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THE CROSS-CULTURAL BACKGROUND AND MODERN TRANSFORMATIONS OF RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL SYMBOLS OF LITHUANIAN IDENTITY

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Abstract: Traditional symbols and codes are very powerful elements of culture. In modernity they have become connected with the paradigm of intertextuality: being actual because of their modern and contemporary treatment, at the same time they are associated with intracultural communication, the national historical background and ethnic traditionalism, as well as having a lot of intercultural features. Paradoxically serving to define cultural boundaries and uniqueness, they also can testify to historical processes of cultural globalization.

The aim of this research is to contextualize the iconicity and contemporary meaning of modern national visual symbols (a rue, a six-petal rosette; a sun with wavy rays) and uncover the main differences and similarities between their ancient historical and folkloric meaning and actual modern interpretations based on art, folk art and art-historical, historical, archaeological and folkloric data. This interdisciplinary approach is based on semiotic (i.e. ethnosemiotic), ethnological interpretation and contextual analysis of the function and meaning of visual symbols as elements of culture.

The study clarifies how these ornamental signs of national identity, which are related to cultural heritage, but with intercultural historical origins, come alive and come to be newly interpreted by the social imaginary, influenced by scientific concepts in modern religious, spiritual and cultural life and their representations, and how these signs are prevalent internationally. It also analyses how, as logos in highly symbolic forms relating to mythical paradigms, these visual signs are involved in processes of the auto-communication of culture, its transmission, creation and memory, and how they are related to the boundaries of semiotic space or the semiosphere (Lotman 2005: 210; 2009: 131-142).

Keywords: rue, six-petal rosette, sun with wavy rays, iconicity, visual culture, Lithuanian identity signs, ornament symbolism, logotype, religious symbols.

Introduction

The geometric patterns – the rue, a six-petal rosette and a radiant sun with wavy rays – which serve as signs of Lithuanian cultural identity are popular in advertising and the representation of cultural and religious organisations and ideas. Although they are interpreted as a phenomenon of modern national/regional or spiritual culture, they are derived from the cultural past of the folk, where they were connected with a mythological world-view, and at the same time they have a very wide intercultural context. This strange contradiction between local and national identities, the historical, mythological and religious background of these signs and their intercultural universality and role in modern folk culture and religious and spiritual movements in the context of regionalization or globalization is the main object of my investigation.

These visual symbols are closely related to cultural tradition and folk cultural heritage, which are usually interpreted as a source of knowledge and an inspiration for contemporary culture. They are often associated with the ideology of local identity and autonomy. Their meaning can be perceived as a medium that can be read differently over time as circumstances change. Consequently, such a message can also become an arena for confrontation and competition that is not constant or unchanging (Graham and Howard 2008: 2-5; Robertson 2008: 144-147). On the other hand, symbols of identity, despite being based on tradition, usually had quite different mythological meanings in the past. Therefore, following Guibernau (1996), it might be said that identity defines the paths along which the past and heritage, language, religion, ethnicity and nationalism are harnessed in order to create a narrative of inclusion and distinction that

describes the communities and means by which their features, uniqueness and differences are determined. The recognition and acknowledgement of otherness can help to bolster self-identity, but it can also lead to distrust, avoidance and exclusion or isolation (Graham and Howard 2008: 11).

Analysing modes of the interpretation and actualization of traditional signs and the acculturation of their universal aspects in the process of modernization and intercultural communication, Benedict Anderson's theoretical insights about what he calls 'imagined communities' are relevant. Describing the modern concept of 'nation' as an imagined community, invented and formed through the culturally mediated imagination of people threw mass media (Anderson 2006: 9–36), he draws our attention to the relativity and subjectivity of the concepts and phenomena of modernization. From this point of view, the same mechanism works in the process of the adaptation of ancient signs in modern communities.

According to the concept of Charles Taylor, the 'social imaginary' is 'the way ordinary people imagine their "social surroundings"'. Imagined by the society, entities are brought into existence by the power of the social imagination. They might not be real in the strict sense, but they are real in their consequences (Taylor 2007: 171, 176–211).

Analyzing the social imaginary, J.C. Alexander explores the notion of collective representations. Defining the representative iconicity in contemporary life, he states that

> *Icons allow members of societies to experience a sence of participation in something fundamental, to enjoy the possibility to control despite being unable to access the script that lies beneath. Icons are cultural constructions that provide belief-friendly epiphanies and customer-friendly images. There is then historical continuity of cultural orders. The icon has proven to be a powerful and resilient cultural structure. The contempory icons occupy a wide range of cultural registers. (Alexander 2010) Conventionally they are associated with visual emblems from evocative architectural constructions [...], yet the sensuous surface effects of contemporary icons actually range much more widely to popular songs, [...] brands and logos. It is because they galvanize narratives that icons are not only aesthetic representations but also become full citizens of public discourse. (Alexander and Bartmanski 2012: 6-7).*

The explanation of the cultural meaning of signs by structuralist and post-structuralist approaches and the ethnosemiotical viewpoint is based on the treatment of culture as a system of signs and of meaning as derived from the differences between the signs that form the system. Culture as symbolic order can be described as a system of codes and differences.

However, Castoriadis opposes this approach rising the idea that the choice of symbolism reflects the more positive determinations of the social group, rather than a negative demarcation from other groups. For him, meaning arises as more than the result of differentiation (Castoriadis 1998: 136).

Therefore, I seek to include both attitudes in my research : to analyse the positive determination and also the differentiational aspects of the iconicity of modern meaning-making by social imagination in the field of traditional signs, ornaments, images, emblems and logos.

The image of rue (rūta)

The Lithuanian name for the herb Ruta Graveolens is rūta, the name of the rue herb in Middle English, roe, as well as Old French and Latin ruta, Greek rhute and Ukrainian ruta (рута).

The natural habitat of the rue is limited to the mountains of southern Europe, the Mediterranean coast and the Crimea. Growing in the wild and in gardens from antiquity, the rue was known in southern Europe, North Africa and the Middle East as a healing herb, also being used to stimulate menstruation and induce abortions. Rue was used as an anti-spasmodic and to strengthen eyesight, as well as being a remedy for snakebite (Dioscourides AD 50-70).

In Lithuania, the rue acquired a specific cutural, mythic-poetical meaning. The image of the rue and the rue wreath, its erotic symbolism in traditional Lithuanian folklore and customs, and it historical traces have been analysed by T. Lepner (1744) (Lepneris 2011: 163), J. Baldauskas (1935: 236), S. Matusas (1959), A. Vyšniauskaitė (1964), D. Šeškauskaitė (2000) and others. The rue narative tradition and its changes in literature have been investigated by J. Sadauskienė (2010). However, transformations of visual images of the rue in modernity and contemporary culture have been poorly investigated thus far.

According to Matusas, rues appeared in Lithuanian flower gardens as early as the fifteenth century. He links the wearing of a flower wreath as a symbol of girls‘ virginity with Christianity, based on the regulations of the municipality of Riga, Livonia, in 1450. In his opinion, rues spread from the monasteries.

The oldest mention of the ruta herb in Lithuania in the inventory of Rokiškis church and rectory, which reports that rues and marjoram were sown and planted alongside vegetebles (Matusas 1959: 142).

Despite some obvious Chistian folk explanations about the origin of the rue from Jesus' blood during his martyrdom (Višinskis 1964: 165–166; Kibort 1893: 156), in general the image and customs associated with the rue connote more universal moral values in Lithuanian folk culture.

Sadauskienė defined several aspects of the semantics of nineteenth-century Lithuanian folklore about girls' rue gardens as a place for the self-perception of the virgin: here rue is a symbol of vital, reproductive powers in a sacred, magical space. She also distinguished several symbolic aspects of rue gardens: as a model of the mythological world centre, a representation of vitality, a magical place suitable for divination and fortune-telling, and a place of worship and exaltation. She admits that the image of the rue is associated with the folk mythico-poetical tradition, which is not identical to the Christian symbolism (Sadauskienė 2010: 147-150).

The image of the rue in Lithuanian traditional culture was closely related to the rites of matrimony. In the Christian tradition it was associated with the idea of virginity: the rue was one of the most important attributes of a girl's life before she married. Every maiden was expected to cultivate a rue garden in her homestead and to use rues to make wreaths for her wedding eve and wedding day.

Before the wedding eve, and also before going to the wedding ceremony, the bride went to her rue garden to mourn them, to say farewell to them in lamentation (virkauti) with her rues and their garden. This action expressed the bride's farewell to the community of her youth and to her maidenhead as well. The rue wreaths for a wedding ceremony were presented to each other by the bride and bridegroom on the first day of the celebration. The image of a wreath of rue is more symbolic in nature, as rues would be woven into the bride's wreath with other herbs, would be used to decorate the top of a crown, or a small wreath of rue would be attached to the bride's head-covering. And a rue branch (as a symbolic rue wreath) was used to decorate the bridegroom's cap (Vyšniauskaitė 1964: 489–92).

The mythico-poetic image of the rue, or of a wreath of rue, is particularly common in Lithuanian folklore as a symbol of the girl's or bride's virginity, of pure matrimonial love, of youth and of the intention to marry itself. Mytho-

poetic Lithuanian folk songs from the Easter period depict a stereotypical image of a young girl who is sitting on the chair in the rue garden. A strong northern wind blows her rue wreath into the sea. She asks three fishermen, who are also brothers, to retrieve her wreath from the water. They agree, but they ask for a gift in return. She agrees to give a golden ring to the first, a silk scarf to the second and a promise of marriage to the third.[1]

The loss of the wreath when it is blown off the girl's head by the north wind thus signifies her marriage and her farewell to maidenhood and her youth. Normally, married women would no longer grow rue in the Lithuanian tradition. A wreath of rue would sometimes be kept in a small chest as an amulet symbolizing a successful marriage. The usual image of the rue is directly associated with a girl's youth and beauty in Lithuanian folklore.

Rue in Lithuanian folklore is also associated with other symbolic flowers, namely lily and mint: 'I sowed the rue, / I sowed the mint, / I sowed the lily, / I sowed my young days, / Like a green rue' [2]. This triple and complex image is a reference to the archaic mythico-poetic sphere of love, maidenhood, youth and beauty: symbolically rue stands for medicine and feminine fertility, mint stands for fragrance (aphrodisiac sphere) and the lily stands for the most perfect, highest beauty. In other words, these qualities in mythical thinking are typical of the mythical worlds of Aušra (Lithuanian), Aphrodite (Greek) and Venus (Roman).

The image of the rue, often coupled with mint, is also a common symbol of a girl's virginity, beauty and youth in Ukrainian, Russian and Belarusian folklore. It is similarly associated with the ideas of maidenhood and weddings. It is known in Balkan Slav folklore as well (Малаш & Мажэйка et al. 1981: 205-26; Дей 1963: 387; Цивьян 1989: 66-7). Parallels between rue and mint images and their meanings in Slavonic folklore with Baltic-Lithuanian folklore allow us to agree with T. Civian (1989) and make conclusions about the archaic mythological origins of this coupled motif.

It is important to note that the rue emerged as symbolic image of modern Lithuanian identity in the second half of the nineteenth century, when it became a very clear ethnic, national, cultural and spiritual symbol. Its name started to be used to denote many Lithuanian cultural societies in various countries in the late nineteenth century. From the early days, the rue name was associated with Lithuanian cultural activities and connected with patriotic Lithuanian

academic youth communities and Catholic clerical student organizations. In other words, Christian values were treated as very close to folklore traditions.

The authorities in the Russian Empire did not allow clergymen to study at universities abroad at the end of the nineteenth century. But despite that restriction, most Lithuanian clerical students attended the Catholic University of Fribourg in Switzerland, as it offered the possibility to study under a pseudonym. Initially, Lithuanian students joined Polish student societies such as Kółko Polskie and Philaretia. However, after disagreements on national questions, and despite the claim that Lithuanians and Poles were inseparable nations, united by a common history, the Lithuanians established their own society, which they entitled 'Rūta' (Rue) (1899–1915) (Katilius 2016). It is significant that the name 'Rūta' was given to this religious university's national, ethnic and cultural youth associations (Katilius 2015: 497-508). In 1913 the 'Rūta' association at the University of Fribourg obtained property that had been transferred from another organization that had been closed, the Lithuanian Catholic Students Association of Leuven University – Society 'Lietuva' (Lithuania) (1909-1913). Later the 'Rūta' society was renamed 'Lituania', part of which grew into the national Catholic youth association 'Ateitis' (Future) (from 1910 till now).

The name of Fribourg University's 'Rūta' association was chosen because of the association with this ethnic herb, the most popular and richest in terms of its aesthetic and spiritual symbolism, rather than because of a desire to oppose the Poles' completely different kind of organisational titles.

The obverse of the flag of the 'Lituania' (formerly 'Rūta') Society represents the heraldic symbol of the Lithuanian state, or Vytis (1922) (Petrilionis 2019). The ignorance of rue image and the preference for the heraldic Vytis testifies that the rue came to be interpreted as an inappropriate symbol too closely related to folk culture than to the idea of the revival of the Lithuanian state. Indeed, the former 'Rūta' society clearly declared its non-involment in questions of the political revival of the Lithuanian state (Katilius, 2015: 502-504).

Another young Catholics society also chose the name 'Rūta' for as a branch of the ',Ateitis' ('Future') organization in Moscow, the 'Rue' Society of Moscow Lithuanian Catholic Students (1910 – 1918) (Makauskis 1959: 456). This was established in clear opposition to the anti-clerical newspaper that carried the Lithuanian folk-mythological name of 'Aušrinė' ('Morning Star'). For this purpose, the Catholics chose a rue as another popular folkloric image of virginity that was close to Christian values.

Figure 1. The rue image as a visual element: a) in the composition of the flag of the Marijampolė branch of the 'Future' organization (about 1918-1940); b) in the logo of the LNOBT; and c) in the balcony stage decoration of the pandemic concerts of the singer S. Jančaitė (21.03.2021, photo by G. Umbrasas).

In light of this historical background to the evolution of later organizations, we can understand the logic of the emergence of a rue motif in the flag of the Marijampolė branch of the 'Future' association (Figure 1a).
Another form of social imaginery associated with the rue was its choice in former pre-war Germany. It was associated with a similar understanding of moral values in folklore, but interpreted in the framework of feminine and theosophical spirituality and its synthesis with the ideals of the Lithuanian national culture revival.

In this part of Germany (Lithuania Minor, part of East Prussia) a quite different type institution associated with the rue image and Lithuania was established. This was the the famous self-publishing enterprise Rūta, which operated as informal society (1904–1938 in Tilsit, Germany) for publishing and distributing the works of the Lithuanian writer, philosopher, organizer of choral, musical and theatrical activities, and cultural activist Vydūnas (Vilhemas Storosta) (1868 – 1953) (Figure 2a). The title of the society derived from 'Rūta' , the nickname of his muse, lifelong friend and intellectual collaborator, writer and public figure, Morta Raišukytė (1874 – 1933) (Figure 2b), was the head of this society. Vydūnas' world-view absorbed theosophy and oriental mysticism together with Lithuania's spiritual and folkloric traditions. Having a background as a Protestant priest, he mainly dedicated his life to the moral, spiritual and cultural revival of the ethnic Lithuanians of Lithuania Minor.

The logotype of the 'Rue' publishing house consists of only the word 'Rūta' with the specific letter 'Û' introduced by Vydūnas instead of common letter 'Ū' (Figure 2 c,d,e). The cover of special book written by Vydūnas dedicated to the memory of M. Raišukytė, *Roses and Lilies* (*Rožės ir lelijos*) is also symbolically decorated with rues, in line with its association with the nickname and ideals of this outstanding, socially active woman (Figure 2 e). Another interpretation of rue image in Vydūnas' design for the book cover represents the rue as an erotic folk-cultural symbol in his novelette *Hero of the Village* (Figure 2 d).

In our days one of the best known symbolic images of the rue is present in the logo of the Lithuanian National Opera and Ballet Theater in Vilnius (from the second half of the twentieth century). It is unfortunate that this institution does not provide any information about the date or author of this logo[3] (Figure 1b).

The rue image was probably chosen based on tradition, because the most impressive musical events in re-established Lithuania at the beginning of the

Figure 2. Rue image in Vydūnas' publications: a) Vydūnas (1930); b) M. Raišukytė (Rūta) (1902); c, d, e) Covers of books published by the 'Rūta' editing house: *Our task* (1921, Tilsit), *Hero of the Village* (1914, Tilsit), and *Roses and Lilies* (1933, Tilsit).

twentieth century were organized by the well-known Association of Lithuanians of Vilnius 'Rue' (1909 – 1914), which organized performances, concerts, lectures, literary evenings, musical performances and commemorations. It had a choir and a circle of actors and was noted most for its contribution to the development of Lithuanian theatre. In total 'Rūta' staged about fifty plays (Būtėnas 1940).

It is obvious that the rue in this logo is treated as a symbol of a national herb. At the same time, it is associated with the prehistory of musical theatre in Vilnius. On the other hand, the links of the rue image with the spheres of art, beauty and hedonism are very similar to the sphere of the mythological archetype of Aphrodite, which, as already noted above, is similar to folkloric images of virginity and the rue in Lithuania.

The strong association of opera with the rue image in Lithuanian culture is obvious in recent stage decorations of philantropic pandemic concerts from the private balcony on the third floor of a private apartment block in Vilnius, performed by the professional singer Skaidra Jančiatė (Figure 1c).

Nowadays Lithuanian girls no longer cultivate rues in their flower gardens, and the ideal of virginity is not so relevant, but this flower is still sometimes used as a decoration at weddings. Indeed, the rue is becoming a national and traditional symbolic element of the visual culture of wedding rituals (for example, in the decoration of the wedding ring box). In the modern world, the symbol and sign of the rue often become a formal element of Lithuanian tradition that has been stripped off its direct links with the genuine ancient semantics of the rue as a symbol of maidenhood.

This decline in the traditional sacralised symbolism of the rue in modernity can be explained not only with reference to the weakened tradition of the maidenhood of the bride, but also by the influence of the above-mentioned assumption, disseminated by several researchers, that the rue was a quite new plant of Christian origin in Lithuania (Balys 1952; Matusas 1962).Thus, the 'Ramuva' neo-pagan movement, which aims to nurture and revitalize Lithuania's national traditions, does not tend to view the rue as an archaic Lithuanian traditional plant, and thus uses field flowers for bridal wreaths instead.[4]

The closest analogies to rue patterns in modern logoi can be traced in folk embroidery on the collars and shoulder straps of women's linen shirts and kerchiefs (Jurkuvienė 1993: 38-52) (Figure 3 a,b,c), in pottery decorations (Figure 3 g), and patterns of traditional decorations of Easter eggs (Figure 3 d,e) and in popular elements in Lithuanian blacksmithery – rues decorated the tops of the serpent-like rays of iron crosses and suns (Figure 3 h) – and in the Life Tree images of Lithuanian interior folk furniture (Figure 3 f). It is clear that these motifs and patterns served as the basis of tradition in modern interpretations.

Thus, the popularity of the rue motif and its modes of application in modern times are subject not only to trends in theories regarding its origin, but also to the knowledge and observance of its tradition in visual culture, in which

it is associated in a modern way with the invcentory of symbols of imaginary national identity stemming from traditional weddings.

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Figure 3. The rue pattern in Lithuanian folk art: a) embroideries on the collars of women's linen shirts (artel 'Rūta žalioji' [https://www.rutazalioji.lt/]); b, c) (Jurkuvienė 1993: 53, 59; Šakiai r., Lithuanian National Art Museum, LA 4847; Marijampolė r., LNAM, LA 2137); d) Lithuanian Easter egg decoration; e) Life Tree image on sideboard (1863, drawing of 1957, Joniškėlis region, LNAM, PB 1024); f) jug decoration (Galaunė 1959; Kuršėnai, Šiauliai r.); g) blacksmith-made cross (19th c.; Šimonys, Kupiškis distr., Kupiškis Ethnographic Museum).

The multi-petal star as a polysemous symbol of folk artists, neo-pagan movements, and heritage

The multi-petal rosette or multi-pointed star in a circle is one of the commonest patterns in Lithuanian folk wood-carving. It is typified in the decorations of wooden furniture, household items, weaving instruments, exterior house ornamentations, dowry chests and pottery. In modernity, this symbol has preserved its value in transformations of professional art in 'the national' style, but above all it has become a unique logo for contemporary folk art and craft institutions, relating to representational symbolism of the national identity.

The ancient symbolism of this sign has been analysed by Lithuanian scholars. J. Perkovskis (Perkowski) briefly investigated a multi-pointed star in Samogitian folk art, its origin and inter-cultural symbolism in pre-Classical Europe, Greco-Roman civilization, Medieval European art and all-European folk art as related to the solar and celestial bodies (Perkovskis 1999: 24-6, 64, 94-8, 178-81). Its celestial bodies, and light, solar and even cosmological symbolism of the World Tree have been identified by researchers into the Lithuanian mythical world-view (Vėlius 1983: 39-40; Vaiškūnas 2005; Gimbutienė 1994: 22, 32–3, 41–2; Dundulienė 1988: 76-89, 33-5, 42). The segmented star is interpreted by E. Usačiovaitė (1998: 44-5, 122) as a Christian symbol of light.

Other semantic aspects of the sign related to the symbolism of the thunder god in the Baltic and Greco-Roman traditions have been subjected to a thorough analysis by the author in other article (Tumėnas 2016).

Analogues of this pattern from a historical and inter-cultural perspective make it possible to attribute this pattern to the group of signs denoting stars, celestial bodies, the sun and celestial light. As R. Eisler has pointed out, the motifs of celestial bodies in ancient civilizations were associated with the sovereign and his protection and power (Eisler 1910: 60-1).

One of the Ancient Babylonian reliefs - the tablet of Shamash (9th c. BC) depicts the worship of sun god (in ornamental form) on a throne by three priests in front of the Babylonian king Nabu-apla-iddina (Figure 4 a). The composition of geometric representation of the Sun god is very close to the eight-pointed rosette pattern: the star in the center of circle has 4 points in horizontal and vertical direction and in diagonal direction it is complemented by triple wavy rays which serve as indication of the sun. It is amazing that this ancient multi-pointed star with wavy rays pattern as religious symbol still is alive in Lithuanian folk iron cross tradition (Figure 3 h; 7; 12).

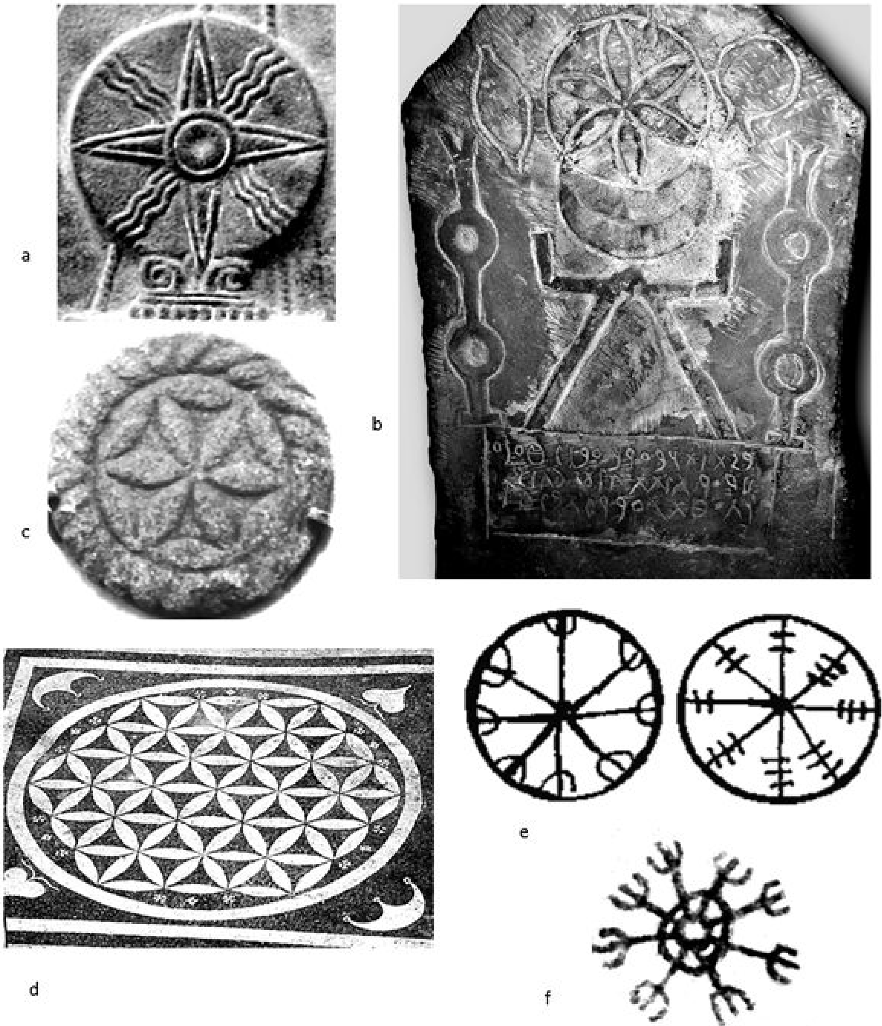

Figure 4. Multi-petal star in ancient traditions: a) Sun god Shamash in a fragment of the 'Tablet of Shamash' from Sippar (Tell Abu Habbah) (9th century BC), Neo-Babylonian Empire, British Library, room 55; b) Phoenician funeral stele from Carthage (about 5th c. BC), Bardo National Museum, Tunis; c) stone carving from the Castro de Santa Trega (6th -3rd c. BC), Archaeological Park of the Castro Culture, Lansbrica, Galicia, Spain; d) mosaic fragment from terrace house floor, Curetes Street 1a (1st – 2nd c. AD), Efesus, Turkey; e) Holy Pentacles of King Solomon from the occult book 'Clavicula Salomonis' (14th -15th., Italy); f) Pentacles sign in the Qur'an manuscript from Mindanao, Philippines (University of Virginia Library, MSS 13296).

In Sumerian culture, according to ancient sources, the Goddess Inana was connected to the rosette sign as an astral symbol. Similarly the identity of the eight-pointed star sign as a symbol for the star-divinity Inana–Ishtar and the flower/rosette sign were commonly used in Mesopotamian art. According to M. Compareti, the image of a divine figure dressed with a 'garment of heaven' can be found in Babylonian texts specifically referring to a Goddess (Compareti 2007: 206).

The geometry of such representations of the Sun god in multi-pointed star-rosette form is very similar to the Sun symbol above the Moon as a Phoencian and Punic attribute of Mother Goddess Tanit (aquivalent to Ashtarte/ Ishtar and similar to Asherah) (about 5th c. BC) found at Carthage (Tunis, Morocco) (Christian 2013: 179 – 205) (Figure 4 b). This iconographic tradition of the depiction of a lunar symbol together with a sun or star sign above it was known in Greek antiquity and may also be traced in the Lithuanian 'cross-sun' blacksmithery (Figure 17b; 20; 22b).

The six-pointed star sign was very popular in the Castro culture of Galician Celts (6th-rd c. BC), usually being carved as a single interior decoration with an apotropaic function (Figure 4c).

The rosette/flower representation has also been used in Anatolia as a star or sun symbol within the religious sphere since very ancient times. It was later accepted in ancient Greece, particularly among the Hellenistic kingdoms. In Hellenistic cultures, astral symbols (especially the star) had apotropaic properties (Compareti 2007: 206).

The sophisticated six-petal rosette of the multilevel net compositional structure in popular modern interpretations of the Jewish tradition is called the 'Flower of Life'. A similar sophisticated six-petal rosette pattern is found in a mosaic dating from antiquity (1-2nd c. AD) of the floor of a terraced house in Efesus, Turkey (Figure 4d).

The magic Qabalistical symbolic signs – holy Pentacles, similar to the multi-pointed rosette – are spread in the Judaic tradition (known from the book the *Key of Solomon* written anonymously in the 14th – 15th c.) (Mathers 1889) (Figure 4e).

Similar signs are also known in the Islamic tradition. For example, the eight-pointed star that is the symbol of 'King Solomon's ring' is depicted above a prayer text in a manuscript of the Qur'an from Mindanao, Philippines (Gallop 2019) (Figure 4f).

The seven-pointed star, combined with its complicated and sophisticated compositional form, also is known in Romanian folk wooden architecture (Figure 5a). The six-pointed star as a decoration for silver amulets with surrounded by an inscription of prayers in Arabic for the well-being of their woman wearers waiting for motherhood, are known from Sudan (Wallis Budge 1930: 75).

The six-petal rosette was popular in decorations of cross beams in folk architecture of the Lviv (Ukraine) region of former Galicia (now in Poland and Ukraine) as a protective symbol.[5] It is significant that some adjacent carved inscriptions probably have the Lithuanian origins, for example, the text 'DIE 8VA', which can be read as Dieva[s], 'God' in Lithuanian (Figure 5b).

It is obvious that the most general symbolism of the blessing and protection of celestial bodies plays the most important role in perceptions of the multi-petal rosette in Lithuania. This is once again suggested by the abundance and variety of such symbols not only in the traditional wooden household environment, mostly on sacralised interior furniture (towel holders – *rankšluostinės*) (Figure 5c) and decoration of weaving instruments (distaffs – *verpstės, prieverpstės*) (Figure 5d), as well as in the decoration of archaic stringed instruments with an ancient ritualistic function (*kanklės*) (Figure 5e). In the modern period this type of pattern has become very strongly related to a particular national-cultural symbolism.

As a highly popular and recognizable symbol of folk art tradition, promoted to the level of a symbol of national identity, the multi-petal rosette started to serve as the basic element of the logo of the Association of Lithuanian Folk Artists (Lietuvos tautodailininkų sąjunga) (Figure 6a). Later the Community of Lithuanians of Estonia (founded in 1990) (Figure 6b) adopted a multidimensional segmented star consisting of seven hexagonal stars and interpreted in modern angular forms as their logo. It was based on a range of symbols of national identity, in which this common element of Lithuanian folk art was perceived as a symbol of the Lithuanian national community abroad. However, a comparative view would suggest that the chosen structure of the sign is rather similar to the symbol of the Flower of Life in the Hebrew tradition.

Furthermore, the World Congress of Ethnic Religions (WCER), founded and held for the first time in Vilnius (1998),[6] adopted the organization's logo, which was designed for this occasion. It consists of this local and at the same time universal symbol of a petal rosette incorporated into the net structure, the petals being transformed into leaves similar to oak leaves (Figure 6d). This

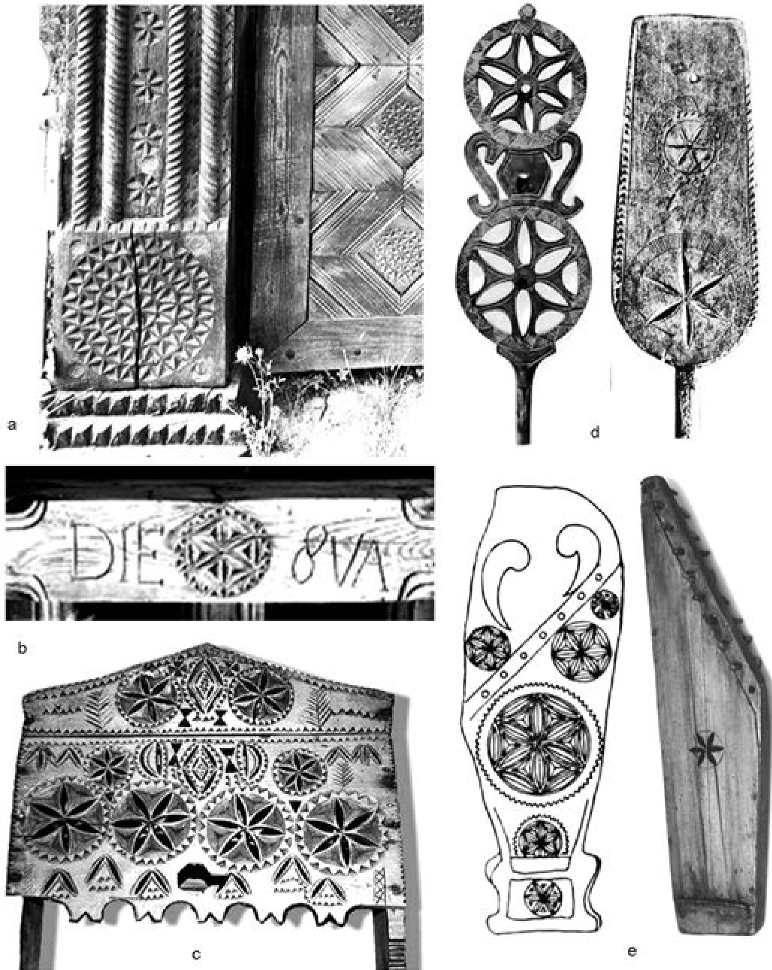

Figure 5. Petal rosettes in folk woodcrafts: a) a seven-pointed star in a fragment of a gateway arch in Romania (beginning of 19th c., Curtișoara settlement, Gorj County, National Village Museum 'Dimitrie Gusti', Bucharest); b) six-petal rosette in crossbeams in Galicia (Lviv region, Ukraine); c) characteristic Lithuanian decoration of towel-holder; d) Lithuanian spinning distaff; e) multi-petal rosette on a *kanklės*, a string instrument of Lithuania Minor (19th c.; Boetticher 1897: 57-9), and Samogitia.

logo served as the basis for a later, simplified design of the logo of the European Congress of Ethnic Religions (ECER),[7] which consists of the same six-petal rosette combined with seven hexagonal stars (Figure 6e).

Later, a modern pagan Czech NGO, the Slavic Circle (Slovansky Kruh), engaged in an investigation into and dissemination of original knowledge about Slavonic tribes with the aim of restoring local traditions and spreading spiritual knowledge among the people, adopted a similar pattern, with a simple hexagonal star, as its logo[8] (Figure 6f).

In analysing the spreading of this sign in modern times, it is important to distinguish its applications not only as religious symbol, but also as the mark of cultural heritage and a kind of wisdom of traditional knowledge. A very similar sign was adopted as the logo of the highest category certificate of Lithuanian Nation Heritage products (Figure 6c).

The same signs are used as logos for folk or national museums in East Europe, such as the Shevchenkivskyi Hai Open-Air Museum of Folk Architecture and Life (Lviv county, Ukraine) (Figure 6g) and the Slovak National Museum (Figure 6h).

Thus, the very similar and even code-like marking of the phenomenon of Lithuanian folk art with the six-petal rosette is more or less logical, suggesting a visual stereotype that is well rooted in the culture. One the other hand, like similarly repeated logos, this signification lacks creativity. At the same time, it is obvious that in modern Lithuanian culture the segmented star has been stripped of its archaic association with a celestial body or thunder god and today is only used to express a scientifically generalized concept of its exceptional popularity in traditional folk art. Thus, its present-day logo-based symbolism speaks of the modernistic conception of national identity, defined through the prism of the nation's folk art. However, the intercultural presence of variations of this sign suggests the relativity of the idea of its uniqueness to Lithuania when it represents local ethno-cultural and 'ethno-pagan' identities. On the one hand, the initial local ethno-cultural recognisability of the sign seems logical, while on the other hand, the universal, 'ecumenical' features of this sign as the mark of a modern European pagan identity seem to be based on its wide geographical spread and archaic religious roots.

Figure 6. Six-petal rosette logos as a heritage symbol: a) Logo of the Lithuanian Folk Artists' Association; b) Logo of the Community of Lithuanians of Estonia; c) Lithuanian Nation Heritage Product certification mark; d) Logo of the World Congress of Ethnic Religions (WCER) (1998); e) logo of the European Congress of Ethnic Religions (ECER); f) logo of the modern pagan Czech organization, Slovansky Kruh; g) logo of the Shevchenko Gai Open-Air Museum of Folk Architecture and Life; h) logo of Slovak National Museum.

The radiant sun-cross with snake-like rays

Like the multi-petal rosette, the sun-cross or cross with sun-rays as an ornament was very characteristic of the iron crosses in traditional Lithuanian folk art (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Iron crosses of Užventis churche (Kelmė r., 19th c.). 2019, photo by the author.

In the modern period, a radiant sun with snake-like rays started to serve as a true symbol of Lithuania's cultural and specifically Christian identity, as well as being a sign from more ancient Baltic spiritual traditions. At the same time, this pattern was associated with conspiratorial Christian resistance against the ideology of Soviet atheism in the second half of the twentieth century.

The old symbolism of Lithuanian iron sun-crosses has been studied by P. Galaunė (1930: 229), A. Rūkštelė (1957), J. Perkovskis (1999: 26–30), M. Gimbutienė/Gimbutas (1994/1958), A. Mažiulis (1951), Ž. Mikšys (1959), Grinius, J. (1970), Kontrimas (1991), J. Zabulytė (2003) and others. Galaunė and Gimbutienė emphasized their ancient pre-Christian origins, while Rūkštelė and Mikšys derived their forms from Catholic Baroque monstrances.

My investigations into the historical traces of the particular form of this sign – a sun with wavy rays – reveals its origin in Christian Gothic and Rennaisance art, as well as emphasizing its archetypal similarity to more ancient art forms.

One of most ancient compositional schemes related to the sun–cross sign can be recognized in the Neo-Babylonian Empire representation of the Sun god Shamash (nineth century BC, analysed above in the context of petalled rosette): this combines a vertical-horisontal four-pointed star with the diagonal wavy rays (Figure 4a).

Another important example from ancient cultures, the Phoencian sign consisting of a star and crescent mentioned earlier (Figure 4b), has a very similar composition to the Lithuanian sun-crosses (Figures 7, 8).

An analysis of changes in the Lithuanian metal-cross tradition in the twentieth century helps us to trace the path of the mental-visual symbolization of iron cross-suns into the arsenal of modern Lithuanian national symbols. This happened in order to incorporate a national-local approach to what was otherwise a global Christian symbol, based on folk cultural and pre-Christian spiritual traditions. The strong need to develop national-local visual symbols was based on cultural, religious and national resistance to tsarist russification and later to the anti-religious and atheist Soviet regime's prohibition on nurturing the Catholic religion and crossing it with tradition.

This modern interpretation of the symbolism and meaning of crosses in the blacksmiths' world view was inspired by the works of the anthropologists J. Basanavičius (1912) and especially by comparative research by the American archaeologist and anthropologist M. Gimbutienė (Gimbutas, 1958). They have both examined and the archaic pre-Christian elements in traditional Lithuanian Christian crosses, which they interpret hypothetically.

In 1959, the Lithuanian graphic artist Žibuntas Mikšys criticized Gimbutienė's 'pagan' explanation of the sun–cross symbolism. In his opinion, the Lithuanian iron cross with the sun symbol tradition is correlated with the Christian symbolism of heavenly orbs. Although the sun symbol had been

adopted from paganism in the first centuries of Christianity, it had nonetheless been Christianized: Christ started being equated with the sun, while in Baroque sacred art, the sun motif became especially widespread in the decoration of monstrances and reliquaries, being in turn adopted in the form of iron crosses erected on the top of churches and Lithuanian memorial monuments (Mikšys 1959: 112–22).

An analogous sun-cross with wavy rays is present on a relief on the Baroque pediment of the Church of St Michael the Archangel in Vilnius (seventeenth century) and in the ceiling decor of the Gothic-Renaissance St Nicholas' Church, also in Vilnius (early sixteenth century). These motives resemble an extended version of the Christogram surrounded by the sun and decorated by three nails, this also constituting the seal of the Jesuit order adopted by St. Ignatius Loyola in 1541 (Figure 8a).

A similar sun motif is also found in Milanese Renaissance decorative painting in Italy, where it is quite typical: these sun symbols appear in the outdoor galleries of the Sforza Castle and in the ceiling decor of the Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan. This sun motif in the decoration of the Sforza Castle could have carried the wider, poetic symbolism of heavenly orbs. On the other hand, associating the wavy sunbeam motif exclusively with Christian art would be an overly narrow approach. Similar circular motifs with spiral-like rays rotating from the centre are common on pre-Christian decorated stone stelas in Gotland, Sweden, held at the Formsale Museum in Visby.

The beginnings of the modern interpretation of the sun-cross as a symbol of Lithuanian uniqueness can be recognized in the emblematic interpretation of Lithuanian Catholics organisation abroad. The flag of Lithuanian students in the Swiss 'Lituania' association showed a geometrical sun symbol with the following words around it: 'Omnia Instaurare In Christo, Lituania 1899-1922'. Here the details of the sun with wavy rays recalls traditional smithy work, while only the compressed rays resemble the cross motive (Figure 8b).

It is well known that, during the atheistic Soviet era, blacksmithing crosses was deemed a conspiratorial activity, but its prohibition was not absolute, given the subjective, non-categorical attitude of government officials, who sometimes provided secret support for cultural and religious traditions.

Consequently, iron cross artistic crafting, especially of a sun-like form, survives and is a vital aspect of contemporary folk art. Today it forms a significant part of the cross-crafting heritage and is inscribed on UNESCO's intangible world heritage list (Figure 9).

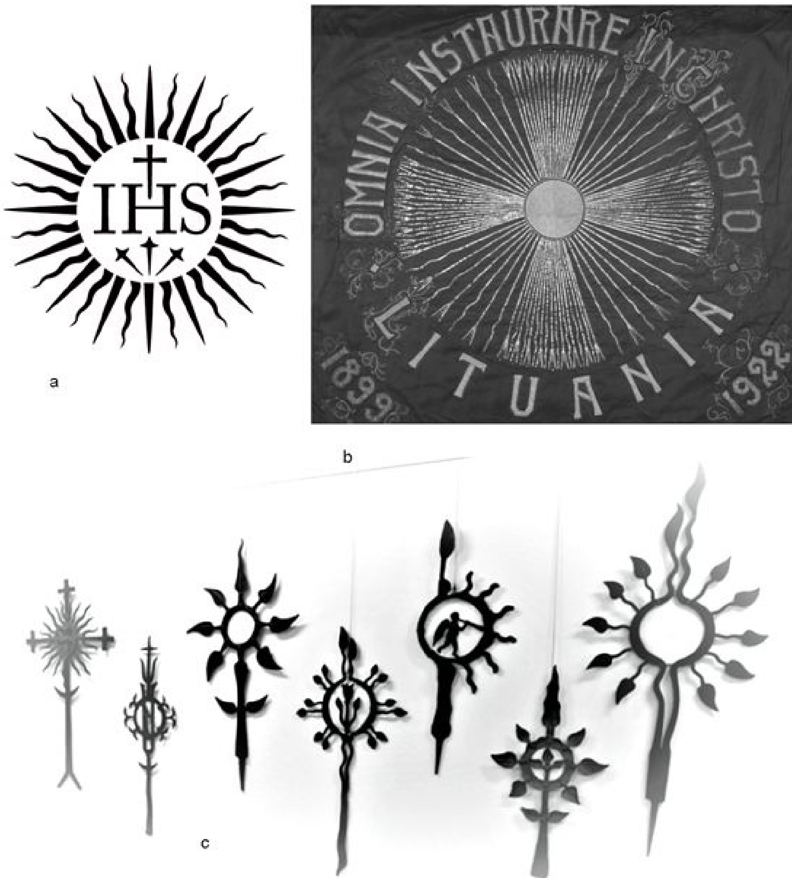

Figure 8. Cross with sun-like rays in the Christian tradition: a) the Jesuit sign, 1541; b) the sun-like cross in the flag of the Lithuanians association 'Rūta-Lituania' at Fribourg (1922; The Museum of Church Art, Vilnius); c) artistic blacksmithery crosses by V. Jarutis (2018, photo by the author).

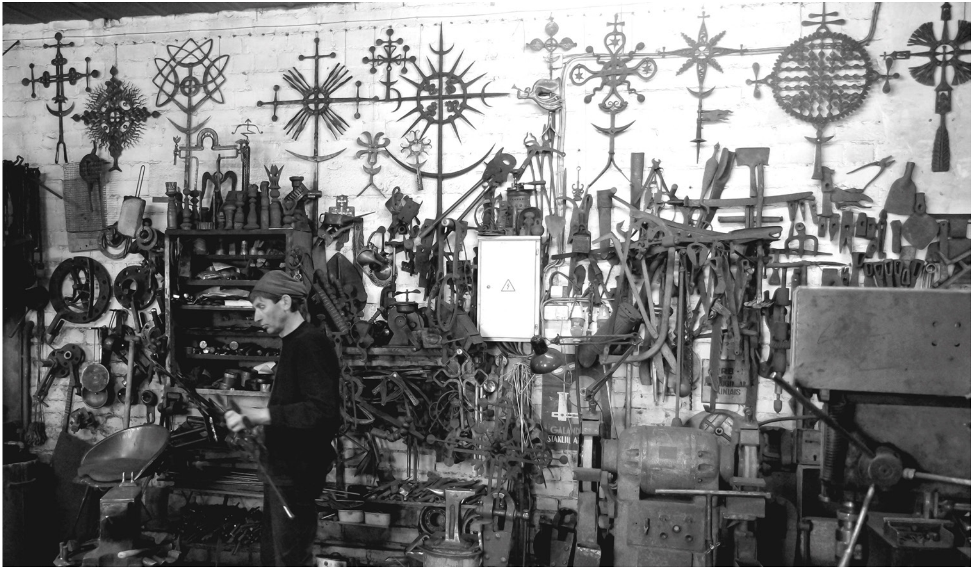

Figure 9. Sun-crosses at blacksmith V. Mikuckis' workplace (Mažeikiai region, 2017 photo by author)

Česlovas Pečetauskas (born 1946, Kėdainiai district) (Figure 10) recalls:

> *We did not have exhibitions of metal crosses during the Soviet era. Most iron crosses were commissioned by private individuals for the cemetery monuments. The authorities did not pay attention to the cemeteries. Cemeteries are such a sacred thing… It would be cruel to penalize graves and monuments, or to tear them down in other ways. And when a baby was born, Christians hung a cross over the crib. Children were baptized and received their first Holy Communion in the Soviet era, but this was done in secret.* [9]

It is important to note that Č. Pečetauskas, a fourth-generation blacksmith, became interested in metal cross-smithing, being inspired by the artistic activities of the Cappuccino Friar Stanislovas (A.M. Dobrovolskis, lived 1918-2005). According to a blacksmith, Friar Stanislovas was one of the most active promoters and creators of the sun crosses in Lithuania of Soviet tmes, making them not only for the churches, but also for living interiors, and donating them

Figure 10. Č. Pečetauskas wearing the crown of the King of the Blaksmiths (2018, Blacksmith's festival in Mažeikiai, photo by the author).

widely to those, very often intellectuals, who practised christianity. In Paberžė settlement (Kėdainiai region) in his residency, he emassed a huge collection of this traditional art and of new ones he himself had created (Figure 11).

According to Jolanta Antanaitienė, the organist of church where he took services, Friar Stanislovas made most of the crosses in a simplified, modernized way, by cutting shapes out of copper metal. [10]

The famous painter Aloyzas Stasiulevičius (born 1937; Figure 12), an enthusiast for the protection of folk art, who was friends with Friar Stanislovas, remembers:

> *"The monk together with his assistants made about two thousand crosses during his life, which he presented to couples at baptisms and other festive occasions. People liked to adorn their home interiors with his folk craft works. Friar Stanislovas keenly supported this folk art tradition."* [11]

Another famous blacksmith, Vytautas Jarutis (lived 1936-2018; Figure 13; also Figure 8c) recalls the ideological environment in the Soviet era:

> *We made crosses in cemeteries privately. No one in authority resisted much, but they warned people against such activities. Therefore to erect or exhibit crosses in public places was impossible. We all communicated with*

Figure 11. Frier Stanislovas and his collection of old crosses together with ones created by the priest (below) (1973, Paberžė, Kėdainiai r., Lithuanian Special Archives);).

Figure 12. Painter A. Stasiulevičius (2021, Vilnius, photo by O. Stasiulevičiūtė).

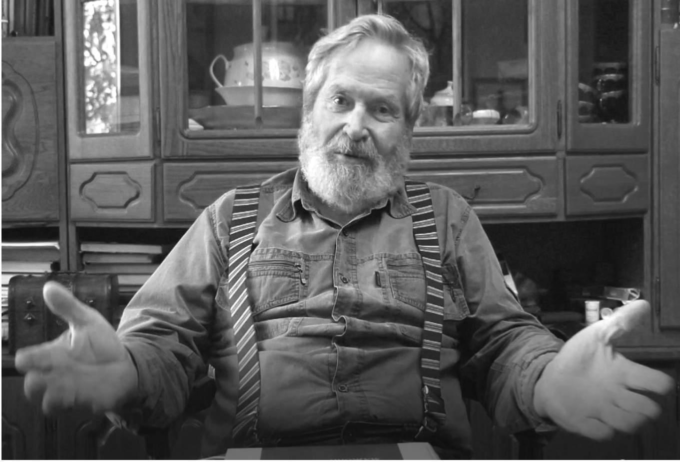

Figure 13. Blacksmith V. Jarutis during an interview (2017, Alytus, photo by the author).

> *the priests. Many woodcarvers made sculptures and crosses for churches in secret. But no one made them in public. And we did so for cemeteries too. No one in authority would go there to check up on you...*
>
> *Those who say that we created Soviet art are wrong. That ideology that was promoted was alien to our spiritual world. We couldn't show crosses at folk art exhibitions, but we create them in cemeteries. Of course, you couldn't erect a cross in a public place, but nobody could stop you in a cemetery.*[12]

The spreading of iron sun-like crosses in the monuments of cemeteries of Lithuanian Zanavikia from the seventies of the twentieth century is attested by J. Zabulytė (Zabulytė 2016).

At the same time, Lithuanian artists associate sun-like crosses with the ethnic pagan tradition. The blacksmith Č. Pečetauskas explains:

> *Old traditional iron 'suns' are published together with crosses in publications on old cross-blacksmithing by Galaunė, Basanavičius and Kontrimas. And I have done a similar thing. I call them 'Saulute' (the Sun). When there is no cross, 'the Sun' seems like a pagan element to me. Because paganism in metal folk blacksmithing is associated with Christianity, the crucifix appears in a 'sun'. If the rays appear in the cross, for me it is a clear sign of the Balts. Christianity is bound up with the pagan tradition. Because*

there was a transition from paganism to Christianity: not all tribes were baptised at the beginning. And if you use a 'moon' in the cross, that is paganism one hundred percent, because the moon and the sun represent the Baltic, Lithuanian tradition.[13]

Its important to note that the painter A. Stasiulevičius also traces patterns of sun-like crosses as a tradition from the period of the pre-Christian Balts.

V. Jarutis was a leader who introduced the fine craft of metal sun-like crosses into the official sphere of Lithuanian contemporary folk art in those times. He succesfully established the new and modern way of treating this symbol of the Lithuanian Christian folk art tradition in accordance with Soviet ideology. V. Jarutis shared his memories of the cultural realities of the 1990s. After positive responses from experts, art critics and ethnologists about his exhibited works, he became famous:

I called my radiant crosses made for contemporary folk-art exhibitions 'The Sun'. A headline in a newspaper article wrote about my works: 'Not a small sun, but a big sun'. Many officials asked me about my sucsess: 'Oh, you are such a great master; you must do some ideological work.' It was I who hammered the sun, together with the birds and the text on a metal board: 'Let the sun always shine'. Because at that time this popular song was widespread everywhere, throughout the Soviet Union: 'Pust vsegda budet solnce'.[14] *So I said to the President of the Folk Artists Union: 'This is a patriotic work. You know, every morning the media sing: 'Let the sun always shine'. I just translated it into Lithuanian. 'Oh, very well, very well,' the President replied.*[15]

V. Jarutis also described his approach to the archaic elements in the 'sun' symbol and its creation at the present day:

As an artist, I create, and obviously I avoid copying the same sun symbol in my work. I do take a deeper interest in the symbols, trying to figure out paganism. You read through a lot of material, and you have to have your own vision. For example, I read of the works by Gimbutienė back in the Soviet period. I had her book and read everything about the art of the Balts, the sun symbols, traditions, and so on. I don't have her original book, but the photocopies of all the pages. They're not even bound, just loose pages.[16]

Interviews with the most famous contemporary folk blacksmiths revealed that the 'pagan' narrative (inspired by the researches of J. Basanavičius M. Gimbutienė) predominates in their emic interpretation of the sun-cross symbolism, while by contrast the Christian explanation remains poorly developed.

Thus, 'diplomatic' compromises, along with the conspiratorial ideas that entered the iron sun-cross symbolism, were invented by the artists and promoters. This newly treated pattern of symbolism was also acceptable to the aesthetics and ideology of Soviet modernism, thereby fitting the framework of reasonable and non-conflictual identity symbols without losing traditional spiritual and community-building meanings.

Thanks to proper scientific and delicate ideological explanations, the image of a sun with wavy beams became an ambivalent symbol: in the inner self-communication of culture, it was linked to both Christianity and the older national spiritual tradition and became associated with cultural resisitance to Soviet displacement and atheism; while for government representatives and the public at large, it was presented as an aesthetic element, a poetical image of a democratic popular culture. Due to this invention of an alternative version of the message implied in sun-crosses, which was also supported by representatives of the Catholic Church, a fertile ground was provided for the survival and development of the highly artistic metal cross-crafting tradition in Lithuania during the Soviet period.

The image of the sun-cross became dear to the wider artists' community, as it still is today: it has spread to souvenir and jewellry manufacterers and has encouraged creators to explore the motif of sun-crosses as an element of Lithuanian identity (for example, the decorative wooden artefact with the amber sun surrounded by the serpent-like metal rays installed at the centre of a biomorfic oak wood frame (Figure 14a); the neck pendant of a metal sun with amber in its centre (Figure 14b); the ear pendants in the shape of a sun with wavy rays (Figure 14c); or a similar pendant of a sun-cross with wawy sun rays[17] (Figure 14d).

The analysis of sun-like cross symbols reveals how visual signs can be treated as the active element of the social imaginery. The Lithuanian blacksmithing sun-cross tradition of the twentieth century, after the loss of independence in 1940, became an ideologically moderate and sensitive, conflictual, differentiating sign of resistance and at the same time a unifying religious, spiritual, national and folk cultural symbol.

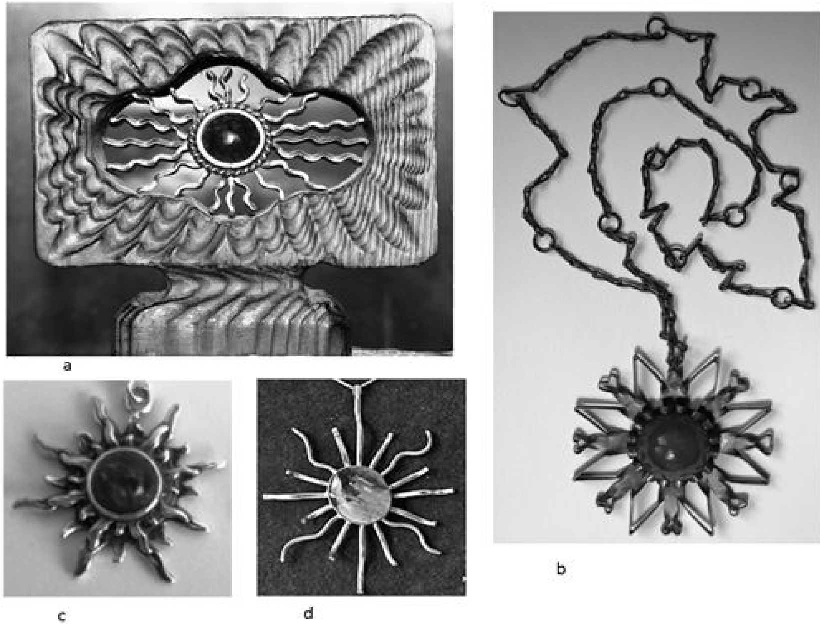

Figure 14. Sun-cross in Lithuanian national souvenirs and jewellry: a) decorative wooden souvenir of a metal sun (second part of 20th c.); b) sun with amber eye inneck pendant (about 1965, Kaunas); c) contemporary ear pendant consisting of metal sun with wavy rays; d) contemporary ear pendant by Gražvydas Kasparavičius.

Conclusions

Modern and contemporary interpretations of traditional symbolic patterns (associated with the mythico-poetical tradition) in logos, folk art patterns, jewellery, souvenirs, etc. investigated here not only stress the vitality of their forms in culture, but also inspire various echoes in the socio-cultural context: the ideologies of heritage protection and the tradition of folk-cultural aesthetics.

These modernized patterns are associated with the concept of national or regional identity, and they serve to popularize traditional world views and communal values. They are much more related to notions of eternity and longevity than to the transience, temporality and experimentalism of contemporary culture. In this respect they are similar in nature to religious symbols.

The modern interpretation of these signs initially stemmed from the aspirations of certain communities, supported by the social imagination, to create boundaries of identity and distinctiveness from other social groups. In the case of the rue symbol, this means Christians or virtuous, spiritual Lithuanians fostering national culture, and resisting the challenges of Germanization, Russification and Polonization. In the case of the sun-cross, they proved resistant to Soviet atheism and displacement. In the case of the petal rosette, they were treated as the cultivators of the native national pagan religion, the nurturers of a particular tradition of folk art and the guardians of folk cultural heritage.

On the other hand, these modernized symbols are positively associated with the most popular iconic images of folk-cultural aesthetic traditions. The rue is linked with a characteristic folklore image, as well as with traditional embroidery, Easter eggs and furniture-painting patterns. The multi-petal star is linked to the characteristic, recognizable and impressive decor of sacralized domestic artifacts, such as towels, spindles and distaffs. The sun with wavy rays is linked to the most peculiar patterns of Lithuanian cross blacksmithery.

In modern times the rue sign arose from the interpretation of the traditional folk-cultural symbolism of mythico-poetic origin, being related to notions of virginity, youth and beauty, as well as dreams of getting married. The stylization of the sign inherited from ethnographic ornaments prevailed in modernity, and the sign itself became associated with the patriotic cultural activities of religious ('Ateitis') and spiritual-cultural ('Rūta' of Tilžė) institutions, the sphere of national art and cultural management. Moreover, its original folk-cultural symbolism, which was associated with the idea of virginity, eventually became obsolete. Recognizing the greatest interdisciplinary, art-synthesis event of rural culture in ethnographic weddings, it is logical to equate such weddings with operas in urban culture. The rue as the sign of a wedding has been included in the logo of Lithuanian opera.

In Lithuanian culture the multi-petal rosette sign, widespread in ancient civilizations, appears on the most highly sacralized objects, and is thought to be associated with the symbolism of heavenly protection. In modern times it became a symbol of the Neo-pagan Lithuanian movement 'Ramuva', but at the same time it was adopted as a more universal sign of a living spiritual heritage, based on moral values. It also became the logo of the World Congress of Ethnic Religions, which was later taken into adaptations by other European national pagan associations. On the other hand, the six-petal rosette, one of the most

characteristic folk-art symbols, was initially incorporated into the logo of the Lithuanian Folk Artists' Association. The latest interpretation of this motif is its use in the logo of the National Heritage Product Certificate. The popularity of this pattern in the folk art of other countries and its connection with heritage as a traditional knowledge led to original adaptations of this sign in the logos of heritage museums in other east European countries.

For the sun-crosses in the Soviet era, folk artists began to look for ambitious compromises while at the same time using aspects of their symbolism in a conspiratorial fashion that could meet the provisions of Soviet aesthetics and enter the circle of symbols of non-conflicting identity while at the same time not losing their hidden traditional Christian religious significance. The sun-crosses were interpreted in more universal manner and were officially presented as an element of democratic folk culture. In internal, conspiratorial cultural communications, however, it became a sign of spiritual resistance, associated with both the older pagan and national spiritual tradition and national Christianity, Its iconic value was mostly based on the paradigm of traditionalism, local exclusivity and communal mental unity. The invention of an alternative non-Christian reading of blacksmithed sun-crosses during the Soviet era provided a favourable basis for the development of the highly artistic level of blacksmithing art in Lithuania.

A wider critical intercultural and diachronic approach reveals the relativity of national, communal and spiritual identities and the meanings of the traditional geometric motifs investigated here.

Notes

[1] The Musical Folklore Archive of the Ethnomusicology Department of the Institute of Ethnomusicology of the Lithuanian Music Academy, MFA ED IE LMTA, KTR 143(9), Varėna region.

[2] Čepukienė, Anelė (singer). 1960, MFA ED IE LMTA, KF 2903.

[3] [https://www.opera.lt/istorija/992]. Accessed 18.02.2021.

[4] [http://romuva.lt/apeigos/mergvakario/]. Accessed 18.02.2021.

[5] [https://forgottengalicia.com/a-protection-symbol-for-the-home-the-six-petal-rosette-on-the-crossbeams-of-galicia/]. Accessed 15.02.2021.

[6] [http://ecer-org.eu/the-1998-wcer-congress/#more-2712]. Accessed 18.02.2021.

[7] [http://ecer-org.eu/]. Accessed 18.02.2021.

[8] [http://www.slovanskykruh.cz/en/]. Accessed 18.02.2021.

[9] Interview conducted in Užventis (Kelmė r.) at blacksmithery workshop, 'Užventis'ART', July 2017.

[10] Interview conducted by phone, 20.11.2020.

[11] Interview in interviewee's home in Vilnius, 09.11.2020.

[12] Interviews conducted in Užventis (Kelmė r.) and at intgerviewee's home in Alytus, July–August 2017.

[13] Užventis, 2017 July.

[14] [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MmRkAcBGC8g]. Accessed 22.02.2021.

[15] Užventis and Alytus, July - August, 2017.

[16] Ibid.

[17] [http://www.grazvydaskasparavicius.com/en/gallery/gid:1663/5]. Accessed 21.02.2021.

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