmsteads. The peasant activity of neighbour against neighbour of different religion made the situation resemble a civil war. Buildings were burned, people were killed or taken hostage, and some were sold into forced labour or slavery in Russia. Civilians were taken hostage and tortured for information. When the Russian military power had the upper hand, the Orthodox population terrorized the Lutheran population, and when the tides turned, retaliation was swift.<sup>12</sup>

In 1658, events on other frontiers forced Russia and Sweden to settle a truce on a front that was relatively unimportant to both. The Ingrian and Karelian borders were left intact, but the war caused a profound change of climate in the area. Hostilities between the population groups grew, and the Russian Orthodox population started to flee eastwards to Russia. The Lutherans stayed put and more moved in from Vyborg Karelia and Savonia. Especially in the southern areas and in Ingria, the majority of the population was now Finnish and Lutheran. Hostility and suspicion between population groups were prominent in the area throughout the latter half of the seventeenth century, and social disruption was a continuous feature of life in all spheres.<sup>13</sup>

In the more sparsely populated northern parishes of the county of Kexholm, Russian power had less impact in general during the war and it was less feared afterwards. Despite the devastation of the war, the church and official policies were even gentler, and the Russian Orthodox population felt no incentive to flee. In the parishes of Salmi, Suojärvi, and Suistamo, the majority of the population continued to practise its Russian Orthodox religion.<sup>14</sup>

The closer connection of Kexholm through the church organization also brought the area closer to the rest of the county of Vyborg in other administrative and political senses. The Swedish Constitution of 1634 speaks of 'both Karelias' – meaning the province of Vyborg Karelia, which had been a part of the realm since at least 1323, and Kexholm Karelia, the newly acquired area – as if they constituted a single whole.<sup>15</sup> As we shall see, each Karelia influenced the other more widely than just at the border areas.

### **Persecution Stereotypes: Orgies with Forest Spirits**

Attitudes towards the Orthodox population were ambiguous, however. The political and clerical powers emphasized the necessity of social and political peace, and when the truce came, the first task of the authorities was to try to deal with the consequences of the extreme violence. Popular attitudes were not as swift to change, however, and so for the next decades, the law courts had to handle various incidents of violence that reflected what had happened during the war. Some of them had little to do with religion as such; rather they sprang from alcohol-related incidents. The fact that the Lutheran and Russian Orthodox populations were drinking together shows that relations were often relatively amicable, but the drunken brawls that ensued also show that the memories of war increased bitterness between the groups for some time.<sup>16</sup> The bitterness was sometimes more and sometimes less verbalized. In 1668 in Uukuniemi, there was uncertainty over the ownership of a slash-and-burn field that a group of Russian Orthodox villagers wanted to harvest. The Lutheran farmer, who had cleared the area, burnt it, and sowed it defended his ownership shouting, 'believe me, five Russians will die before they can claim this land, for it belongs to me!' The result of the ensuing fight was the reverse: the farmer was killed. His murderers never claimed the land, because, like others in a similar situation, they fled for Russia.<sup>17</sup> When the wood that had been stored for making tar burned down in Kitee, a Russian Orthodox villager was suspected of arson, since he had gloated about the fire at the 'Swede's' property.<sup>18</sup>

The hostilities did not always come to open violence, but instead resulted in rumours and prejudicial attitudes. In the county of Kexholm, Provost Henrik Boisman held a visitation at the parish of Kesälähti in 1675. Going through the routine list of questions for visitations, he also asked about the spiritual state of the parish and the religious offences that were generally known but yet not resolved: blaspheming, contempt of God's word, superstitions, and so on. This time there was an

informant with an interesting story: the son of the former vicar, Daniel Martinpoika, reported that the villagers of Oinaanvaara in the parish of Jaakkima practised weird magical arts and idolatry. His information was hearsay, but nevertheless disturbing enough for the provost to take the matter up when his visitation rounds reached the parish of Jaakkima. He held a preliminary inquiry with the local vicar, and sent his results for further investigation in the local secular court's next session, which took place in late March 1675. The preliminary inquest record by the Provost stated that, on St Peter's days at the end of June (the 29th), the Oinaanvaara villagers gathers on a hill called Lehmänmäki (Cow Hill). When they reached the top of the hill, they prepared a gruel with milk, adding one egg to the mixture. Once the food was ready, one of the villagers would climb a tree and call for the spirits living in the forests and hills to come and eat. The villagers would remove the egg from the gruel and place it on the rocks for the spirits at a spot they used for other sorts of offerings as well; the rest of the gruel was then consumed by the villagers. If someone mentioned the name of Jesus Christ during the meal, his nose and mouth were punched bloody. Any disturbance during the celebration was thought to cause bad luck and ill fortune. Taking part was, however, compulsory, and the other villagers would not tolerate those who refused to participate in this ritual celebration.<sup>19</sup>

The Witches' Sabbath does not in general feature in eastern Finland – there are no reported cases, and it has been suggested that the concepts of these Sabbaths had not spread to the area.<sup>20</sup> It is currently understood that the learned theories of witchcraft spread unevenly among the European populace. For example, Norman Cohn emphasizes the influence of the Inquisition and traditional theories of treason on the formulation of confessions and testimony – elite theories were imposed on the confessions. Stuart Clark, who has studied learned theory, argues that some elements of that theory clearly spread among the populace, but that it is impossible to determine how widely they were shared.<sup>21</sup> Lyndal Roper has written on forced discourses: German witches were often forced with violence and torture to confess according to a formula which was designed by elite authorities and therefore, to a great extent, alien to the witch who was of a lower social standing. At the same time, Roper among others emphasizes that each confession had to include something of the confessor's own experience and persona, something of her (in Roper's cases, the witch is almost always female) mental view and identity. Therefore, what comes to the fore in those confessions, Roper claims, is an image of the Sabbath that is created partly by the educated elite theorists and judges and partly by the witches of the lower

social strata.<sup>22</sup> A partly similar view on the matter has been presented regarding the Finnish trials by Antero Heikkinen and Jari Eilola and the Swedish trials by Per-Anders Östling. The latter two historians emphasize the importance of shamanism and pre-Christian folklore in creating the stories or experiences of the Witches' Sabbath that involve flying to 'another world' or to another reality. For Eilola, Blåkulla was actually a folklore conception that was, at the time of the witch trials, appropriated and mixed with the learned theories of the Sabbath. Eilola works here along the lines of Carlo Ginzburg and Evá Pócs, who have even further emphasized the popular origin of the night-flying witches. For all of them, however, the Witches' Sabbath is a deadly serious matter; it is feared, respected, and forbidden. For these scholars, the period of witch trials was a period of fire and fear.<sup>23</sup> As Willem de Blécourt<sup>24</sup> describes, historians are keen to find popular versions and traces of the Sabbath, because the travelling between two worlds – this one and the world of the Sabbath – has been related to shamanism as well as to inverted carnival practices as methods of criticizing authority, power, and wealth.<sup>25</sup>

Even in this case, there is no mention of a Sabbath or Blåkulla – a hill or sometimes a field, which the testimonial narratives in the few Sabbath trials of western Finland describe as the place of the witches' meeting<sup>26</sup> – nor the Devil as a person; only 'spirits' are mentioned. There is also no mention of or even a reference to 'witches', and the personal nouns used imply the male gender. The ingredients of the narrative, however – the gathering at a place outside the village, the meal, the threat of violence, and the apostasy – are similar to the ingredients of a Witches' Sabbath.<sup>27</sup> Gruel does not sound very fitting for an orgy, although when made with milk instead of water, it was actually considered a better, festive sort of food. The court description of the story suggests that the concepts of the Sabbath were indeed familiar to the eastern Finnish population, even though there was not enough concern about witches or Sabbaths to stage any trials. This was a version of the Sabbath story adjusted to the circumstances where men's relations with the spirits were more important than women's relations with the personal Devil.

The violent and compulsory party with the forest spirits seems like a version of the Witches' Sabbath with the Devil and demons, with violence and rape and sex; it is an inverted image of village festivals, adjusted to the circumstances of Karelian areas. The compulsory nature of the party might reflect the ways in which conspirators, from early Christians to today's terrorists and military occupiers, have been thought to bind each other to secrecy by committing awful acts

together – in this case, the apostasy of almost denying Christ, in other cases, incest, rape, sodomy, and so on.<sup>28</sup> It seems, however, that neither the authorities nor the neighbours were very interested in interpreting the matter according to a demonological framework, and even less according to a framework of apostasy. Instead, the spirits, forest spirits, and the related superstitions were quite enough.

The matter in Jaakkima seemed grave. The provincial governor, who led the court session, ordered the whole village of Oinaanvaara to be summoned to the next court session, and the bailiff was ordered to act as prosecutor so that the matter would not be forgotten. This was a normal procedure in all witchcraft and religious offence cases, and the expectation was that people would turn up for the investigation. Only in exceptional cases were people incarcerated before trial, normally in cases of murder where there were eyewitnesses and the suspect was expected to flee. In addition, in most local parishes, there was nowhere to lock people up. On the other hand, it seems that although people did move a lot, have contacts, and trade over long distances to the other side of Finland and even across the Baltic Sea, leaving home and the protection of family was not an alluring prospect for most. They rather chose to appear in court and have the matter settled, a choice made the more understandable by the fact that witchcraft and religious offences in Finland were very rarely punished by anything other than fines and lesser corporeal punishments: the possibility of a death sentence was very small.<sup>29</sup> In the case of Oinaanvaara villagers, problems appeared, however, and the investigation was not carried out even in 1678, when the matter was pursued in court, albeit without the presence of any of the villagers of Oinaanvaara or Daniel Martinpoika, who was apparently visiting Kexholm on business. The man from whom Martinpoika had claimed to have heard the story was present, but could not remember anything of the matter.<sup>30</sup> Summons were sent again, and a new court session was scheduled.

Again, none of the summoned persons turned up, but the new vicar of the parish of Jaakkima had sent a letter to the court, explaining that he had never even heard of the rumours about any unlawful celebration in Oinaanvaara before the provost's inquiry during the visitation some years earlier. As it had been his parish and his responsibility, he had tried to find out more on the matter, but he had not been able find anyone who actually knew anything about it. The only thing that people talked about was that the 'Russians' who had lived in the village before the Rupture War had practised 'all sorts of idolatry and superstition'. Since then, however, the current

inhabitants of the village – Lutheran immigrants from Savonia and Swedish Karelia – had cut and burnt down the place of worship in Lehmänmäki. Other witnesses also told of having cut down some crosses and tree stumps with crosses on them, and having destroyed places that had caused anger when the Russians had performed their ceremonies in their time. No evidence could be found against the current inhabitants of Oinaanvaara, and there was obviously no point in trying to pursue a matter against the former inhabitants, who had moved to Russia probably two decades ago. The court then tried to follow the chains of hearsay to establish where the accusation had originated. Finally, they concluded that a few men, including Daniel Martinpoika, had discussed the habits of the Russians, and got confused about whether there was something still going on.<sup>31</sup>

It is interesting that this case seems to present a very clear narrative of the demonization of Russian Orthodoxy. In the previous chapters, I have suggested that the struggle between Calvinism and Orthodox Lutheranism seems to have checked any demonization of Catholicism on the practical level of religious life. The frequent but not very elaborate Lutheran swipes at Catholicism in sermons did not compare to the similar and consistent demonization of Catholicism that took place in Denmark, for example, as Louise Kallestrup suggests.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, the prosecution of the ritual use of prayer as magic did not amount to a very efficient campaign against ‘Catholic rituals’ for Protestant purity, because ritual or sacramental traditions were important in distinguishing Swedish Orthodox Lutheran identity against Calvinism. Russian Orthodoxy had no similar weight to counterbalance it – to make Lutheran identity one of the middle ground – as in western parts of Sweden and in Europe generally. It is also significant that the demonization of Russian Orthodoxy took place on a popular level, in the local community, where local hostilities and the need to work together produced tension. This is also the only court case of its kind: it was a localized demonization that did not spread.

The narrative of the orgies at Lehmänmäki probably reflects attitudes and popular propaganda against the Russian Orthodox population and Russian military that was spread during and after the years of the Rupture War. Nevertheless, the authorities seem not to have been keen on making extensive investigations, and the opportunity to blame the whole thing on a misunderstanding of the past ways of the now emigrated Russians was a convenient way to both discredit the rumour and put a dampener on further rumours. Though the rumour-monger was not brought to court in person, nor was any formal punishment

imposed on him, this method of deliberately not making more fuss probably also served to put an end to the talk of orgies with spirits.

## **The Devil as a Joke**

The deliberate damping of trials including the imagery of the Witches' Sabbath was the usual procedure in Finland, and it seems to be in line with the restitutive nature of the judicial system I suggested previously. The only chain trial where one of the accused named other suspects on the basis of having seen them at the Witches' Sabbath was in Åland between 1666 and 1670, where thirteen women were charged and seven executed. Single trials took place after that mostly in Swedishspeaking Ostrobothnia. Only three trials took place outside the Swedishspeaking areas and they may be illustrative of the fact that people were widely aware of the Sabbath narratives, and that all levels of society lacked enthusiasm in Finland for prosecuting and even taking the Sabbath imagery seriously. A detour in western Finland is in order here to put the forest spirit orgies in their proper – not too persecutory – context.

The first of these trials took place in 1677 in Ulvila, a decade after the Åland affair had begun the Sabbath trials in Sweden, when the panics took place across the Gulf of Bothnia in Sweden proper. An old woman called Riitta was accused of having attended the Witches' Sabbath. During the summer of 1677, Riitta was 'in God's Honour told to confess the truth, when she denied all charges asking God to preserve her from such accusations'.<sup>33</sup> A witness testified that a soldier, Tuomas Erikinpoika, had said that he had seen her riding her goat on Easter morning. The rumour had then spread. Riitta was reported to have ridden on two Easters to Blåkulla, as the Swedish called the Witches' Sabbath. Riitta denied everything and each of those who had heard and further spread the rumour were called to testify. Not everyone seemed to have taken it too seriously even at the time. As one of the neighbours was on his way to tell the parish vicar the story, he was cautioned 'not to make too big a deal out of it, as his own wife could have ridden a goat, too'. A few testimonies were heard, and a couple of witnesses called on were absent. One of the witnesses testified that when Tuomas, the man who had claimed to have seen Riitta fly, had been sued to appear in court, he had been very sad and depressed, but as soon as he had been obliged to travel to war, he had been glad to escape the trial. Consequently Tuomas was not present in the court.

The local vicar then took charge and reported that Tuomas had confessed to him that he had only tried to scare children with the story of

the goat and the flying witch. The vicar and the jury then testified that both Riitta and her husband had good reputations, nothing bad had ever before been heard of them, and they both diligently took part in communion. Evidence came to light that Tuomas had been previously sentenced to fines for theft in the past, and therefore he was not considered fully trustworthy. As Tuomas had recanted his words and admitted that they were a joke, Riitta was acquitted of all charges. However, no punishment was immediately imposed on Tuomas either, either for slander or for presenting unfounded charges. He was now absent, posted somewhere in Pomerania, and the court did not feel it worth the trouble of pursuing him. The faster the matter could be settled, the better. Riitta was told that if she wanted compensation, she should try to get it 'the best way she could',<sup>34</sup> meaning that she could forget the matter if she so wanted to do, but she could also sue Tuomas in a separate trial for defamation, if he ever returned from the war.<sup>35</sup>

The second case was brought to the attention of the court in Ulvila in 1686 by an angry neighbour, who complained that his neighbour, Agata Pekantytär, had falsely accused him of damaging and stealing her cattle with witchcraft, which was so much more outrageous because she was a reputed witch herself. Agata was accused of various forms of maleficium and magic, but there was also a woman who said she had seen Agata fly to the Sabbath. It took some time to get that particular witness to court. In the end, she denied ever having seen Agata fly; she had only seen two of her calves panting by the shed floor, and she could not think of any other explanation than that they had just returned from the flight – which was likely to have taken place since Agata had spoken very impolitely to her and told her 'to go to hell'. Agata defended her impoliteness by saying the woman had been drunk and disturbed her cattle. At this point, the jury and the court noted that the neighbour's wife was indeed prone to drinking too much, and that there was no truth in any of the accusations.<sup>36</sup>

The matter was hushed up, but not forgotten. On Shrove Tuesday 1699, a group of young girls had been sledge riding in Ulvila, Finland. The party consisted of the young Miss Maria Klööf from a nearby manor and three maid servants from the same manor. Riding downhill with a sledge was a common winter pastime and especially popular on Shrove Tuesdays, when great parties of young people went sledging together. The tradition belonged to the remnants of Catholic carnivals, but many people also competed on the length and speed of their rides in the – more or less serious – hope that the qualities of the ride would correspond to the length and smoothness of the linen for the next summer. The exercise

and the general fun probably excited the girls so much that on their way home, they decided to continue their amusement at the expense of an old woman, a retired servant and widow. The old widow lived in her private cabin on the edge of the village, so they were not restrained by any immediate danger of any of the other villagers or the people from the manor seeing them. The girls tapped on the window of the widow's cabin to try to scare her, pretending to disappear when she came to open the window. Shrovetide was, after all, a festive time, and like all festive times, it was susceptible to strange spirits and witches. The old woman opened her windows and managed to see and recognize them, however, and yelled at them to go away. The girls went accordingly, but did not end their prank. The girls ran to the manor, and there met two young men, the manor's scribe and a male worker Mikko Pekanpoika, working in the scribe's cabin. Still evidently excited about their adventures, and desirous to attract the men's attention, the girls started to brag about their game at the old woman's cabin. They had 'frightened the woman so badly, she would not pay half an öre [a low denomination coin] for her life', they told the men. They had also seen, they claimed, a broomstick fly on the dark skyline, 'and a humanlike hand holding the reins'.<sup>37</sup>

Up to this point, the whole unruliness had been harmless and mere jest, although unkind towards the elderly woman. At this point, however, Mikko Pekanpoika started guessing whose hand might have been flying the broomstick. The story spread and a rumour started to circulate in the village and even in the nearby town. Mikko had thought the witch must have been Agata – who fitted the pattern, she had been accused – although acquitted – of flying to a Witches' Sabbath almost 15 years previously. When the rumour eventually – and inevitably – reached Agata's ears, she retold it, but substituted her own name in the story with the name of Mikko's mother-in-law. When this woman in turn heard the story, she brought it to matter to the court as defamation, demanding punishment for whoever had started such a rumour. The court never took the idea seriously that she could have flown on the broomstick, but 22 pages of court records were used in finding out who was responsible for the rumour. Agata – not the girls or the scribe's assistant – was fined for slander; to add insult to injury, she also had to pay the trial costs.<sup>38</sup>

It has often been claimed that the Åland affair was the result of the personal interest of two people: Nils Psilander, the district judge, and Johannes Gezelius Sr, Bishop of Turku. The latter is more interesting in the context of religious ideology. Johannes Gezelius Sr is often described as the most confessionalist Orthodox Lutheran bishop in history, with

the strictest disciplinary policy. He had been the professor of theology, specializing in theology and exegesis, and he was apparently interested in folklore and folk beliefs, if only to be able to turn ignorant people away from them. As Laasonen states, Gezelius had missionary views, which grew when he was Swedish superintendent in Livonia, an area where Catholic practices had to be tolerated. Laasonen also points out that as a thorough, orthodox Lutheran, Gezelius's pet enemy was not Catholicism, but Calvinism. In the case of the Åland affair, however, the condemned practices – some of which I discussed in Chapter 2, seem to have pointed to a Catholic rather than Calvinist origin. Many of the women even described having learned to use ritual prayer when they had followed their conscripted husbands to war zones in Szczecin and other Polish regions. Gezelius had spent his youth under the tutelage of the future Provost of Åland, Gabriel Murenius; he had befriended him and was familiar with the region. Gezelius was apparently interested in demonology, but, after the disastrous affair, he seems to have lost interest. When the first six of the charged women in Åland had confessed and were sentenced, it turned out that the confessions had been false; they were invented and fabricated by the women together with the prison guard, who had supplied a box of boot polish to present as the witches' salve. The Governor General of Finland, Per Brahe, also intervened, and although he did not stop the proceedings as he had done in the case of the Devil's pact at the Royal Academy of Turku, it was well known that he wanted more discretion in the trials. This was made clear to all the clergy in the diocese through Gezelius, and to all the judges in the jurisdiction through the Court of Appeal in Turku.<sup>39</sup>

## **Offering Places and Non-Christian Forms of Worship**

Making offerings to the spirits was, nevertheless, a pertinent part of religious life in eastern Finland, as it apparently had been also in western parts. Bishop of Turku, Isaacus Rothovius wrote in his sermon in 1640,

The peasants in this country practise great foolery with fishing, trailing and choosing extraordinary dates for holy days. When they get sick, they seek help from the Devil, sacrifice a thanksgiving for the Evil, carrying to the altar wax images, wax candles, squirrel skins and other things, they sacrifice lambs, money and other things on certain days, such as St Bartholomew's, St Olaf's, and St Jacob's day. They hang ox heads, calf heads, and lamb heads on the walls of their houses and they converse with these in the dark so that no one

dares to own their God. When a horse gets sick, old hags and hogs gather in the dark house, drink half a barrel of ale and perform some ceremonies. When they catch a bear they organize a banquet in the dark, drink a toast to the bear from its skull, and growl like the bear growls to get more luck.<sup>40</sup>

In the previous chapter, I discussed offerings made openly and institutionally at churches, and unofficially and clandestinely to Catholic saints at homes and households. There were also other offering places, especially in eastern Finland, that seem to have had a less Christians nature: special stones with cups carved into them for offered food or treasure to be placed, sacred trees, marked by the cutting of branches or the cutting of crosses and other signs into the bark, and sacrificial forests. Offerings were apparently made to different nature spirits, such as dangerous forest spirits and water spirits who needed to be placated, and protective household and ancestor spirits that needed to be taken good care of. Often the offering places stood in the vicinity of the households and the home. The sacrificial trees were most often spruces, birches, or pines, the largest of the commonly met trees in the area. Rowan trees were also thought to have magical qualities and were sometimes used as sacrificial trees, too.<sup>41</sup> According to folklore surveys by Martti Sarmela and Laura Stark, various sacrifices were made in connection to the trees and forests. Most of them were connected to the yearly calendar cycle, either on fixed days, like the saints' days discussed earlier, or when the first crops of the year were harvested. Some of the sacrifices related to the human lifecycle of birth, marriage, and death. Others were performed in crisis situations, such as when people were threatened by illness, death, bad luck, or other problems.<sup>42</sup>

The interest in antiquities from 1666 onwards brought forward a number of sacrificial places where spirits apparently had been offered to. The surviving parts of the collection only cover parishes in western Finland and Åland, but it is possible that the clergy in eastern Finland also gathered material and even sent it forwards, but it never reached the antiquity bureau in Stockholm. Most of the western part is from the second phase of the collection, when new instructions were sent to the parishes in 1672, telling the local clergy that too little information had been sent in, and that they should be more diligent in reporting anything that could be of interest regarding the ancient culture of the realm. At this point, the vicar of Vaasa and Mustasaari sent a letter telling about a local offering church and a past bishop who had acted heroically during times of war.<sup>43</sup> The letter did not say which war, but

the vicar of the neighbouring parish of Maalahti reported there being a 'white war flag hung up' in the church, taken by a certain second lieutenant 'from Russians in his time'.<sup>44</sup> In Närpiö and Korsnäs, there had been 'two monks' books' that had by now disappeared, likewise there were 'two crosses with flags that had been used in procession during the papist times'. In addition, there were also stories of giants or trolls 'which did not include any idolatry' and a cairn where two drunken soldiers had claimed something supernatural had happened.<sup>45</sup> These examples show the way the descriptions relocate potential religious items in the past or in the world of drunken or ignorant people, where they pose no real threat either to Lutheranism or to the authority of the vicar in the eyes of his superiors. Many of the vicars also tell stories of Danish invasions in south-western Finland dating back to the beginning of the sixteenth century. Nevertheless, along with Närpiö, almost all of the parishes in Åland also reported cairns. The vicar of Lemland also reported an offering well, called the well of St Olaf.<sup>46</sup> Åland also figured on lists of 'pagan' remnants, because the local vicar Murenius was interested in the customs.<sup>47</sup>

After the antiquity collections, the disciplinary campaign of the latter seventeenth century also seems to have included offering places in the lists of ungodly superstitions to be enquired after. Unlike the antiquity collections' surviving letters, the interest in the offering places seems to concentrate in the eastern diocese. In 1681, the vicar of Ruokolahti brought a number of complaints to court. The most important of them was that the parishioners were slowing down and neglecting the building of a new church, which had been under way since 1668. Among other complaints, he claimed that although he had pronounced and read aloud the orders sent by the Court of Appeal about the abolition and destruction of offering groves and other offering places, the parishioners refused to act according to the orders. The reference to the Court of Appeal suggests that the matter was taken up a few years previously in a secular arena, although it seems that it was done on the initiative of the vicar. Only a couple of relatively unsuccessful attempts had been made at fulfilling the orders. The vicar petitioned the court to assign someone to see the work completed with the help of the local constabulary<sup>48</sup> and members of the local jury. These individuals would be able to give official, and if need be, forceful assistance, since trouble was expected.<sup>49</sup> The next year, the vicar complained that many of the offering places were still intact, although more than 50 offering trees had been cut down. After this, the offering trees were not mentioned again in court, and it is not known whether the campaign produced

any results.<sup>50</sup> Since trees are mutable, living things, it is likely that the practitioners found it easy to move their offering places to somewhere more private, or even to grow new groves to replace the old ones.

Similarly, in Jääski, a parishioner was fined for not appearing to answer a charge presented by the vicar. The parishioner was charged with having a superstitious offering place in his home. Another parishioner was accused of having three offering stones by his kitchen door. Although he had been ordered to remove them on pain of a 40mark fine – a considerable sum – he did not do so. Formal charges were raised, but nothing further seems to have come of the matter, which may be more significant than at first seems: it points to the relative lack of interest in pursuing the matter compared to, for example, the use of ritual prayer in magic.<sup>51</sup> Further offering stones were discussed in the court of Lappee and Joutseno.<sup>52</sup> The vicar of the parish of Liperi in northern part of the county of Kexholm and Kuopio in Savonia reported having destroyed offering places in the 1680s.<sup>53</sup> It seems that the seventeenth-century attention to offering stones spread from Lake Ladoga to Savonia, but it was most commonly centred on the northern parts of the county of Kexholm around Kerimäki, Anttola, and Sääminki, places where evidence of their being still in use was being collected by folklorists even in the nineteenth century. Archaeological evidence of offering stones – for example, remains of the moss that grew on the bottom of the carved cups in western Finland – dates their first use to the Bronze Age.<sup>54</sup>

Later folklore material suggests that the offering stones in eastern Finland were sacred places of kin groups and that they were also used by a single household rather than by whole villages, since they were not on common lands but in private locations on farmsteads. In this, they differ from the western offering stones, which seem to have rather integrated whole villages for worship. It has been suggested that the eastern offering stones were places of ancestor worship and that they may have been related to old burial sites.<sup>55</sup>

Sacrificial offering trees were apparently even more widespread in the semi-nomadic slashandburn culture than offering stones, and references to them can be found in almost every parish in Savonia. Some of the trees were also connected to burial sites. Although the clergy claims to have tried to eradicate the trees – and there are a couple of references during the seventeenth century, although even more during the eighteenth – the success was moderate at best. As in the case of Ruokolahti, the trees were protected by magic: anyone who harmed them was likely to catch a deadly disease, lose their sanity, or be somehow maimed – at the very least, they would lose cattle. In later folklore material, stories

tell of people dying within a couple of days after having cut down or harmed the trees.<sup>56</sup>

Concern for the superstition of the people in eastern Finland was not limited to the Swedish Lutheran authorities; it was reflected in a similar concern from the Russian Orthodox side, although the source material in Sweden does not reflect this. Some of the concern can be seen in the fact that the Russian Orthodox clergy kept trickling into the parishes on the Swedish side of the border after the Treaty of Stolbovo, despite the opposing efforts of the Lutheran overlords. The widespread persistence suggests that this was not spontaneous or sporadic, but deliberate and at least semiorganized. The proximity of the Lutherans caused concern for the Russian Orthodox population as well, and a fear of superstition. In 1534–35, a monk called Ilja from Novgorod visited Kexholm Karelia with an armed escort. His instructions were to destroy and 'burn with fire' all the sacrificial places, stones, and trees in villages and living places. The Karelian people were said to

not care for the church of God or its rules. They do not go church to hear the service ... but the Devil has caused them to worship on their own filthy sites for trees and stones – and they sacrifice food and drink and drink for the honour of the evil spirits. And they are all evildoing apostates, 'Chudian' dice casters to their desecrated places, and their dead they put in the kurgan mounds and non-Christian burial sites in the villages with the help of the dice casters, and do not take them to the churches to be buried.<sup>57</sup>

The dice casters were also reported to give names to children and to attend to the dead on All Souls' Day. This points to rituals alternative to the Christian ones, but it is not at all certain – and even likely – that the practitioners thought them mutually exclusive rather than complementary. Nor is it certain that the offering stones and wells were actually in use even where they were not destroyed.

Other elements of non-Christian religious life also rose to the attention of clerical authorities. One of them was Kekri, already mentioned in connection to the calendar feasts on saints' days. Petrus Bång, the Bishop of Vyborg,<sup>58</sup> travelled to Savonia at the end of the seventeenth century and noted one custom in particular that he considered superstitious: the celebration of Kekri. In the visitation record of the parish of Joroinen, he commented that during All Souls' Day, the populace 'offered to their old god Kekri, and so on, which seems to be left from pagan times'.<sup>59</sup>

Bishop Bång considered Kekri to be a pre-Christian deity or a spirit that was connected to ensuring luck with cattle. He ordered an end to the customs, and – in the usual manner according to law – the matter to be taken up by the secular courts, which had the power of secular punishment. According to the visitation record, a letter was dispatched to the secular authorities formally informing them of the matter, but it seems possible that it never reached the secular authorities since a secular court hearing never took place. Bång continued his trip to Kuopio, where he again took up the matter of Kekri. When asked about it, the parishioners denied not only celebrating it, but also of knowing anything about such celebrations. The bishop, however, noted in the record that although the parishioners denied all knowledge, 'the whole country knew differently'.<sup>60</sup>

Again, the secular authorities – this time the local bailiff – were ordered to investigate further. Nothing seems to have come of these investigations either. Instead of the widespread practice of Kekri celebrations, Bång's concern seems to have come from his personal conviction that such superstitions could exist and merit repression.<sup>61</sup>

Bång is usually considered one of the fully confessionalist Orthodox Lutheran bishops, along with Johannes Gezelius Sr. Bång was also a widely learned man who had studied in Uppsala and Greifswald, and visited the confessionalist Lutheran centres of Wittenberg, Leipzig, and Jena and the irenic universities of Helmsted and Altdorf. He had met Philip Spener in Strasbourg and – briefly – studied eastern languages in Heidelberg, Ulm, Tübingen, and Leiden.<sup>62</sup> His confessionalism was therefore slightly more moderate than that of many of his colleagues. From the beginning of his career, he had also been very interested in the history of Sweden. He began his career as the second professor of theology at the Royal Academy of Turku, where his duties included church history (the first professor covered exegesis) – the dissertations he supervised often related to church history. In 1675, he published a larger work covering 'The church history of the ancient Sweo-Goths' (*Priscorum Sveo-Gothorum Ecclesia*) in which he took part in building the noteworthy, heroic past of the Swedes as the forerunners of Northern civilization, where biblical figures like Adam and Noah had shared their wisdom. It is likely that his interest in Kekri and other pagan remnants derived from these past efforts: his theological and church historical interests were bound to have influenced his episcopal ones. It is also noteworthy, that *Priscorum Sveo-Gothorum Ecclesia* mentions two folk songs on the killing of a bear, one of which seems to have a genuine source, but the other one – the one quoted in the work – has since turned out to have been a complete fake.<sup>63</sup>

Bång's knowledge of the matter seems to originate from Michael Agricola's list of pagan superstitions in Finland, printed in poetry form at the beginning of the Psalter of 1553, where Kekri was also treated like a deity. Indeed *Prisorum Sveo-Gothorum Ecclesia* was largely a commentary on Agricola's list of deities. In all other source material, including later folklore, Kekri seems rather to be the name of the calendar festival, the celebration when the last of the harvest was finally reaped and the pasturing season of the cattle was over – that is, the end of autumn and the beginning of winter. Bång's interest in superstition also seems to mirror that of Agricola and a number of other clergy in that the discourse seems part of a genre of literature, and, in this case, learned discussion, as well as a form of making oneself important and useful by pointing out the neglect of previous generations of clergy.<sup>64</sup>

When Bång was appointed bishop, attention was drawn to the remains of pagan customs by the investigation and antiquity collection in the realm, as already mentioned in the previous chapter. These investigations called for the clergy to note the remains of previous cultures, and they were interpreted not as a sign of failure of the Christianization process, but as part of the realm's great past. It is noteworthy that although Kekri does turn up in a number of visitation records in Savonia and Tavastia – where the bishops and clergy were investigating – and even in some secular court records where witnesses testified to past celebrations in these areas, it did not arise in the antiquity collections. The collections did not receive reports from the eastern parts of Finland, so it may well be that Kekri was not an important part of the lived religion or religious cultural heritage there. However, the evidence seems to originate from the religious authorities' suspicions rather than from popular practice. Moreover, despite the bishop's severe words on putting an end to the custom, he seems not to have taken any strong practical action, and, where he does perform some action – such as sending information onwards and ordering someone to investigate – the results do not seem to have been followed up. In reality then, Bishop Bång's interest in both the customs themselves and their repression seems to have been limited. It may be congruent with the lack of interest that there are actually very few incidences in which the laity described Kekri practices: the pagan custom in question seems to be of interest to the clergy to the extent that there may be some limited clerical invention involved.

Another more pagan than Catholic or Orthodox religious custom that attracted some interest in the seventeenth century was Ukko and toasts to Ukko. Ukko was described as the main God in Agricola's list of Finnish

deities; he presided over the sky, rain, and thunder, and through them also crops and the harvest. Folklore scholar Martti Haavio, has, however, suggested that Ukko was not the name of the deity, but a general reverential term for a senior male figure.<sup>65</sup> A celebration called *Ukon vakka*, or Ukko's toast, seems to have been a fertility rite to secure the success of the sowing and harvest. It is also more often mentioned by the clergy as part of the superstitious ways of the peasantry than actually described as celebrated by the practitioners. Agricola may have had his information from his brother-in-law, who served as a bailiff in Savonlinna and Savonia in the early 1540s, where he had fined a group of peasant farmers for celebrating toasts to Ukko; the farmers in turn complained about their fines to the king.<sup>66</sup> The fine in question had been so large (eight pounds – i.e. 32 barrels – of wheat) that it was probably shared by a large group of participants during the sowing time. In parishes in Savonia, the rite was celebrated when the cattle were sent out to pasture in 1579, and in 1648 even at the vicarage. Folklorists have, however, found the rites in the folklore of various parts of the eastern Baltic area, in Eastern Finland, Russian Karelia, Ingria, and Estonia. In the case of Ukko, it is interesting that the cases in the seventeenth-century secular court records actually come not only from eastern Finland, but also from Tavastia.

In the village of Kokkila in the parish of Hauho, a dry spell threatened the harvest in 1662, and the villagers tried to counter it with toasts to Ukko, resulting in the best description available of the custom: the villagers gathered on the shores of the lake in the village with nine barrels of ale. Unlike with the saints' day celebrations, the court record does not present the participants as farm owners, and they were not all male. Nevertheless, since the record did give their names, four of the six participants can be recognized from tax lists: there was a man from a wealthy cavalry estate – although it is not certain if he was the owner or a hired soldier – one old master, and two old mistresses of farmsteads. They were all elderly and had adult children running their farms. Having reached the lake, the participants stood in a circle, the organizer standing waist-deep in water, chanting the words,

sacred Ukko, Father of the weather,  
obedient to God,  
give us rain so that the beautiful flowers should not dry  
and the growing crops fail.<sup>67</sup>

While chanting, the organizer also splashed the water with his hands to imitate rain and drank his ale. The others did the same, got each other

wet, and returned home via a creek bank.<sup>68</sup> Another seventeenth-century description comes from Sulkava in Savonia, where the toast to Ukko had been drunk in order to protect cattle. This toast also included singing. Members of the jury reported that few people practised the custom any longer, and that the pagan songs had been replaced with godly hymns.<sup>69</sup> Nineteenth-century folklore material gives more elaborate narratives from eastern Savonia.<sup>70</sup>

Although the offering customs to spirits and pagan deities were probably not that different from those that took place in the church or during the saints' days in the eyes of the practitioners, I have treated them separately since they were clearly placed in a different place on the continuum between religion and superstition. The offering customs in churches were clearly Christian and institutional. The saints' day offering meals were more unofficial, but still clearly Christian and Lutheranized. The third group of offerings handled in this chapter was clearly syncretic; it mixed Christian offering practices with offerings to nature and ancestor spirits. The first, institutional group of offerings was the most widespread, and many of the people who offered in churches would have felt it unchristian to offer to spirits as well – but not all of them. Those who had offering stones in their homes for the spirits, on the other hand, did not seem to think the customs mutually exclusive.

As Bishop Bång's interest in Kekri and pagan gods seems to have been scholarly at least as much as pastoral, the scholarly interest in remnants of pagan cultures increased further during the next century. This is illustrated by a set of academic dissertations (*pro exercitio* and *pro gradu*) at the Royal Academy of Turku. The institution produced a total of 1778 dissertations during its existence (1640–1827).<sup>71</sup> Around twenty of them deal explicitly with superstition and magic, and a few more with old poetry. In addition, a number of late eighteenth-century dissertations deal with 'natural history', retelling folklore stories, and 'traditional knowledge' about the home provinces of the students and professors. The contents, however, may tell more than the number of dissertations. Two well-known works will serve to show the development of the interest in antiquities that developed in the eighteenth century.

The first of these dissertations was Gabriel Maxenius's *pro graduale* (1733), *De effectibus fascine naturalibus*. It is a work in theology and philosophy by a student with strong clerical ties. Maxenius's dissertation is rather famous and is often mentioned when Finnish folklore studies on magic are discussed, for he was one of the first to have actually done fieldwork: he had spent years as governor to the son of the vicar and dean of the parish of Kajaani. While there, he had been encouraged by

his employer, the vicar, to collect folklore material – the superstitious songs of the parishioners – to use in his own dissertation to become a clergyman himself. His work quotes five poems at length, later interpreted by ethnologists as origin spells that identified the origins of the world and illnesses; these poems were used for healing. These spells invoke supernatural figures and deities, who were seen as the origin of illnesses or accidents, and who therefore had power over those illnesses or accidents. Maxenius mentions mainly female figures: Louhi, the mistress of the northern farm and the wife of the North Wind, who can defeat iron; Kiutatar, the mistress of Pain; and Maria Emonen (Mother Mary), who, in Maxenius's orthodox Lutheran context, did not have the consoling features of Catholicism's Virgin Mary, but appeared as part of the old evil and as papist delusions. Ukko and Ilmarinen – the smith who forged the source of good luck – were the male deities mentioned. Maxenius had little interest in the performers or the situations of performance, however.

By the other half of the century, disciplines other than theology and metaphysics also developed an interest in the same customs and folklore materials. Henrik Gabriel Porthan was initially a professor of rhetoric, but his chair was turned into one of economics by the time he finished his set of five dissertations called *De Poesi Fennica* (1766–78). The last part of *De Poesi Fennica* concerns songs and poetry on pagan deities, healing, and shamanism, and it is apparently unfinished. Porthan handed over the material to his student, Christian Lenqvist, for the dissertation *De superstitione veterum Fennorum theoretica et practica* (1782). Lenqvist is likely to have added to the material, since there are striking similarities to Maxenius's material, and Lenqvist's father had been the vicar of the same parish in Kajaani where Maxenius had collected his five songs. Lenqvist's interpretation of the material was nevertheless different from Maxenius's. Maxenius described the folk beliefs and the deities in them as a part of a past culture that was great but at the same time inherently devilish and threatening – a culture which was best overcome by proper Christianity. Lenqvist, on the other hand, tried his best to make this culture respectable. Like many historians, but in much greater detail, Lenqvist identified the gods he had found in the Finnish folklore as the same as those in the great cultures of Ancient Greece and Rome, Middle Eastern cultures, and even Britain. He seems to have agreed with his professor that the clergy had been misguided in their efforts to eradicate all knowledge of the old religious culture. Nevertheless, his attitude towards the shaman figure of the old religion, the 'tietäjä', was sarcastic as far as religion was concerned. Lenqvist's

attitude grew bitter when he described the healing practices used with the origin spells and the populace treating universitytrained doctors with contempt, and preferring to listen to the raging, cunning shaman.<sup>72</sup> While the interpretation of the old superstitions change, both of the works represent a similar interest in the history and legends that were necessary for a great nation to have, from which also the antiquity collections grew. This was a tradition of history in which the politically correct big picture was much more important than boring details of evidence and in which the provenance of evidence was only slowly arousing substantial interest. It is also intriguing to note how much material these works – by now classics of Finnish folklore – share.

### **Religion at Gravesites: Burial Grounds and Ancestral Forests**

The offering practices in eastern Finland have been related to ancestor worship and (non-Christian) burial sites. Non-Orthodox burials did cause some concern in the late seventeenthcentury county of Kexholm. In recent decades, there has been a considerable interest in ghosts and vampire stories. In the history of the Reformation in western Europe, they are related to the development of Catholic ideas on purgatory, the liminal space where souls were painfully cleansed before they could reach heaven. The Protestant faiths, on the other hand, dispensed with purgatory, and this should, in theory, have made it impossible for ghosts to exist, but it seems that they continued to haunt Protestant cultures as well.<sup>73</sup> In Finland, materials on ghost stories abound in nineteenth-century folklore, but in the seventeenth century, there is rather little evidence available. In a couple of cases, ghosts or spirits (*Spökelser eller rår*) drove men home from the forest. More material can be found from the eighteenth century.<sup>74</sup>

There were, however, forms of magic and superstition that were connected to the dead and that drew attention already in seventeenth-century Finland. One form was connected to burial sites, especially in eastern Finland. Unlike in the disputes over burials sites in France or Britain, there is no indication that any tension between Catholicism and Protestantism was involved, but the unofficial sites are attached to non-Christian superstition and rational explanations. Nevertheless, burial sites were important for the identity of not only the dead, but also the living kin. In France and Scotland, the desire to be buried – and to bury one's deceased relatives – near other members of the family line was an important issue for Protestants as well as Catholics.<sup>75</sup>

There was also a tension between the need to be buried near one's own kin and family and the obligation to care for and commemorate the dead, which is said to have extended beyond the kin group in the medieval tradition. It was believed that it was the duty of the living to ease the purgatory of the dead by prayer and good works, and it was the reciprocal duty of the dead to ease the life of the living by intercession with the Divine. The mutual care made the dead belong to both the kin and to the whole community.<sup>76</sup>

In the parish of Ruokolahti, there had been various problems with the congregation drinking beer during church services. An additional claim was taken up in 1675 by the vicar, who complained that the parishioners did not care to bring their dead to be buried in the churchyards, but buried them without the presence of the clergy at 'forbidden sites'. These were *karsikko* places, sites where spirits were thought to live, and trees had been specially pruned to mark the site as a place of taboo and worship. It is congruent with the use of these places as burial sites that they were often also thought to represent a resting or living space, especially for ancestor spirits. The officials, including the vicar, attributed the keeping of these unofficial sites in Ruokolahti to the unwillingness of the parishioners to pay for the burial – half a barrel of corn was the price, so it was a considerable sum – but the frequency with which the adherence to unofficial burial sites was recorded in the east suggests that there were other reasons for it, too.<sup>77</sup>

Similar cases appear in various places in eastern Finland during the eighteenth century, when they were usually attached to forbidden and unofficial burials by the accusers. It is in eastern Finland where the burial practices seem to have caused trouble. In western parts, narratives of such practices were treated as history, such as a story presented by the vicar of Kökar of the ruins of a local, long defunct Catholic convent, upon which stood the burial site of Peer Diekne, a heroic sacred man from the Nordic sagas. The convent had been in use until the end of the 1530s, after which the landed estate was confiscated to the crown, but the convent church itself may have been in use as a church into the 1640s. This tells us something about the need to build temporal distance. The vicar reported that others had since been buried there, and were sometimes still being buried around Peer Diekne's grave, although everyone was greatly afraid that misfortune would strike those who touched an existing grave. The vicar of Kökar proudly announced that great respect was still shown to Peer Diekne.<sup>78</sup>

In eastern Finland, however, the suspicion was that lay people buried their dead in non-Christian grounds, where the proper rituals – or the

cause of death or even establishing that the death had taken place – were not controlled by the authorities. The problem seems to have been largely hierarchical and interpretational: in theory, the Protestant concept of justification by faith alone should have made burial in consecrated ground unnecessary – the burial site had nothing to do with salvation or resurrection.<sup>79</sup> Nevertheless, death was too important to be left to the laity. It was even too important to be left to the parish clergy. In Finland – like in Germany – one can see that the church superiors and even the state power pressed for greater rigidity and conformity in listing, recording, and supervising deaths, causes of death, and the related rituals.<sup>80</sup>

Those accused of using unofficial burial grounds usually explained their actions by referring to weather conditions and the impracticality of travel when the land and waterways were not properly frozen, and digging graves in the churchyard when they were.<sup>81</sup> Nevertheless, the unofficial burial places in forests or islands near the homestead usually required some travel, and often – although not necessarily – some digging as well. Frequently, the explanation was that the corpses had been deposited on a nearby island or in a tree in the nearby forest temporarily to wait for suitable weather for transporting the body to the parish church. The purpose may have also been to accommodate two kinds of needs in the treatment of the dead at the same time: the temporary placement of the dead in a nearby burial place of the kin allowed the spirit to enter the kin group's community of the dead; the subsequent disposal at the churchyard catered for the larger community. A rational explanation was likely to work better when presented in court, though.

It was a consequence of the Protestant views on the afterlife without a purgatory that the living and the dead should be properly separated. The dead should go to their eternal fate and the living should continue their path towards it in this life. For the living, the burial site was not supposed to offer a sacred place of worship (of God or the dead) but only a place of quietude where commemoration would remind one of one's own fate. The purpose of the graveyard became not to house the dead among the living, but to separate the groups. As a result, European graveyards were often moved outside cities.<sup>82</sup> In Finland, by contrast, the authorities aimed at gathering the burials sites in the centre under their control.

The site of burial was not the only source of tension in burial practices. The medieval idea that the dead still formed a part of the community with mutual obligations and duties, as advocated by Natalie Zemon Davis,<sup>83</sup> also led to forms of magic trying to coerce the dead into cooperation. All over Europe, the bones of the dead, especially if

executed, and stones from churchyards and the like were used for magical purposes, from fortune-telling to raising the dead. In Finland, most of the material seems to relate to retrieving stolen goods and identifying thieves (understood as the same thing by early modern people) or curing illnesses. These forms of magic become especially prominent during the second half of the eighteenth century, when they concentrate in the eastern areas and Savonia,<sup>84</sup> but they were already known during the seventeenth century, when the idea was geographically more widespread. In reports from Ulvila from at least the midseventeenth century onwards, splinters from the windowsill or door frame where the thieves had entered would be taken to the graveyard and posited in someone's coffin. This was supposed to make the thief ill, cause epilepsy, or drive him insane.<sup>85</sup> Items such as bones and skulls were also taken from the graveyard in a similar way as reported in the eighteenth century, but they were usually given a rationalist explanation: in 1638, someone had taken a human skull from the churchyard in Pori town and taken it to scare magpies in the turnip fields. Magpies were probably not his only target, as he was sentenced to public penance and confession for superstition and magic.<sup>86</sup> It is likely, however, that the longer survival of the customs in eastern Finland had to do with the Russian Orthodox graveyards, which were separate from the Lutheran ones, and the customs in Karelia, where the dead kin members were provided with living abodes and sometimes food and drink in the graveyards. These circumstances aided the survival of graveyard magic in particular in this area.

# 5

## Conclusion: The Continuum of Magic and Religion

Throughout the confessionalist period of the seventeenth century, the religious plurality embodied in ceremonies and rituals and interpreted as magic survived and even flourished in Finland.

Previous scholarly literature has argued that the popular masses did not adopt many of the central ideas of the Reformation. This was reflected in the communal and collectivist religious attitudes that Swedish historian Göran Malmstedt sees in early modern communion practices, which he claims did not fit with the reformers' teachings. Malmstedt also claims – following Robert Scribner's work – that the church's aim was to create a sharper distinction between the sacred and the profane, but that this was a failure in both time and space. The populace found that regarding faith and mercy alone as the routes to salvation was too abstract, and deeds remained important. Malmstedt terms this the 'preReformation piety of deeds'.<sup>1</sup> This was a bargaining religion in which the sacramental relationship between humans and saints or divine powers produced a mutual obligation, and the completion or neglect of duties by one was expected to produce a similar response from the other.

Various anthropological approaches can be modified to apply to early modern Sweden and Germany, such as van Gennep's rites of passage, Durkheim's 'solidarity', Turner's 'communitas', and Mauss's gifts as an integrating obligation between members of communities and between the communities of the sacred and profane. Such models do need modifications when they are transported from one culture to another, however, just as the scholars who created them intended. These models have given much insight into early modern and late medieval cultures, adding to the sophistication and empathy of historians' approaches. There is nevertheless an inherent functionalism in the anthropological

models that may give too simple a picture of early modern religious culture as conveniently built for the archaic needs of society – that its purpose was to efface insecurities, tensions, and conflicts in order to maintain a self-regulating ecosystem of social stability. This functionalism fits well with the state and discipline-oriented views of German and Scandinavian scholarship on confessionalization, but the functions of religion are not the same thing as religion itself, or faith – or magic. Early modern culture was more complex, more dynamic, and more relational than such views suggest.<sup>2</sup>

As has been pointed out by decades of scholarship and as can also be seen in this study (though it has not been my focus), there was a strong effort to teach the post-Reformation views to the populace in the seventeenth century. The clergy was being educated in seminars and yearly synods, and a multitude of literature and circular letters was sent to the clergy to help them teach catechism, preach sermons, and set an example to the parishioners. When teaching failed, discipline took over, and this applied to the parish clergy as well as the lay population. Visitations and court trials increased. Nevertheless, the teaching seems to have failed to produce the kind of modern understanding of the individualist, internalized spiritual religious life we assume the reformers had wanted. The failure to teach the populace has been attributed to the different interpretations that various social groups in any society can give to any cultural expressions and teachings: when taught to read the Bible, parts of the populace would interpret the day of rest as Saturday instead of Sunday, for example. The more detached a group was from outside influence and the more coherent it was – as the early modern local communities often were – the stronger these groups were likely to hold to their interpretations, and to intentionally create more misinterpretations.<sup>3</sup> Such intentional misinterpretations were then likely to combine traditional and new elements, and to model the new elements to fit with the old ones. Religious syncretism and what Malmstedt calls the incomplete success of the Reformation<sup>4</sup> were the resulting features of early modern culture in Europe, including Sweden and Finland.

I have suggested that the survival of collective ritualistic religion was not so much in spite of the confessionalization efforts or the campaign to discipline the populace, but because Finnish and Swedish Lutheran confessionalization defined itself against Calvinism rather than Catholicism. The boundaries that defined Lutheran identity for the clergy and the elites were set against the Reformed Church. In this context, ceremony did not receive the rigorous purge that usually characterizes the Reformation. The campaign against ceremonies and

rituals remained moderate in Sweden and Finland. Sacramental and traditional markers of the sacred were not necessary for salvation, but unlike the Calvinists, Lutheran Reformers did not forbid them, and so a conservative attitude towards the sacramental became an essential part of early modern Lutheranism in Sweden and Finland. A sacramental understanding of religious practice, its places, times, and rituals, was actually something to which the church leaders, theologians, and parish priests were committed.

Religious life in Finland did also include an attempt to reform ritual, which, on the level of written culture, can be understood as an attempt at simplification. On the level of lived religion, however, no rigorous simplification is particularly evident. Rather, it seems that the clergy and the laity created new Lutheran rituals, as in the case of the offering churches. These rituals slowly came to replace the older ones, and they had less of the stigma of outdated or foreign religion, although they seem to have retained the essentials of collective and sacramental thinking. The shared sacramental understanding was then at times – but not always – reinterpreted as magical and superstitious.

There seems to have been a definite Counter-Reformation effort in the second half of the sixteenth century, which previous scholarship has largely ignored either as being unimportant or as being interrupted by the ascension of Charles IX to the throne of Sweden. Nevertheless, some of the Catholic features in seventeenth-century Finland – like the rosary cult in Lower Satakunta – can be much more coherently interpreted in the context of the Counter-Reformation than as mere remnants of medieval culture, although obviously the two influences could have been in effect at the same time. The Counter-Reformation effort achieved some results, clearly more so in Finland than in Sweden proper. Later on, these effects can be seen in the accusations of superstition that some parts of the laity faced in the courts and in the traditions that were understood to be magic, such as the saints' day celebrations and the use of salt and ritual prayer. This tradition was sustained and partly originated in the Counter-Reformation rather than in medieval Catholicism, but as the seventeenth century wore on, the traditions were Lutheranized by the dominant culture.

The sacramental character of lived religion may have been heightened by the religious circumstances of Finland, where a conservative attitude towards western traditions met with pagan traditions and the sacramentalist tradition of the Russian Orthodox Church. Political and social tensions, however, also added to the influence of the eastern tradition. Whereas in many regions in Europe Catholicism was demonized

by Protestants – and quite often vice versa – in Finland, and largely in Sweden, the demonization did not happen between Lutheranism and Catholicism, except perhaps for a brief period during the battle for power between King Sigismund and Duke Charles. On the contrary, the demonization and hostility were projected onto the Russian Orthodox Church. Despite a continually restated formal tolerance in the local culture of lived religion, religious pluralism in eastern Finland led to tensions. This is not to say that the religious groups could not live side by side. Intermarriage was not uncommon and drinking together was frequent. But the local situation – where foreign policies turned into tangible battles, destruction, and pain – caused a general atmosphere of tension and suspicion in which the Russian Orthodox were in a way dehumanized as a group by presenting them as apostates.

Rather a lot of the material on the superstitious magic practices – be they of Catholic, Lutheran, Russian Orthodox, or pagan origin – is available to historians because the seventeenth-century authorities paid close attention to them. The attention was largely related to the disciplining project of the time, and to religious education. Nevertheless, the role of the disciplining project should be qualified, for it seems almost as much a failure as the Reformation, if understood from the point of view of post-enlightenment Protestantism. The elites in Sweden, including the orthodox Lutheran clergy, seem to have enjoyed the curiosity of the ancient customs of the country, a pleasure possibly similar to the one they felt towards the competing denominations – the knowledge of which not only allowed them an arena of personal freedom in religious elaboration but which was also required of them as learned, worldly men.

German historians Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling coined the term 'paradigm of confessionalization' in the 1980s. Since then, it has become a common basis for research in late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century European history, serving as the point of departure for works on the relationship of the state and culture, and the background assumption for studies on popular religion and religious disciplining. Religion is the key to understanding the early modern world. The paradigm claims that the process of confessionalization was an important phase in the development of the modern state. Nevertheless, it also served to turn the relationship in the opposite direction: state formation became the key to understanding early modern religion, religious discipline, and repression. In Germany – under Lutheranism, the Reformed Church, and Roman Catholicism – church and state worked closely together, and ecclesiastical and social discipline played an important role in making people think and behave like devoted Christians. Since

the paradigm stresses the similarities between the denominations, it is relatively easily transportable to other areas, southern as well as northern, and it has suited socially and politically oriented Scandinavian historians well. The emphasis on the state has diminished in the twenty-first century, and historians are keener to see differences, identities, and individual actors. Thomas Kaufmann has further developed the confessionalization paradigm to point out that although Lutheran, Reformed, and Catholic territories in the German Empire went through the same social and political development to a certain degree, there were substantial differences within the denominations, and these were very important to people at the time. Each confession developed its own distinct *Konfessionskultur*, or confessional culture. Confessionalization, with all its related discipline and reform campaigns, should be understood in the light of the particular dogma of each early modern confession.<sup>5</sup>

The formation of religious identities as either Catholic or Protestant was perhaps faster and stricter in areas where adherents of different denominations lived close to each other, such as in parts of Germany or France.<sup>6</sup> Nordic areas are usually thought of as both more remote and more homogenously Lutheran, but, in the aspiring great power of Sweden, the struggles in Germany were continuously present for the church elite to project their own identities onto. In Finland, the presence of eastern influences, and possibly even non-Christian traditions, may have served as an even stronger counterpart to Lutheran identity.

Historians in Finland have paid ample attention to the survival of traditional religiosity up to the final decades of the seventeenth century, but have explained it as a failure of the Protestant elite to modernize lived religion. At the end of the century, historians often see the campaign against superstition as finally repressing traditional religiosity. Whether or not that led to a modern, individualist relationship between the human and the Divine or to the decline of religion and secularization has not been of major interest to Finnish and Swedish historians, who usually see a major historical break occurring in the Great Northern War, after which everything was different – the period following the war is often studied by different scholars. Another reason for this is that the strong social history tradition in both Sweden and Finland has avoided any interest in theology. Church historians have stressed the importance of Calvinism in church policies, but the meaning of those policies for practical lived religion has not made an impact on social historians. This may be because Finnish and Swedish historians have often followed the lines of inquiry set forth by British historians from John Bossy to Robert Scribner. Studies in France and Britain, where the main framework of

Protestantism was Calvinism, operate in political and religious contexts different from those in Sweden. Even in Lutheran contexts in southern German areas, the situation was different because the balance of power between the religious groups was different. Finnish historians have wanted to denationalize history by following western European models, but this may have prevented us from seeing how the history of these northern corners of Europe has its own unique character.

The historians' models I mention do not fit in Finland without remodelling, but they may very well fit in the history of the areas for which they were created. What use is this for a non-Finnish audience, apart from the obvious – that every region and culture has its own national traps and pitfalls and the example of one can help in noticing them in another, even if they are not the same? A part of the special history of the northern – and north-eastern – corner of Europe is the finding that Swedish Lutheranism seems to have been different from the Lutheranism of German areas; indeed, it was even different in Finland compared to Sweden proper. Once again, this highlights two issues. First, there is the already known but intangible interdependence between politics and social history and religion. The circumstances in Sweden as an aspiring great power and its eastern provinces in Finland were different from those of sixteenth-century German towns and the French and British kingdoms. Nevertheless, more often than not points of comparison can be found in the border areas, periods of civil war, and points of cultural contact. Second, there was a plurality of interpretations that could be given to a religious confession and its expression in various circumstances. Lutheranism changed over time and place, as did the other denominations as well. It is arrogant and dangerous to presume that Lutheranism, Christianity, and religion have been understood in the same way at all times and all places, and even worse to let oneself think that the correct way of understanding 'real' and spiritual religion is our own *a priori* one.

Although contemporary Finnish society is highly secularized, Finland is generally acknowledged to be a profoundly homogeneous society, and the cultural basis of this – from education to the work ethic – has its roots in Lutheranism. I hope that showing that there were coexistence (however uneasy) and interaction (however one-sided) of different religious cultures in the history of this society will help us to recognize patterns for dealing with today's religious plurality.

# Chronology

## Events in this Book, in Finland, Sweden, and Europe

1527 Diet of Västerås, Sweden adopts Lutheranism

1556–63 Gustav I's son John (later John III) becomes Duke of Finland

1568 John III ascends the throne

1571 publication of the Swedish Church Ordinance

1575 publication of the *Nova ordinantia*

1576 publication of the Red Liturgy

1583 Catherine Jagiellon – the Polish wife of John III – dies

1587 Sigismund (the son of John III and Catherine Jagiellon) is elected king of Poland as Sigismund III

1592 John III dies

1593 Sigismund ascends throne of Sweden

1593 Convention of Uppsala defines the country's religion as the Lutheran faith according to the *Confessio Augustana Invariata*

1596–97 the Club War is fought between the peasantry and the troops of the Governor of Finland, Baron Clas Eriksson Fleming

1599 Sigismund deposed, Charles IX ascends the throne of Sweden

1609–17 Ingrian War is fought between Sweden and Russia

1611 Gustav II Adolf ascends the throne

1617 Peace of Stolbova: Käkisalmi and Ingria are annexed to Sweden (and partly to Finland)

1620–46 the period of the notes on the rosary cult

1621–24 Sorolainen's *Postilla* printed

1624 Court of Appeal in Turku is founded

1630 Sweden joins the Thirty Years War

1632 Gustaf II Adolf dies in battle at Luzern; Christina ascends the throne, but there is a guardian government due to Christina's minority

1640 Royal Academy of Turku is founded

1642–51 English Civil War

1644 Queen Christina comes of age

1648 Peace of Westphalia

1654 Queen Christina abdicates; Charles X ascends the throne

1642 first Finnish-language Bible printed

1655	Christina converts to Catholicism
1656–58	the Rupture War is fought between Sweden and Russia
1660	Charles XI ascends the throne
1660–1700	trials on benevolent magic triple compared to previous (and following) periods
1666–70	Blåkulla trials in Åland
1668	Blåkulla trials begin in Sweden proper
1675	Spener publishes <i>Pia Desideria</i> in Frankfurt
1680s–1690s	the period of trials for irregular saints' days
1688	first disruptions caused by radical Pietism in Turku
1697	Charles XII ascends the throne
1696–7	the Great Famine of Finland
1696	Peter becomes sovereign in Russia
1700–21	the Great Northern War is fought between Sweden and Russia
1703	St Petersburg founded by Peter the Great in Russia – on formally Swedish land
1706	Pietism forbidden in Sweden by a Royal Edict of Lusuc
1730–50	offering churches face repression

## Bishops in Finland

### Bishops of Turku

1563–75	Paulus Juusteen
1583–1625	Ericus Erici Sorolainen
1627–52	Isaacus Rothovius
1652–57	Aeschillus Petraeus
1658–64	Johannes Elai Terserus
1664–90	Johannes Gezelius Sr
1690–1718	Johannes Gezelius Jr

### Bishops of Vyborg

1554–63	Paulus Juusteen
1563–64	Canutus Johannis
1568–78	Eerik Härkäpää
1578–1618	Vyborg diocese attached to Turku
1618–29	Olavi Elimaeus
1630–32	Nicolaus Carelius

1633–41	Gabriel Melartopaeus
1642–56	Petrus Bjugg
1658–64	Nicolaus Nykopensis
1664–72	Petrus Brommius
1672–79	Abraham Thauvonius
1679–81	Henrik Carstenius
1681–96	Petrus Bång
1696–1705	Petrus Laurbecchius
1705–11	David Lund

# Notes

## 1 Introduction: Magic in a Religious Borderland

1. The Finland under the jurisdiction of the Turku Court of Appeal included Åland as an old part of the realm, but not Kexholm, which had been ceded by Russia. The jurisdiction for Kexholm was placed under Dorpat along with the other conquered eastern areas.
2. Karonen 1997, 96–137; Nenonen 1999, 167–273; Lappalainen 2001.
3. Jutikkala 1958.
4. Cf. much of Finnish and Swedish Social history since the 1990s, e.g. Einonen and Karonen 2002; Matikainen 2002; and Eilola 2003. For international examples, see, e.g. Wiesner 2006, which, however, dates to the Reformation the same things Finnish scholars date to Lutheran orthodoxy – a quite natural delay in Finnish historiography, as the Reformation teachings really only struck through during the Lutheran orthodoxy, possibly only by the mid1600s.
5. E.g. Pleijell 1951 and 1965 have been especially important in Finland and Sweden. However, see also Juva 1955.
6. E.g. Laasonen 1998; Laine 1996; and several articles in Ericsson 2007.
7. Garstein 1992; Laasonen 1998.
8. Laasonen 1998.
9. Most importantly Gezelius 1672, 218 and 1689, 79; Laasonen 1977, 465; Vallinkoski 1962–66 on the dissertations at the Royal Academy of Turku; see also Oja 1999, 36–9; Dillinger 2011 provides a view on some pragmatic applications of natural magic in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe.
10. See e.g. Dixon, Freist, and Greengrass 2009; Kaplan 2007.
11. Cf. Nenonen 1992, 268ff.; Sörlin 1999.
12. Eilola 2003; Kuha 2014.
13. Karonen 1997, 243ff.
14. E.g. Miettinen 2012.
15. Oja 1999, 173–7; Nenonen 1992, 39–72; and Katajala 2005.
16. Heikkinen 1969, 94–100, 134–7, 141ff., and 181–6.
17. Heikkinen 1969, 51, 204–48.
18. Kieckhefer 1989, 1.
19. Ankarloo 1972, 82–6; Nenonen 1992, 256ff.
20. Wilskman 1781. Cf. Nenonen 1992, 263ff.; Ankarloo 1972
21. Taussi-Sjöberg 1996, 21–3; Ylikangas 1988, 50–77; and Andersson 1998, 102.
22. The laws and ordinances can be found in Schlyter 1869 and Ulkuniemi 1978, and the most important collections of statutes in Schmedemann 1706. Concerning the eighteenth century, see Modée et al. 1742–1809, and, concerning the church, see Wilskman 1781.
23. Letto-Vanamo 1997; Trolle Önnerfors 2014; Björne 1995.
24. Sörlin 1999, 63–5; Nenonen 1992, *passim*.
25. Cohn 1975.

26. Clark 1980, 103; 1997, 25.
27. Roper 1994, 55.
28. Davis 1983.
29. Ginzburg 1992 (Italian orig. 1966).
30. Purkiss 1996.
31. Gibson 1999.
32. Monter 2002.
33. Levack 2006.
34. Blomsted 1958; Inger 1980, 46–62, 70–1, 80–5; Karonen 1997, 116–24, 145–7; Letto-Vanamo 1997; and Karonen 1999, 188–94.
35. Österberg 1987 or 1989; Andersson 1998.
36. Ylikangas 1988 or 1998; Karonen 1999; and Eilola 2003.
37. Sörlin 1999; Lennersand and Oja 2006; and Eilola 2009.

## 2 Lived Lutheranism and the Development of Superstition

1. Kieckhefer 1994, 813–36; Clark 1997, 31ff.; Toivo 2015; Stark 2002, 125–39.
2. This can be read in any textbook on the history of witchcraft or the history of witch-hunts (e.g. Levack 2006, 109ff.; Clark 1997, 435ff.), but regarding the case of Finland two scholars' works are of particular note: Eilola 2003 and Nenonen 1992. Also see English overviews in Nenonen 1993 and 2006.
3. E.g. Aalto 1996; Einonen and Karonen 2002; Matikainen 2002; Eilola 2003.
4. See, e.g. Zeeden 1985; Lotz-Heumann 2014, 33–53.
5. Lotz-Heumann 2014, 33–53. See also Ingesman 2014 for assessments on Nordic historiography.
6. See, e.g. Bossy 1970; Duffy 1992; Scribner 1987.
7. E.g. Hallenberg 2001, 74–7; see also Montgomery 1995.
8. Asche 2003; Czaika 2007b, 73–98.
9. Czaika 2007b, 77, 86.
10. On language issues see also Rublack 2005, 94.
11. Laasonen 1998, 72–73.
12. Czaika 2007b, 80.
13. Laasonen 1998, 19.
14. Laasonen 1998, 20; Zeeden 1965; Ijäs 2014, 65–73.
15. Laasonen 1998, 21.
16. Laasonen 1998, 22–4, 36, 40–3.
17. Laasonen 1998, 73.
18. Laasonen 1998, 73–4; Anthoni 1936, 162–7, including Fleming's memorandum dated 28 August 1596.
19. Laasonen 1998, 74; Heininen 1974, 40, 141, 164, 222–3.
20. Czaika 2007b, 81.
21. Göransson 1952.
22. Exorcism was a very clear and important part of the Lutheran Swedish and Finnish Baptism. See e.g. the baptismal manual cited by Salminen 2008 from the manual codex in Kokemäki.
23. Malmstedt 2002, 12; Kuha 2012 or Kuha 2014.
24. Scribner 1987, 16; Ruutu 2004, 42; Heal 2005.

25. Duffy 1992.
26. Ruutu 2004, 42–77; Michalski 2002, 234.
27. Laasonen 1991, 158.
28. Hiekkanen 2005; see also Hanska 2005.
29. Heal 2005; 2007, 56, 106, 140–7.
30. Pirinen 1955; Katajala 2002, 168ff.; Pirinen 1939, 38–52.
31. Hiekkanen 2005, 171–88 and 2007, *passim*.
32. Heal 2005, 39–59.
33. Hiekkanen 2005.
34. Laasonen 1998.
35. Duffy 2001, 105.
36. In Brandenburg and Silesia, parishioners put a violent end to the Prince's attempts at Calvinization. They were, however, more favourable to Lutheranism, since it retained the core of the beloved and trusted Catholic customs.
37. Laasonen 1998, 41; Fleischer 1974, 92; Juva 1955, 52.
38. *Rukouspäivät* in Finnish and *bönedagar* in Swedish.
39. Laasonen 1977, 70–90.
40. Laine 2008, 195–7.
41. On Ericus Erici's career, see also Pohjolan-Pirhonen 1960, 420–3; Holmquist 1933, III:2, 241; Holmström 1937, 70–6.
42. Sorolainen 1614.
43. Sorolainen 1621, 7–8; cf. Katajala-Peltomaa 2015.
44. E.g. Sorolainen 1621, 7–8, 510.
45. 'Mutta cazoman mitä meidän aicanam on tapattunut / cosca se Pawin Messukiria eli Liturgia pappein päälle tungettin sekä Ruozisa että Suomesa, että heidän piti taicka sen wastanottama / taicka mistaman heidän wircans ja leipäns / silloin monen sydämen aiatoxet ilmoitettin / sillä monda otit sen vastan ia monicahdat sitä wastan sanoit.' Sorolainen 1621, 219, (187) on Sunday after Christmas.
46. Laasonen 1991, 156–8; Heal 2007, 116ff.
47. Kiiskinen 2010, 286. My translation aims at giving the content only, but the original Swedish poem is not of very good literary quality.
48. Kallestrup 2015, 36–52; forthcoming.
49. Gezelius 1665.
50. District Court Records, Vehmaa 15.–16. May 1693: Vehmaa ja Ala-Satakunta KO a 2:111. NA.
51. Malmstedt 2002, 29–55; Also, in Finland Tuokko 22 on western Finland; Tuokko 77, for eastern Finland, where the cases begin a couple of years earlier, in 1668. Tuokko is a twentieth-century catalogue of the seventeenth-century rural district court records, which lists the cases by search words. Like all indexes, it reflects the interests of the compilers and too narrowly defined key words may lead astray. I have looked broadly at everything under 'church' and 'religion' and 'folk religion'. I have also gone through samples of court records from various parishes, and, not surprisingly, come across cases that are not listed in Tuokko: it cannot be considered exhaustive, but it gives a good enough overview of the kind and proportion of cases that exist in the court records. Tuokko was originally written by hand on card files and has been housed in the National Archives of Finland, but it is currently undergoing digitization and is

accessible via the Internet at <http://digi.narc.fi/digi/dosearch.ka?new=1&haku=tuomiokirjakortisto>.

52. District Court Records Huittinen 6.–8. and 10. March 1684. Ala-Satakunta KO a 1:543 – v. NA.
53. District Court Records, Ulvila 3.–4. and 6.–7. February 1688. Ala-Satakunta II KO a 3:36 – 7. NA.
54. 'O Käre herre huru wähl du Prädikar, noogh haar iagh dett tillförende och hördt'. District Court Records, Laitila 9.–12. January 1688. Masku ja Vehmaa KO a 3:33 – v. NA.
55. District court records Huittinen 8.–10. February 1693. Ylä-Satakunta KO a 13: 20–1; Loimijoki 29.–30. May 1695 Ylä-Satakunta KO a 15:209–10; Loimijoki 26.–29. October 1695 Ylä-Satakunta KO a 15: 482 – v; Loimijoki 29.–30. May 1695. Ylä-Satakunta KO a 15: 217 – v.NA.
56. Malmstedt 2002, 144–5.
57. Laasonen 1998, 163.
58. Laasonen 1977, 227–8.
59. Heal 2007, 102–3 .
60. Gezelius 1689, 302, 303; KL 1686 XI: 10; Lehtonen 1931, 168, 173.
61. '[A]tt gå till Herrens Nattwardh, war icke annat, än een ritus', District Court Records, Kokemäki 16.–18. June 1684. Ala-Satakunta II, KO a 1: 599 (when the case was begun but the accused did not show up) and Kokemäki 9.–12 December 1684, Ala-Satakunta II KO a 1: 660 – v. (when witnesses were heard and a resolution of moving the matter to the cathedral chapter given) NA.
62. 'Nembnär jagh intet Gudh ibland?' ... 'Lohen sjlmät, Sijan sjlmät, Minun vercoin Catzocat, Nimen Isen Poian etc.' District Court records, Ulvila 11–12 Sept 1676; Bielkesamlingen vol. 27: 53–5. SRA.
63. The case was summarized in Åbo Tidningar 23 February 1795 (no. 8).
64. 'Mijn koo är modstulen, mijn koo är blodstulen, mijn koo är köttstulen, men jagh skall gifwa dig malt och salt, och du skallt få dijn mackt och kraft åther.' District court record draft Kastelholm 6 August 1666; See also Hausen 1894–98, 266.
65. 'Du skalt gå efter migh, som fahnen efter dhen örätta mästaren, såsom ock efter dhen som går til tings och weet rätt men witnar örätt.' District Court Record draft, Sund 27 August 1666; Hausen 1894–98, 280.
66. 'Du skall längtä efter migh som den fattige siäl efter Gudz rijke, och Jorden efter friskt wtn.' District court record draft Sund 27 August 1666; Hausen 1894–98, 281. Roughly similar in another testimony against the same woman on Sund 13–14 December 1666; Hausen 1894–98, 288.
67. District court record draft Sund 13–14 December 1666; Hausen 1894–98, 289.
68. District court record draft Finström 24 August 1666; Hausen 1894–98, 279.
69. The Åland Blåkulla trials were the only set of 'panic type' chain trials in Finland in which one of the accused named another under torture. Altogether 13 women were accused, seven of whom were eventually executed (decapitated and burned afterwards). This story can be read in Finnish in, e.g. Heikkilä 1969, 208ff. or Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo 2009, 204ff. There is also an English description in Heikkilä and Kervinen 1990, loosely summarized by Brian P. Levack 1992 (second edition of Levack 2006; Heikkilä and Kervinen did not quite make it to the first edition from 1987, although their article was first published in Swedish in 1987 and had been first presented as a conference paper in Sweden in 1984).
70. For further reading, see Toivo 2008, 36ff. and 120ff.

71. 'Du skall längtä efter migh som den fattige siäl efter Gudz rijke, och Jorden efter friskt watn.' District court record draft Sund 27 August 1666; Hausen 1894–98, 281.
72. 'Som Jorden (:inhet hjorten:) längtar effter friskt watn och mijn fattiga siäl efter Gudz rijke, så längtaa du efter migh, och du skall få nyitta och gagn af all din ährs föda. Och sedan läses sherpå Fadfer wår', District court record draft, Sund 13–14 December 1666; Hausen 1894–98, 288.
73. '[O]ch säija så: "Jag seer wähl hwar dhen gumma ståår; som min koo har förspildt; hon ståår på en heetan häll, hon skall lefwandes på jorden spricka innan sitt och innan sooluskott, J nampn Guds Fadher, Son och then Helige Andes".' District Court Record draft, Sund 13–14 December 1666; Hausen 1894–98, 288.
74. 'Säijandes dherhoos för whar koo: "Jag gifwer mina koor mallt och saltt lika som Jungfru maria gaf sina, j nampn Faders, Sons och then H. Andes".' District Court Record draft, Sunday 13–14 December 1666; Hausen 1894–98, 288.
75. Laasonen 1998.
76. Kauffman 2006, 418–41.
77. District Court Records, Ulvila 10.–11. October 1692. Ala-Satakunta II, KO a 7:471–3.
78. Lower Court Records Ala-Satakunta II, KO a6:530–31v; Lower Court Records Ulvila 10.–11. October 1692. Ala-Satakunta II, KO a7:471–3.
79. Cf. Eilola 2003.
80. E.g. Lower Court Records Ulvila 11.–12. September 1676. Bielkes. vol. 27:53–4v. SRA; Ulvila 11.–12. July 1687. Ala-Satakunta II, KO a 2: 225–9; Ulvila 21.–23. and 25. February 1687. Ala-Satakunta II, KO a 2: 183–5; Ulvila 4.–5. November 1695. Vehmaa ja Ala-Satakunta II, KO a 5: 367–8; in other parts of Finland e.g. Oulu 8.–10. and 13.–14. January 1674, rr13:527–v.
81. Klaniczay, 1990, 166; Henningsen, 2001, 271–96.
82. See Wilmi 2003, 176–8.
83. A range of cases in Lower Court Records, such as Ulvila 4. and 6. April 1674. Vehmaa ja Ala-Satakunta I: KO a4: 22–3, 26v; Ulvila 3.–5. July 1683. Ala-Satakunta II: KO a 1: 425v; Ulvila 21. and 23. Feb. 1694. Ala-Satakunta II: KO a6:29–32. NAF; *Suomen kansan muinaisia taikojia* IV (1933).
84. Weikert 2004; Malmstedt 2002; Kuha 2012. See also the Master's thesis of Miia Kuronen (later Miia Kuha) 2009.
85. Jokipii 2002, 53; Hiltunen 1987, 192–205; Hormia 1939. On the church of Kuopio, see Kuronen 2009. Church records, Oulunsalo, account book 1719–67, IK8. NA.
86. Sundberg 1989.
87. Sundberg 1989, 72; Weikert 2004, 232–4; Sanders 1995.
88. Sundberg 1989, 68; Weikert 2001, 256.
89. Quotation from a letter by Mathias Benedicti, 22 March 1674, in Ståhle 1960, 277; Weikert 2001, 256; Katajala-Peltomaa 2009, 14–15; Mayr 2000.
90. Weikert 2004; Jokipii 2002.
91. In charge of the pastoral care in the military.
92. Weikert 2001, 264.
93. Jokipii 2002, 35–7; Stark 2002, 65–9, 160–4.
94. Hiltunen 1987, 192–205, 481–2.
95. Hormia 1939, 233.

96. Alaja 2013, 227–41, esp. 234.
97. Examples in eastern Finland District court records Jääski 2–3 June 1686. Jääski, Ranta ja Äyräpää, II KO a:3: 227–9; Ruokolahti 18–20 February 1689, Jääski, Ranta ja Äyräpää, II KO a:3: 183. NA.
98. Hiltunen 1987, 192–205, 481–2.
99. Hormia 1939, 235.
100. Weikert 2001, 256.
101. Jokipii 2002.
102. Sundberg 1989; Kuronen 2009; Weikert 2004, 232–4; Sanders 1995; Malmstedt 2002; Laasonen 1967.
103. Hiltunen 1987, 192–205; 481–2.
104. Hormia 1939, 229–31; Jokipii 1991, 331.
105. Hiltunen 1987, 192–205, 481–2.
106. Hormia 1939, 229–31.
107. Jokipii 2002.
108. Hiltunen 1987, 192–205, 481–2.
109. Jokipii 2002, 50.
110. Rosenwein 2006.
111. Nenonen 1992; Oja 1999, 121ff.
112. Alaja 2013, *passim*; Arffman 2008.
113. Cf. Laasonen 1977, 11–13.
114. Jokipii 2002; Kuha 2009.
115. Jokipii 2002; Weikert 2004, 80–3, 181ff.; on Charles XI, Kuha 2009, 29.
116. These arguments come forward in the trials held in Oulu on Oulunsalo offering practices, as described by Hiltunen 1987, 192–205, 481–2.
117. Hiltunen 1987, 192–205, 481–2.
118. Kansanaho 1954; Laine 1996; Sulkunen 1999.
119. Jokipii 2002, 70; 1991, 331.

### 3 Catholic Influence and Magic in Finland

1. Laine 2007.
2. Karonen 1997, 96–101, 130–2; Garstein 1963, I, 48–9; Pohjolan-Pirhonen 1960: 227–30, 263–70.
3. Biaudet 1906, nos 2 and 4; Garstein 1963, I, 49–50.
4. Biaudet 1906, no. 3; Nuorteva 1997, 192.
5. Biaudet 1906, no. 7.
6. Garstein 1963, I, 57; Nuorteva 1997, 192.
7. Garstein 1963, I, 76–9.
8. Biaudet 1912, no. 204.
9. Mullet, 1999, 1–28; Bolton 1983; Arnold 2005.
10. Hanska 2005.
11. Nuorteva 1997, 194; Biaudet 1906, nos 9 and 10.
12. Biaudet 1906, nos 134, 397; Biaudet 1912, no. 315; Nuorteva 1997, 196.
13. Nuorteva 1997, 200–1.
14. Garstein 1963, I, 100–1.
15. Biaudet 1905; Bolin 1912, I, 18–19; Garstein 1963, I, 105–6.
16. Biaudet 1912, 192; Bolin 1912, I, 32–3; Nuorteva 1997, 202.

17. Nuorteva 1997, 202.
18. Nuorteva 1997, 191–246; Garstein 1992, 113 knows only 3 Finnish students and therefore claims that, with the exception of Sweden, other countries were poorly represented.
19. Kuninkaankartano. Despite their name, no royalty actually lived in these manors; they were rather crown property meant for the efficient cultivation of fields and animals when normal methods of taxation were not suitable, e.g. for military needs.
20. Salminen 2007; Hockman 2015, 110–13.
21. Biaudet 1 I.A.5. fol. 492; Hockman 2015, 113–15.
22. Nuorteva 1997, 204–5.
23. Biaudet 1912, no. 315; Biaudet 1905. Michael Jussoila was actually an exception here. He was only 16 when he left Sweden and consequently not yet in the stage of proper college education. He appears to have entered a gymnasium in Braunsberg and paid for his studies himself.
24. E.g. Biaudet 1912, no. 313.
25. Nuorteva 1997, 210–11; Karttunen 1908, 127–34.
26. Garstein 1963, I, 235–6.
27. Nuorteva 1997, 214, 217.
28. Karttunen 1908, 190–4; Nuorteva 1997, 223.
29. Nuorteva 1997, 225. On the Catholic interpretation: Biaudet 2: Possevino to Cardinal Ptolemeo Gallio 19 Feb. 1585; Johannes Jussoila to the Rector of Collegium Germanicum, Sunday sexagesima 1586. NAF.
30. Garstein 1992, 113–14.
31. Nuorteva 1997, 228–30, 236.
32. Stiernman 1728, I, 41, 433. The Örebro Ordinance from 1617 confirmed these articles further and limited student peregrinations to schools and universities outside the influence of the king of Poland: Stiernman 1728, I, 708–13; Garstein 1980, II, 141–6.
33. Nuorteva 1997, 226–7, 237.
34. Nuorteva 1997 accounts for what happened to the Finnish Jesuit school students who are known to have returned to Sweden. Most of them seem to have died either during or in the aftermath of the Club War.
35. Sorolainen 1621, 219, 187 (I Sunday after Christmas).
36. Kouri 1979, 169–78.
37. Garstein 1992.
38. E.g. Pirinen 1991, Kuha 2014, and Arffman forthcoming.
39. Kuha 2014, Laine 2008, Arffman forthcoming.
40. Burke 1978, Scribner 1981, Duffy 1992.
41. E.g. Malmstedt 2002, Weikert 2004, Sanders 1995, and various others.
42. Nuorteva 1997, 202.
43. Hiekkanen 2006; Koivisto et al. 2012, 31–2.
44. The references to these court records have been collected using local or church histories and the ‘Tuokko’ register of rural court records, local histories, and scholarly works on church and religious history, witchcraft, and superstition in Finland. Marko Nenonen 1992, 405–10 includes an almost complete list of witchcraft and magic trials in Lower Satakunta, where some of the cases are also noted. As noted earlier, Tuokko is a twentieth-century catalogue of the seventeenth-century rural district court records and is currently undergoing

digitization (<http://digi.narc.fi/digi/dosearch.ka?new=1&haku=tuomiokirjakortisto>). 'Rosary' as such is not available as a search word. I have used search words relating to church, religion, and superstition. In addition to the obvious search term 'traces of Catholic religion', cases like these should be expected to turn up, for example, under headings like 'communion' or 'church punishment', because the suspected parishioners would often be banned from communion. There are plenty of cases when someone was noted as banned from communion, but the reasons stated are fornication and crimes of violence, and a couple of times 'ignorance of the rudiments of religion', which means that the person had failed his or her catechism hearing. Likewise, one would expect that entries on 'visitation' included cases like these, but it seems not.

45. '[E]tt paar stene båndh som käringar i den tijdh hade läst opå.' District court records, Kokemäki, 17.–20. November 1634. Ala-Satakunta I KO a 3, 304v. NA.
46. '[H]on brukar Läsebandh och gammal Påwesk willfarellse. Hwilcket Rychte hennes man Hindrich Madzon bekiende för Rätten. Och förthenskuld haffwer honnom giffues Orsak at sättia henne ifrån Kyrckian till dhez hon sådant aståår.' District court records, Huittinen 30.–31. August 1624. Ala-Satakunta I KO a 2, 254v. NA.
47. Toivo 2008; Oja 1999, 102–3.
48. '[H]on I Kyrkiotiden hade brukat Mariolatria och således warit ifrå Kyrckian'. District court records, Ulvila, 31. March 1634. Ala-Satakunta I KO a 3, 275v. NA.
49. '[M]ed käringar'. District court records. Huittinen 4.–5. June 1646. Ala-Satakunta I KO a 6, 148. NA.
50. 'Tio Gods buds, troon, Fadhren wår nio gånger hwardera på knään läsit.' District court records. Huittinen 16.–18. November 1646. Ala-Satakunta I KO a 6, 192v. NA.
51. Garstein 1992, 227, 240–1, 271, 308–9.
52. Ankarloo 1972, 82–6; Nenonen 1992, 256ff.
53. Ankarloo 1972, 82–6; Nenonen 1992, 256ff. The laws were rather vague on the definitions of heresy, blasphemy, and cursing, which stood for harmful witchcraft and various forms of superstitious behaviour. Therefore, the various patents were observed to a varying degree. Cf. also Pihlajamäki 2006, 189–98; Ylikangas 1983, 153–4. Unfortunately the church court and visitation records from early seventeenth-century Lower Satakunta do not survive.
54. Nenonen 1992, 123–36; for English summaries see also Nenonen 1993 and 2006.
55. This assessment is based on the various trials in this book and both my own (Toivo 2008) and Marko Nenonen's work on witchcraft compared to relevant ones in Sweden proper by, Sörlin 1999; Oja 1999; Lennersand and Oja 2006. On a comparison on punishments for violence against parents and even infanticide, compare Toivo 2013, Lilieqvist 2014, and Bergenlöv 2001. On work on chastity crime and unwed mothers, see Tiina Miettinen 2012.
56. Suvanto and Niemelä 1986; Lehtinen 1967; also Binder 1996 on Marian texts in Turku before and after the Reformation.
57. Laine 2007.
58. Hiekkanen 2007, 246–51. On the Franciscan connections and other influences on the relative wealth of the area, see Salminen 2011, 8–63; Suvanto 1973, 409; Salmesvuori 2003, 9–54; Salmesvuori 2009; Fält 2015.
59. Pirinen 1991.
60. Pollman 2014, 167; Evangelisti 2014, 412–13.
61. Evangelisti 2014, 404–7; Heal 2007, 148ff.

62. The original letter is lost, but a full transcript has been quoted in various publications, including an English translation by Garstein 1992, 119–22.
63. Garstein 1992, 119–22.
64. Karant-Nunn 2010, 159–87; Rubin 2009; Heal 2007, 64–132, 140–7.
65. '[L]ucevat nimettäin / sata ja wijsikymmedä Engelin tervehdystä ja wijsito-istakymmentä [sic] Isä Meidän Rucousta – ja sawat palio aneita ia syndins antexi waica cuinga caucana sydän ia aiatos siitä on.' Sorolainen, 1621, 7–8; *Postilla* II, 510.
66. Sorolainen 1621, 207, 209–11 (175, 177–9, I Sunday after Christmas), 201 (169, II Christmas Day).
67. An example of a folklore story mixing Marian mythology with Finnish 'pagan' religion might be a story from Hauho (again in Tavastia) depicting an offering tree (these were mainly thought to be offerings for ancestors or forest gods, in this case possibly also to Ukko, the god of Heaven and thunder or war, since the offerings were preferably of iron) and Mary revealing herself sitting in the tree every New Year's Day. The story was passed on orally, and recorded early in the twentieth century; it claimed to tell of a tree that had been standing on a hill since the seventeenth century. Palmo 1929, 168. The Finnish Literature Society houses a collection of folk legends in the Finnish Literature Society Archives, Manuscript card files, Perinnelajikortistot: Legendat. See also Rausmaa and Rokala 1973.
68. Heal 2005; Hiekkanen, 2005.
69. Hiekkanen, 2007, 219–74; on the church of Huittinen, esp. 220–3, Kokemäki, 224–7, Ulvila 266–9; Pirinen 1996.
70. McNamer 2010, 6–7.
71. Cf. Rosenwein, 2002, 821–845.
72. E.g. Rubin 2009, 261, 364–5.
73. McNamer 2010, 6–7. There are landmark studies on affective devotion by, e.g. Caroline Bynum, Jeffrey Hamburger, Sarah Beckwith, Thomas Bestul and Rachel Fulton, and Martha Nussbaum.
74. E.g. Karant-Nunn 2010.
75. McNamer 2010, 12.
76. Karant-Nunn, 2010, 174–9.
77. '[K]äringar i den tijdh.' District Court Records, Kokemäki, 17.–20. November 1634., Ala-Satakunta I KO a 3, 304v. NA. The Vicar of Punkalaidun practised 'with (old) hags' and 'med käringar'. District Court records, Huittinen 4.–5. June 1646. The Ala-Satakunta I KO a 6, 148. The word 'kärring' was a diminutive word used to address 'unimportant womenfolk'. It most often means 'old woman', usually denoting also mental simplicity and short-sightedness, credulity, and stubbornness, even when the person's actual age is not very advanced. *Svenska Academiens Ordbok*.
78. Toivo 2012.
79. Van Gent 2009, 127ff.
80. McNamer 2010, 12, 119–50.
81. District Court records, Kokemäki, 17–20 November 1634. Ala-Satakunta I KO a 3, 304v; Huittinen 4–5 June 1646. Ala-Satakunta I KO a 6, 148. NA
82. Laine 2008, 182; Knuutila 1987, 9–4.
83. *Rovasti*, in Finnish.

84. County Archives in Joensuu, IICd1, item 14 (6.3.1670). Olavi is the Finnish version of Olaf.
85. Religious offences in Finland were still mostly treated as misdemeanours, not as blasphemy, apostasy, or heresy. Cf. earlier chapter.
86. Lempäinen 1967, 81; Ankarloo 1972, 82–6; Nenonen 1992, 256ff.
87. Scribner 1987; cf. also Bossy 1973.
88. District Court Records: Jääski 2.–3. June 1686. Jääski, Ranta ja Äyräpää, II KO a:3: 227–9. National Archives of Finland (NA).
89. District Court Records: Jääski 2.–3. June 1686. Jääski, Ranta ja Äyräpää, II KO a:3: 227–9. National Archives of Finland (NA).
90. District Court Records: Ruokolahti 18.–20. February 1689, Jääski, Ranta ja Äyräpää, II KO a:3: 183. NA. However, the description is historicized: the celebrations had not been practised for some years, so the participants were acquitted. There are a number of other references to blasphemous or lay celebrations mocking the Mass or Eucharist in the Finnish seventeenth-century court records. Some of them even seem to have taken place on Sundays, saints' days, or at Christmas. (One on St Stephen's Day, the second day of Christmas day, is presented by Kuha 2012, 99–104.) Since there is a clear element of mockery there, I will not include them in this discussion of seriously performed religious rites. Nevertheless, even in dismissing the cases on those grounds, one must consider two things. First, seriously performed religious rituals may well include an element of mockery and humour in them – these things are not necessarily mutually exclusive, especially in a preEnlightenment setting (see e.g. Handelman 1977, 185–92). Second, the descriptions of commemorative customs that derived from Catholicism may have been purposefully distorted or turned into mockery in the court setting. One of the reasons for this was that Catholic ideas were considered dangerous, so they were undermined by ridicule. Another reason was that if the offence could be termed some sort of bad behaviour due to ignorance, drunkenness, or general irresponsibility, the crime merited a lesser punishment (fines) than heresy or apostasy (decapitation), which a real adherence to Catholicism signified in the confessionalist Lutheran setting.
91. E.g. Mänd 2012.
92. Nenonen 1992, 71–2; Saloheimo 1990, 528–9.
93. Talve 1990, 251, 262–3.
94. Karant-Nunn 2007 (orig. 1997), esp. chapter 4; Nischan 1999; Palmer Wandel 2006.
95. Dixon 1996, 109.
96. Burnett 2011, 87–8.
97. Heal 2005.
98. Burnett 2011, 99, 117–18.
99. Karant-Nunn 2007, 116–20; Malmstedt 2014.
100. Scribner 2001, 113–17.
101. Cf. Burnett 2011, 88–96.
102. The record says 'om vårr', springtime, in a slightly ambiguous handwriting.
103. See Toivo 2008, 60–3; Stark 2002, 111–37.
104. It is not clear how this was done. Most of the cattle sheds at the time had earth floors, so there is not much room under the threshold. One would also think that the cattle would be scared of fire and panic easily, but nothing of that sort is ever mentioned in connection to this kind of magic.

105. See, e.g. Stark 1998.
106. See, e.g. Dixon, Freist, and Greengrass 2009; Kaplan 2007.
107. Muchembled 1985, 171. The same for Protestant regions, e.g. Ozment 1980, 116–20.
108. Duffy 1992, 3; Malmstedt 2002, 174.
109. Malmstedt 2002, 143ff.
110. Ståhle 1960.
111. Toivo 2014, 299–319.
112. On the secular representative nature of the household or village, see, e.g. Eilola 2003; Karonen 1997, 61ff. On personal duties towards saints in personal matters like illness, see e.g. Katajala-Peltomaa 2009.
113. Cf. Appel 2010.
114. Toivo 2008; Stark-Arola 1998; Malmstedt 2002, 159, 185.
115. E.g. Malmstedt 2002; Scribner 1987, etc.
116. Dixon 1996, 109.
117. Bossy 1970, 62ff.
118. Heal 2005.
119. Malmstedt 2002; Weikert 2004, 232–4; Sanders 1995.
120. Scribner 1987.
121. E.g. Kuha 2014, 159–73; Laine 2008.
122. Duffy 1992.
123. Laine 2008, 180.
124. Hiekkanen 2007.
125. From the 'Tuokko' register (see n. 43). I have no doubt that I must have missed some cases. However, I am also quite sure that the missed cases would not alter materially the interpretations given here, not even my opinion on the rarity of the cases on irregular holy days compared to cases of other forms of superstition. Cases in the eighteenth century are not included here.
126. Stark-Arola 1998, Nenonen 1992.
127. Harva 1948; Siikala 2012.
128. District Court Records: Jääski 2–3 June 1686. Jääski, Ranta ja Äyräpää, II KO a:3: 227–9. NA.
129. Waite 2003, 213–14. This was also the source of the translation of the quotation from the Livonian visitation order.
130. Nyman 1997; Konglig Majjt:tz Placat och Päpud, Om Gamle Monumenter och Antiquiteter. Tryckt aff Georg Hantsch 1666; Ståhle 1960. These evaluations are discussed, e.g., by Wangefelt-Ström 2011.
131. E.g. Gabriel Maxenius, *De effectibus fascine naturalibus* (1733); Christian Lenqvist, *De superstitione veterum fennorum theoretica et practica* (1782).
132. Nenonen 1999, 167–215; Pirinen 1991, 317–18.
133. Rural District Court Records: Jääski 2.–3. June 1686. Jääski, Ranta ja Äyräpää, II KO a:3: 227–9. National Archives of Finland (NA).
134. Rural District Court Records: Jääski 2.–3. June 1686. Jääski, Ranta ja Äyräpää, II KO a:3: 227–9. National Archives of Finland (NA).
135. Jutikkala 1958.
136. See Wangefelt-Ström 2011.
137. Laasonen 1977, 227–8; Gezelius 1689, 302, 303. KL 1686 XI: 10. Lehtonen 1931, 168, 173.

138. Foster 1992; Scribner and Johnson 1996; Karant-Nunn 2007 (orig. 1997); Parish and Naphy 2002.
139. Harva 1948, 74, 83–4; Siikala 2008, 158–60; Talve 1990, 251, 262–3; Vilkuna 1983, 410–14, 345–8 (originally published 1950).
140. Haavio 1959, 19–20, 136–7; Nenonen 1992, 69–72; Katajala-Peltomaa 2009, 207–13.
141. See Tittonen 2008 on burial places.

## 4 Eastern Orthodox Influence and Its Demonization in Finland

1. Katajala 2005, 47.
2. Katajala 2005, 21–34.
3. Katajala 2005, 21–34.
4. Resolution på Prästerskapets Besvär 1647, in Stiernmann 1728–29, II, 1103; Laasonen 2005, 17.
5. Laasonen 2005, 17, 20.
6. Katajala 2005, 32–3.
7. Laasonen 2005, 20.
8. Royal Majesty's instructions in Swedish in Elimaeus 22. July 1618, in Lagus 1847, IV, 103, or Akiander 1868–69, I, 29–32. Also in Finnish in Laasonen 2005, 20.
9. Laasonen 2005, 49–51.
10. Laasonen 2005, 34–5, 38–9, 41–4.
11. Laasonen 2005, 48–52, 54–8, 60–2, 68, 85ff.; District Court Records, Kexholm 22 January 1642. Province of Kexholm KO a 2. NA.
12. Lappalainen 1972; 2001, 113–25, esp. 124; Katajala 2005, 34.
13. Lappalainen 1972; 2001, 113–25; Katajala 2005, 34.
14. Laasonen 2005, 111.
15. Lehtinen 1961, 203; Eng. 2000, 267.
16. Laasonen 2005, 117–18; e.g. a case from Rautu, where entire families on each side had first been drinking and then fighting: District Court Records, Rautu 20–21 February 1665. Province of Kexholm KO a 3.
17. Laasonen 2005, 118. District Court Records, Uukuniemi 21–22 February 1668. Province of Kexholm KO a 3.
18. Laasonen 2005, 118. District Court Records, Kitee 20–21 September 1667. Province of Kexholm KO a 3; Kitee 15–16 February 1669.
19. District Court Records, Jaakkima 10–11 March 1675 Province of Kexholm KO a 4: 22–23.
20. Nenonen 1992, 112, 146, 183, 365; 1997; Katajala 2005, 167.
21. Clark 1997, 25, 69ff.; Cohn 1975.
22. Roper 1994, 55; 2004.
23. Heikkinen 1969; Eilola 2003; Ginzburg 1992 (Italian orig. 1966); Östling 2002.
24. De Blécourt 2007, 125–45.
25. See e.g. Davis 1977.
26. Eilola 2003.
27. For analysis on European Sabbath trials, see, e.g. Voltmer 2009.

28. Cf. Cohn 1975; Moore 1987.
29. Cf. Nenonen 1992; on the area of Kexholm especially Katajala 2005.
30. District Court Records, Uukuniemi 22–23 February 1678. Province of Kexholm KO a 4, 103–4.
31. ‘[H]varjehanda viskepelige avgudaktigheter’. District Court Records, Uukuniemi 28–29 March 1679, Province of Kexholm KO a 4:184–5.
32. Kallestrup 2015, 33–52; forthcoming.
33. ‘För Gudi Åhran begärt att bekiänna rätta sanningen, till detta nekade hon begärandes Guden henne bewara från et sådant beskyllning.’
34. ‘Thet bästa hon gitter’, a common phrase in court records.
35. District Court Records, Ulvila 11–13 September 1677. Bielkesamlingen vol. 27: 89v–100. SRA.
36. District Court Records Ulvila 2 and 4–5 October 1686. Ala-Satakunta II KO a 1: 114; Ulvila 21–23 February 1687. Ala-Satakunta II, KO a 2:183–5; Ulvila 11–13 July 1687. Ala-Satakunta II, KO a 2: 225–9. NA. See also Toivo 2008, 60–4.
37. ‘Så skrämdé henne at hon icke medh ett öre skul sitt liff lössa wille’... ‘Som Människö Hand styrdes’. District Court Records Ulvila 6–8. March 1699. Vehmaa ja Ala-Satakunta II, KO a 13: 92–4 and Ulvila 2–4. May 1700. Vehmaa ja Ala-Satakunta II, KO a 14: 512–21. NA.
38. District Court Records from Ulvila 6–8 March 1699. Vehmaa ja Ala-Satakunta II, KO a 13: 92–94 and Ulvila 2–4 May 1700. Vehmaa ja Ala-Satakunta II, KO a 14: 512–21. National Archives of Finland.
39. Laasonen 1977, *passim*.
40. Rothovius 1641.
41. Sarmela 1994, 46; Stark 2002.
42. Sarmela 1994, 47.
43. Letter by Olaus Martinus 13 March 1674, Ståhle 1960, 297.
44. ‘[E]n vwhite fahna upmonstrat ... af Ryssarne in sin tid.’ Letter by Olaus Magni Arenius, undated. In Ståhle 1960, 196.
45. ‘[T]wenne munckeböcker ... dock uthan avguderij’. Letter by Elias Petri Hilmius, undated. In Ståhle 1960, 194–5.
46. Letter by Mathias Benedicti, 22 March 1674. In Ståhle 1960, 277.
47. Heikkilä 1969, 81–2.
48. *Nimismies* (in Finnish), *Länsman* (in Swedish).
49. District Court Records, Ruokolahti 15.–16. February 1681, Jääski, Ranta Äyräpää II KO a 1: 90. NA.
50. District Court Records, Ruokolahti 12. December 1682. Jääski, Ranta Äyräpää II KO a 1:42–43. NA.
51. District Court Records, Jääski 15.–17. February 1686. Jääski, Ranta Äyräpää II, KO a 3:207. NA.
52. District Court Records, Lappee and Joutseno 22–23 September 1685. Kymenkartano ja Lappee KO a 2, 188–9. NA.
53. Akiander 1869, 12; 1868, 428.
54. Siikala 2012, 85.
55. Siikala 2012, 85–6; Hautala 1960, 110.
56. Siikala 2012, 86; Stark 2002, 77–81.
57. Kirkinen 1987, where the quotation is from; Silvennoinen 2001, 40–1.
58. Bång was a doctor of theology from the Royal Academy of Turku. He had first been the vicar of two wealthy parishes near Turku, Lieto and Maaria.

In the latter, he fell into disfavour with the parishioners, in his own opinion because he was trying to keep order, but according to the parishioners because he was a violent and intemperate man who understood Finnish badly and overstepped his rights. The parishioners complained about him to the church consistorium, to the Court of Appeal, and eventually to the Royal Majesty and the Diet. The parishioners' petitions were unsuccessful, and Bång was not discharged from the office of vicar until he was appointed the superintendent of Ingria in 1679. From that office he was appointed acting bishop to the diocese of Vyborg in 1681, when the current bishop fell ill. He served in that office until his death in 1696. <http://www.kansallisbiografia.fi/paimenmuisto/?eid=325>.

59. '[D]he offra sin gamle afgud Kekri, medh mera sådant, som synes vara af hedendomen qvarblifwit'. Episcopal visitation record, Joroinen 15 February 1693. In Neovious 1890, 451–3.

60. '[H]jeela landet talar annorlunda'. Episcopal visitation record, Kuopio 19 February 1693. In Neovious 1890, 453.

61. Episcopal visitation record, Kuopio 19 February 1693. In Neovius 1890, 453.

62. Rather a lot has been made of Bång's studies at foreign universities, and he did make a considerable trip by the normal standards of his time. Considering that his trip through Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands took only a few months, he cannot really be said to have studied greatly. Surely, however, seeing many different attitudes must have made an impression on him and influenced his theological career path.

63. Simolin 1912; Laasonen 2005; Vallinkoski 1962–66, 96–103; Siikala 2012, 29.

64. Katajala-Peltomaa 2015.

65. Haavio 1959, 136–7.

66. Siikala 2012, 397. The letter of complaint does not speak of Ukko, but a Swedish cultural translation or nearest equivalent, 'thordn'. The same translation was also given in the court records of Hauho later, but there the records include a song in Finnish, which mentions Pyhä Vcko Illman Isä, 'Sacred Vcko Father of the Wheater'.

67. I have had little opportunity to translate the original Kalevala-metre poetry: 'Pyhä Vcko Illman Isä, Jumalan käskyläinen, sadetta sinä meilen suo, ettei kuivuis Kucka Caunis, wilia wihelä waipuis'. The verse *Jumalan käskyläinen*, i.e. 'obedient to God' is slightly out of the proper form, but this does not necessarily mean anything, since the poetry rules were more fluid than the edited nineteenth-century collection of the *Kalevala* suggests.

68. Miettinen 2009, 338–40.

69. Siikala 2012, 398–9.

70. Siikala 2012, 399ff.

71. All dissertations from the Royal Academy are listed in Vallinkoski 1962–66.

72. On the comparisons, see, e.g., Lenqvist 1782, §5 and p. 55; §XVI.

73. Caciola 2016.

74. See Tittonen 2008; Sarmela 1994; Stark 2002 140–1, 196.

75. Roberts 2000; Spicer 2000; Harding 2000.

76. Burgess 1987, 1991; Duffy 1992, chapters 9–10.

77. District Court Records, Ruokolahti 2–4 December 1675. Jääski, Lappee, Ranta, Äyräpää KO a 15, 80. NA.

78. Ståhle 1960, 280–2; Leinberg 1890, 80, 140; Hockman 2015, 97.

79. Heal 2005.
80. Karant-Nunn 2007 (1997), 154. In Finland, see, e.g. Bång's earlier visitation records.
81. Tittonen 2008.
82. Karant-Nunn 2007, 178–9, 187.
83. Davis 1977.
84. Tittonen 2008.
85. E.g. District Court Records Ulvila 1649, mm6: 615v; Ulvila 19–20 January 1675. Vehmaa ja Ala-Satakunta I KO a 4: 9 – v. NA.
86. District Court Records, Ulvila 1638, Ala-Satakunta I KO a 4:286v. NA.

## 5 Conclusion: The Continuum of Magic and Religion

1. 'Förreformatorisk prestationsfromhet', Malmstedt 2002, 166.
2. Cf. Karant-Nunn 2007 (orig. 1997); Matthias 2004; Czaika 2007a, 2007b.
3. Scribner 1996, 86ff.; Duffy 1992, 588ff.; Karant-Nunn 2007 (orig. 1997), *passim*.
4. Malmstedt 2002, 168.
5. Schilling 1995; Lotz-Heumann 2014; Kaufmann 2006. See also Kaufmann 2009, 702–9.
6. Dixon, Freist, and Greengrass 2009; Forster 2001.

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