

## Gender and Weddings



Gallen-Kallela ('22)

- Gender and time
- Economic aspects
- Wedding songs
- Public-private

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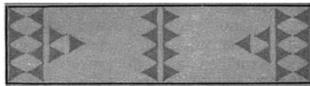
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## Gender and Time



Gallen-Kallela Kalevala Icon ('22)

- What's gender?
- Cyclical time and gender
- Birth-life-death cycle
- "Rites of Passage" mark moments within the cycle
  - Identification
  - Metamorphosis

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## Stages on Life's Way



Embroidered Wedding Shawl

- Five stages of a woman's life Finnish-Karelian communities vis-à-vis marriage
  - Daughter, but no longer child
  - Betrothed woman
  - Bride
  - Young daughter-in-law
  - Wife
- Stages must be navigated by symbolic death, rebirth

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## Economic Aspects

- Marriage as an economic relation
  - Bride price
  - Gifts and symbolic exchange
- Weddings as economic union connect groups
  - Exogamous wedding practices
  - Wedding deals generally made between bride's kin and bridegroom



Gallen-Kallela Poem 20 Feast

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## Two types of weddings: Village and Kin-Group



- W. Finnish Villages
  - Loss of bride
  - Reimbursement to community
  - Open wedding
- E. Finnish Kin-Group
  - Familial bonds
  - Negotiating filial bonds
  - Secretive and exclusive
- Often mixed practice, as we see in *Kalevala*

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## Wedding Songs

- Lyrical genre, performed in relation to the stages of the process
  - Balance between songs and laments
  - Make public expectations
  - Delight and instruct
  - Often coded to conceal
  - Sometimes bawdy



Gallen-Kallela Poem 22 Illustration

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## Key Wedding Song Ideas



Gallen-Kallela Poem 23

- Key concepts
  - Economic context
  - Abduction
    - Predatory groom,
    - Fearful bride-kin
  - Barter
  - Instruction
- Negotiation of roles within marriage
  - Formalized roles and expectations
  - Expectations defined through wedding songs

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## Wedding Song Images

- Important Images
  - Suitor
    - Eagle (Finnish)
    - Hawk (Russian)
  - Door threshold (separation, incorporation)
  - Sauna as part of life cycle and its transformations
- Wedding time of flux
  - Good fortune linked to formalization of ritual
    - Instruction
    - Guidance
  - Futility of unorthodox approaches
  - Imitation of aristocracy to ensure wealthy future



Eagle, N. Karelia

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## Public and Private Relations



Smoke-Cottage Interior

- Separation and incorporation important to formalize power and responsibility within economic unit
  - Women's power
  - Differs from industrial public-private distinction
- Gender and feelings attached not personal
  - Community conventions
  - Marital norms

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## Conclusion



Gallen-Kallela Kalevala Icon

- Marriage as reflection of society
- Organization of time and space
- Marital Relationship
- Community Relationships

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