

THE YEARBOOK OF
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VOLUME 7

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BALKAN AND BALTIC
STUDIES

VOLUME 7
NATURE AND CULTURE IN THE BALKAN
AND BALTIC CONTEXTS 2

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INTRODUCTION

Nature and culture have hundreds of aspects and manifestations in modern societies. Volume 7 of the Yearbook of the Balkan and Baltic Studies aims to highlight some of the trends emerging and results achieved in the field of cultural studies, demonstrating how culture and nature interrelate and complement each other. The volume contains a series of articles on religion, human-nature relations, linguistic phenomena, crises, specific spheres of folklore, activities of the Tartu-Moscow School, and the mindscape of a notable individual.

Most of the articles take an interpretivist approach, that is, an action or event is analysed in the light of the beliefs, narratives, norms, values, or fabricated details of the culture of the society in which it takes place. In most cases, recent events and phenomena are examined alongside past ones, as well as examples of folk narratives and linguistics from historical sources of the region. History is described as a socially situated process with interrelated cultural contexts.

There are also two longer articles in the volume, the first of which traces an important period in the early days of the Estonian Earth Believers' movement. The marking of a well-known place with wooden statues and incantations and its consecration as a holy site in the city centre, on a hill, was an important sign in the early days of the movement. The article is an important milestone for current and future research. Several neo-religions emphasise their links with traditional knowledge related to the identity of local people, local communities or particular groups, who either reinvent traditions, or invent their own traditions and rituals. Traditionalism is an intrinsic element, a signifier of intellectual property and cultural expressions. There are many ways in which sacred sites are negotiated by visitors, believers, or religious groups.

The second longer article deals with ethnobotany. Professionalisation of science has led to a division into narrow disciplines; within one's speciality, the scientist/physician is competent, but their competence ends outside the borders or their discipline. In this sense, popular and folk knowledge, synthetic in nature, cannot be fully represented within one speciality, and for a representative of this speciality the other data are not of interest or are displaced/invisible. One example of interdisciplinary research is ethnobotany, which sometimes takes the opportunity to consider the data from linguistic, folkloric or both disciplines. In many countries data collection in ethnobotany, ethnoveterinary medicine and ethnomedicine has been predominantly in the hands of representatives of these main disciplines, or data are collected by folklorists, ethnologists, or linguists within their own fields. Although researchers' enthusiasm for collecting has been high, several bottlenecks were apparent from the outset. This article in the volume, a collaboration between researchers in the field of botany, ethnobotany and linguistics, offers an example of joint research and its possible results on the basis of historical sources.

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I

Landscape, Rituals, and Culture

Can Nature and Business Exist in Harmony? Local Entrepreneurs' Perceptions of Protected Areas and Economic Development

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Abstract: Bulgaria has one of the richest biodiversity in Europe. To conserve it the state has built a network of national protected areas and included it in the Natura 2000 European ecological network. In attempts to create a vital example for sustainable local development Bulgarian NGOs demonstrate that protected areas are not prohibited for any human activities, but can be prerequisite for such development. This idea became the main mission of one particular project, managed by several NGOs, which aims to show that creating a protected area could be a guarantee of the establishment of a successful model for local people, for business and for the environment. The text will explore whether the project achieves its aims, whether there are clashes between cultural models of developmentalism and environmentalism, what social impact protected areas have on local entrepreneurs, and what their perceptions are of linking nature conservation to economic development. It will present different perspectives, both those of entrepreneurs who are part of the project network, and those of others who are not.

Keywords: environmentalism, developmentalism, nature conservation, NGOs, protected areas

Introduction

Bulgaria is among Europe's top countries for biodiversity. The country ranks third in Europe in terms of the percentage of its territory that is included in the Natura 2000 European ecological network. Protected areas that are part of this network total 34% of Bulgaria. There are also three national parks, eleven nature parks and ninety reserves. Following global tendencies in conservation practice, Bulgarian NGOs attempt to demonstrate that protected areas are not prohibited for any human activities, but can be prerequisite for such development. This turned into a mission for one particular project, managed by several NGOs, that of preserving the balance between nature and the development of rural areas. The Balkans and the People project team wishes to present to the general public and local producers the idea that areas that are part of the Natura 2000 network, nature and national parks, are not forbidden territories; on the contrary, they are a guarantee for the establishment of a successful model for local people, for business and for the environment. The project's motto – "Nature and business can coexist in harmony" – demonstrates this clearly. A coordinator of the project thinks that "every personal success of a family farm and a local entrepreneur from the project network in the nine Natura 2000 areas is a powerful and convincing example of the inextricable link between protected nature and fair livelihood". The team believes that they manage to build "a successful and vital model for the development of the economically poor but naturally rich areas" and suppose that it can be applied in other regions of Bulgaria as well as in united Europe. Whether the project actually achieves this is among the questions of the present study.

The main aim of this article is to analyse what social impact protected areas have on local entrepreneurs and what their perceptions are of linking nature conservation to economic development. I explore concepts, implemented and popularised by the For the Balkans and the People project, and how producers who are part of it perceived them. At the focus of my research are also producers who are not part of the project's network but have developed their activities within the protected areas. The study poses the following main questions: are there clashes between cultural models of developmentalism and environmentalism? Can economic development and nature conservation exist together? What kind of social production and social interaction create protected areas?

I argue that in most case studies there is no conflict between nature conservation and business development. But none of the entrepreneurs appreciate the role of conserved nature as an essential prerequisite for such development. The analysis is based on fieldwork carried out in 2021–2022. Eleven entrepreneurs engaged in animal breeding and bee keeping are interviewed. Producers have developed their activities in diverse areas, with different regimes of management that reflect their perceptions and livelihood strategies. During the fieldwork I conducted structured and semi-structured interviews with entrepreneurs. The main issues discussed related to the benefits and the challenges in their work within protected areas and their perceptions of economic development and nature conservation. The names of the respondents have been changed.

Nature conservation and development

The analysis will follow Kottak's understanding of new ecological anthropology and how it can help recognise the pervasive linkages and concomitant flows of people, technologies, images, and information, as well as acknowledge the impact of differential power and status in the postmodern world on local entities. In this new anthropology, everything is on a larger scale. The focus is no longer mainly the local ecosystem. The 'outsiders' who impinge on local and regional ecosystems become key players in the analysis, as contact with external agents and agencies has become commonplace. According to Kottak, the ecological anthropologist must pay attention to the external organisations and forces (for example governments, NGOs, businesses) now laying claim to local and regional ecosystems throughout the world (Kottak 1999: 23).

The analysis is also based on Kottak's assumption of ethnoecological clashes between cultural models of *developmentalism* and *environmentalism*. Kottak defines these two models as two originally Euro-American ethnoecologies that challenge traditional ethnoecologies. Developmentalism is shaped by ideals of industrialism, progress and (over)consumption. Environmentalism entails a political and social concern for the depletion of natural resources and has arisen with, and in opposition to, the expansion of a cultural model of developmentalism. Kottak points out a third new possibly mediating model, that of sustainable development, which has emerged from recent encounters between local and imported ethnoecologies responding to changing circumstances. Sustainable

development aims at culturally appropriate, ecologically sensitive, self-regenerating change. It thus mediates between the three models – traditional local ethnocology, environmentalism, and developmentalism. “Sustainability” has become a mantra in the discourse surrounding the planning of conservation and development projects, but clear cases of successful sustainable development are few (Kottak 1999: 26).

According to critical analysis by Arturo Escobar, the sustainable development discourse purports to reconcile two old enemies, economic growth and the preservation of the environment, without any significant adjustments in the market system. He thinks that in this discourse nature is reinvented as environment so that capital, not nature and culture, can be sustained. This approach redistributes in new fields many of the concerns of classical development: basic needs, population, resources, technology, institutional cooperation, food security and industrialism are found reconfigured and reshuffled in the sustainable development discourse. This reconciliation of economy and ecology is intended to create the impression that only minor corrections to the market system are needed to launch an era of environmentally sound development, hiding the fact that the economic framework itself cannot hope to accommodate environmental concerns without substantial reform. It is growth (i.e. capitalist market expansion), and not the environment, that has to be sustained (Escobar 1996: 330).

Thomas Hammer notes that the idea of combining conservation and regional development is gaining impetus, particularly in the discussion of sustainable development (Hammer 2007: 21). Ingo Mose outlines new approaches that aim for consistent integration of conservation and development functions, making protected areas real “living landscapes”. Agriculture as well as forestry, handicrafts, tourism and education offer potential arenas to test in which way and to what extent this process of integration could be developed in practice. Mose thinks that expectations are high and protected areas could be used as laboratories for experimental projects or even as models for sustainable regional development, based on the endogenous resources and potentials of the region and the development of these resources via a specific protected areas policy. According to him, large protected areas are increasingly considered to also function as instruments of regional development. This perspective could be applied particularly to many peripheral rural areas throughout Europe that

are faced with severe problems due to economic and socio-cultural disparities (Mose 2007: xv).

As Brockington and Duffy point out, neoliberal conservation is but the latest stage in a long and healthy relationship between capitalism and conservation. This close relationship is nothing new. Alliances between capitalism and conservation are characterised by an aggressive faith in market solutions to environmental problems. These alliances actively remake economies, landscapes, livelihoods, conservation policy and practice; they are partying in the symbolic heartlands of capitalism (Brockington & Duffy 2011: 2). Robert Fletcher and Svetoslava Toncheva also write about the establishment of “neoliberal conservation”, which embodies core principles of neoliberal economics, including commodification, marketisation, decentralisation, and privatisation via so-called market-based instruments (MBIs) such as ecotourism, payment for environmental services (PES) and others (Fletcher & Toncheva 2021: 3). According to Tobias Haller and Marc Galvin conservation is no longer just a noble goal, it can be viewed as a kind of global business based on the construction of what we call “nature”. The construction of nature produces goods such as tourism, which can be sold internationally and in which large-scale investments are made. But the view of nature in peril also generates cash resources because it gives access to funds, today often combining conservation with development goals (Haller & Galvin 2008: 15). Other authors note that conservation is more conciliatory and accommodating of the needs of capitalism than it once was, noting that conservation is not merely about resisting capitalism, or about reaching necessary compromises with it. Conservation and capitalism are shaping nature and society, often in partnership (Brockington, Duffy & Igoe 2008: 3; 5). West, Igoe and Brockington note that part of the neoliberal conservation agenda is the need for biodiversity or nature to become commodities. According to them, some of the most pervasive and far reaching changes wrought by protected areas are visible in the spread of ecotourism and commodification (West, Igoe & Brockington 2006: 257; 262). These authors examine protected areas as a way of seeing, understanding, and producing nature (environment) and culture (society) and as a way of attempting to manage and control the relationship between the two. The areas (re) producing the world and as such, are rich sites of social production and social interaction (West, Igoe & Brockington 2006: 251).

Ecotourism and commodification are part of a more generic process of post-productivist transition in rural areas. With the declining importance of agriculture in the economy (Galani-Moutafi 2013; Storey 2006) rural communities are looking for ways to deal with the situation. They try to adapt to it through the “post-productive” vision, associated with the exploitation of new economic opportunities, their rationalities and the strategies they implement” (Galani-Moutafi 2013: 103) and focus on “re-package the countryside in different ways”, regarding rural areas in “places of consumption rather than production” (Storey 2006). Michael Woods points out that in searching for alternative ways to conceptualise this change in the rural economy, rural geographers established another concept, “multifunctionality”, which particularly focuses on the increasingly multi-functional nature of the contemporary countryside (Woods 2011: 80). Monica Gorman presents three types of activity to describe multifunctionality using the classification of “broadening”, “deepening” and “regrounding”, one of which, “deepening”, is essential for the present study. According to this type, farm households add extra value to their produce within the agrifood supply chain, such as region-specific, organic and high quality products, on-farm processing or short producer–consumer chains (Gorman 2006: 27; 32–33). It is important to note that both in post-productivism and multifunctionality, environmental protection and recognition of nature as valuable in itself have essential places.

The For the Balkans and the People project

One of the aims of the For the Balkans and the People project is to give extra value to agricultural products that originate in protected areas. Thus, preserved nature in these areas became a commodity that can be sold and could help increase farmers’ incomes. The project is funded by the Bulgarian-Swiss Cooperation Program, through the Reform Fund linked to Civil Society Participation and includes 10 partners from Bulgaria and Switzerland, mainly NGOs. It was launched in 2012 as a pilot in nine Natura 2000 areas, which by the end of 2017 had become more than 20. The main idea of the project is to demonstrate that nature and business can exist in harmony, which is expressed in the name Linking Nature Protection and Sustainable Rural Development. The project partners wish to prove that local development and nature conservation

can coexist without conflict and can contribute to increase the quality of life in rural areas, and especially in northwest Bulgaria, which remains one of the poorest regions in Europe. In order to achieve its main purpose, the project sets several smaller goals: development of local family businesses, preservation of biodiversity in areas of high natural value (HNV), increasing consumers' knowledge about the protection of these areas through direct sales of quality products produced on small family farms, and support for farmers who are making additional income from products with extra value. The products are promoted as such through the various project channels and in the media. The project works in several directions: the establishment of payment schemes for ecosystem services, training and exchange of experience among the administration and the farmers, changes and adaptation of Bulgarian legislation through development of measures from new Rural Development Program 2014–2020, revision of regulation and improvement of working conditions for producers. As a result of the project, according to official data, 26 sites for processing raw materials of animal origin have been registered; a farmers' market has been set up where farmers can present and sell their products directly it continues to exist after the end of the project; and two websites have been created, Food from the Balkans, and Produced on the Farm, where consumers can see detailed information about every farmer and product. The project attempts to change the common perception that protected areas hinder development. According to this concept, local development means successful business. Thus, the project demonstrates how nature conservation is put into practice 'with' the people, not 'against' them, and attempts to implement successful practices. So far one can observe the simultaneous presence of all the prerequisites for a successful model of sustainable local development, from supporting family businesses, to preserving biodiversity, adding extra value to agricultural products, and the coexistence of nature conservation and economic development. But what are the farmers' perceptions of these processes, and what are the results of the project?

The perceptions of entrepreneurs who are part of the project network

In order to achieve the project's aims, coordinators are looking for producers who are already developing activities in Natura 2000 areas, nature and national

parks. They present to them the possibilities which these areas provide and support them financially, with expertise and through direct sales at a specially organised farmers' market in Sofia, the Bulgarian capital. My research shows that some of the entrepreneurs in the Berkovica region, most of whom are local, do not recognise nature as a factor in the quality of their products. One of the producers was not sure whether the location of his hives still fell within the Natura 2000 area, as was indicated on the label of a product made years ago. He thought that Natura 2000 did not affect the quality of his honey in any way. Another entrepreneur noted that pasture was generally important for the quality of milk and its products, but was not primary. Grazing and nature were among his criteria for choosing a place to start his activities, but nature was perceived mainly as part of the background: "Well, I really liked the nature... First of all, [it is important that] there is pasture for the animals, the nature is beautiful, as I'm going there to live and to have good time, [I need] to feel good about the place". Two beekeepers say that honey production in the mountains is less than in the plain. They say their hives are not in the Central Balkan buffer Natura 2000 area, as stated in the project guide, but in the foothill of Sredna Gora, where they get more honey and production is more profitable. Both of them have no idea if their lands fall within Natura 2000 area. One of them thinks that among his clients at the farmers' market in Sofia there are very few who appreciate that the product came from a protected area. For another farmer, what is most important for the quality of the milk is the climate, and for him pastures in the protected and the unprotected areas are the same. In general, conversations with these producers show that they are not aware of the extra value that Natura 2000 gives to their products and they do not emphasise this as project experts do. My previous study of the New Thracian Gold project and Slow Food Presidia producer's networks also confirm these conclusions about local producers' understandings. In the present case I conclude that people and organisations external to the specific settlements identify opportunities (especially in protected nature) that can contribute to the development of small producers.

For these producers it is very important that this project "opened their eyes" about direct sales and farmers' markets. They admit that the project helps them a lot with funds and expertise when they want to register under the regulation on direct sales in order to be able to make such sales, assisting them in realising production and increasing their incomes. The Covid-19 pandemic affected

sales because the farmers' market was closed for a period of time. These producers all claim that even after the reopening of the market, consumption has reduced compared to the time before the pandemic. One beekeeper says that before he used to supply honey to 11 shops in Sofia, now it is only two or three. Communication with representatives of these shops took place at the farmers' markets. This once again proves the effectiveness of this channel in increasing incomes. Before this beekeeper started to realise his production at the farmers' market, he sold the honey wholesale at a very low price. One of the animal breeders relies on direct sales not only at the farmers' market, but also on the farm. The other has an established network of customers to whom he delivers products mainly in the capital. For these producers what is important is their (business) development, and not so much nature conservation. The latter is not present in their conversations and thinking and leads me to the conclusion that they do not realise the benefits of Natura 2000 areas and preserved nature as prerequisite for business and local development. The communication and promotion of these concepts is performed primarily by the project team.

The case of Kaloyan's livestock farm is a little different. He manages a family farm with 700 sheep. He tells me that he became aware of the concept of small family livestock farming that cared for nature before this project through the Slow Food movement and his visits to Italy a few years earlier. The farm has closed the cycle by grazing the animals, growing the rest of the food for them and making products from their milk. According to Kaloyan, in pasture livestock breeding the milk has much better aromatic and taste qualities, its production is cheaper, but yields are lower. The family is local to small town in northern Bulgaria; it inherited lands within the Natura 2000 area that are close to the Persina nature park and 20 years ago began purchasing more. Kaloyan says that the fact that their lands are in a protected area was not initially a factor in the development of their activities. He takes this for granted and says that he is "happy and pleased" that the lands are there. At this stage there are more benefits than challenges. According to Kaloyan, the benefits are healthier animals because they are pasture-fed with a variety of food that stems from the great biodiversity. He realises that this gives good extra value to the products. But not all clients are aware what Natura 2000 really means, and only a very small number of them appreciate it. Kaloyan says that they try to talk to people about it, but in order to be more efficient they need to be an established brand and put a lot of effort into explaining. However, detailed information about the

farm being located in a protected area, about its history and mission is listed on its website. The product's label indicates that the animals are pasture-fed, the location in the nature park and a statement saying that, "with every quality and clean product we build a bright future... today". On the inside of the label there is detailed information about the farm's philosophy.

Kaloyan has an interesting point of view about ecological sustainability. According to him, "when people develop something they rather destroy nature or seek to destroy it with minimal impact. We can never give more than we take". He thinks that there has to be long-term scientific research to prove that farm activities give something to nature and the soil. Before, the land was forested, wild nature with animals, but now because of their activities, there are fewer wild animals. For this reason he thinks that he cannot define the farm as ecologically sustainable. Rather, this term is used as a label for organic production to highlighted and demonstrate that something different is happening. The farm realises products through direct sale to an established network of client deliveries and shops. It is still not economically sustainable, despite European funding, because it has taken out bank loans to build infrastructure. The family has other occupations apart from the farm.

The perceptions of entrepreneurs who are not part of the project network

It was important for me to draw a parallel between the two set of producers, and so here I will discuss those producers who are not part of the For the Balkan and the People project to see their perceptions of the benefits and challenges of developing businesses in a protected areas. Do different entrepreneurs appreciate conserved nature as a prerequisite for business development or is the popularisation and implementation of this concept mainly a priority of NGOs? Two beekeepers in the Pleven region, who are not part of any networks and rely on their own efforts to sell products, appreciate the rich diversity of nature in Natura 2000 areas, but do not promote their products through this. Their hives were located in other settlements, having decided to move them to such areas. One beekeeper, registered under the direct sales regulation, does not indicate on the label of his honey that it originates from a Natura 2000 area. Nevertheless, his words show that he appreciates the preserved nature of the

protected area: “It is not a small advantage that the nature is rich, the difference is just huge”. He proves its quality by offering samples from each batch, which, according to him, speak about the rich herbal content. He says that he is pleased with the income he earns from bee products. The problem is that the whole Pleven region has had huge issues with bee poisoning for the last three years (from 2020). According to Tsvetan, a large agricultural company is to blame because they have not met deadlines for spraying with insecticides. He tells me that in Natura 2000 areas no insecticides are allowed, but investigations found that the same company used insecticide that was forbidden 10 years ago. Tsvetan thinks that this is serious violation, but the company received only one fine of 10,000 BGN (approximately €5,100) because the state administration protects it. He said that if the bees are poisoned again next year, he won't be able to survive. Beekeepers have few options for subsidies regardless of whether they are in protected areas or not.

Other challenges are seen in the case of Kalofer's animal breeders. The town is located at the foot of Stara Planina mountain and is used as a starting point for different tourist's routes. Twelve kilometres from the city is the area of Panitsite, where the Central Balkan National Park and the Byala Reka eco-trail begin. The Central Balkan National Park is one of the three national parks in Bulgaria. It was created in 1991 and is located in the highest parts of the Central Stara Planina mountains. Within the boundaries of the National Park, there are nine reserves. A special directorate manages the Park in order to preserve and maintain biodiversity and protect wildlife, and also to provide opportunities for scientific and education activities for the development of tourism and ecological livelihoods.

Along with these activities the Park is used by locals as a natural pasture for animals. South of the Park there are small towns and villages with a large number of livestock husbandry farms. According to breeders with whom I spoke the increased number of farms is due to the potential for European subsidies. At the same time, they say that free pastures, allowed for use by the directorate, are reduced every year and are not enough for all of the breeders. The problem with the shortage of grazing areas started in 2015. One breeder says “everyone is fighting for a pasture in the Balkan because of the subsidy”. There is no way there will be enough territory for everyone, because it decreases every year, and the number of breeders increases because of the subsidy. This results in a number of conflicts that make the coexistence of biodiversity and grazing-

livestock husbandry difficult. Breeders explain that if you have two fines you cannot receive European subsidies and cannot get pastures for animals in the National Park next year. This is a huge problem for animal breeders because grazing on pastures located on the city's land is prohibited for a certain period, during which the animals go to the National Park. Without access to the Park the animals have nowhere to graze. They think that the Park's inspectors do not always evaluate the situation correctly and do not consider the fact that they are dealing with animals. Two local breeders suppose that grazing in the National Park is not a huge benefit except for the better subsidies, although these come with more obligations and more auditing. They highlight that troubles outweigh benefits. Petar, one of the breeders, admits that he cannot exist without subsidies: "If they continue to act like this with these restrictions and requirements and these prohibitions, I have the feeling that animal breeding in Bulgaria will perish". This farm succeeds to subsist because of the subsidies. If it relies only on sales, they will not be enough for all expenses like fodder for animals during the winter, insurances and subsistence of the family. Another breeder, Mihail, defines Bulgarian animal husbandry at the moment as an "ill man who is on a ventilator. If the subsidies are just stopped, everything will be over in two years. If this happens, only breeders like him, who have always existed with and without subsidies, will remain.

During the study another significant problem was outlined – many municipal, monastery and private properties fall within the boundaries of the Park after 2016. The farm of the abovementioned breeder Petar also falls within the boundaries of the Park and is close to the entrance in the Panitsite area. He says that he owns 35 acres of inherited land, on which he has built farm buildings and a house. His animals also spend the winter there. Petar's property has been within the park's boundary for a long period, but until 2016 this hadn't given rise to any problems. After 2016, however, he no longer had the right to claim subsidies for his land. Since then, he says, the property has been considered 50% his and 50% state property. He does not know what caused this change. It becomes clear from the Park's website that the changes probably stem from the 2016 new management plan. This case is not unique, there are other properties within the boundaries of the Park which, according to the locals, have been "taken away". For several years Petar has brought legal action against the Park, but as of the time of fieldwork the case is ongoing.

According to an inspector from a local office of the Central Balkan National Park this huge concentration of livestock husbandry farms negatively affects the biodiversity of the Park. He thinks that very few breeders understand the real value of nature and biodiversity. Most of them are driven by business, not environmental concerns. The directorate has tried to establish dialogue with local breeders and to work with them, but not everyone understands the rules and the requirements of the Park. Some breeders graze more animals in the Park than the directorate allows. Others do not have hired shepherds who control the movement of the animals through the territory. Thus, some animals enter prohibited areas such as reserves, where grazing is not allowed. According to the inspector the breeders prefer to pay a fine for this violation rather than hire a shepherd because the fine is smaller than the shepherd's salary.

This free movement of animals creates another conflict, this time with tourists. Some of them complain that animals occupy the tourist routes, or that there is animal excrement on the trails. On this subject, one of the interviewed animal breeders said, "Animals are no longer wanted absolutely anywhere. Wherever an animal goes no one wants it, absolutely anywhere. For some it interferes with hunting, for others it interferes with villas, for yet others it interferes with vacationers and so on".

In this case study, a conflict between nature conservation and business development is definitely emerging. On the one hand, we have local breeders who are concerned about their livelihoods. Both breeders I spoke with claimed that they had been doing this for a living long before European funding opportunities became available. On the other, we have the directorate trying to do its job by conserving the park's nature. It is clear that this conflict is due to the stricter management rules of the National Park and the high concentration of livestock breeders.

An organic farm has another perception of nature and development in the same region. It is located in the Natura 2000 area and produces dairy products from jersey cow's milk and as well as their own brand of gelato. The farm's business philosophy is based on a humane attitude to animals and people and on the protection and preservation of the environment. The farm is create by a team of people from different professional backgrounds who have similar lifestyles and who want to protecting the environment and invest in its development. One of the farm's employees with whom I spoke defined it as a "small oasis". The team undertakes different activities to manage their business within a

philosophical framework of sustainability, including providing environmentally friendly living conditions, minimising the negative impact on the environment, minimising the accumulation of packaging, composting, tree planting, caring for and protecting endangered species of birds, etc. They chose the location not because it was a protected area but because of the climate and especially of the Rose valley. The team wants to build a good image of the valley in Bulgaria with all of its activities. Maria says that the farm does not receive subsidies for their lands in the protected areas. She emphasises that the location of the animal husbandry is in such areas on the farm's website, as well as detailed information about the whole concept. However, this is not marked on the farm's product labels, which only state "100% Bulgarian product". The farm is economically sustainable due to the development of different mini-projects. As we see in this case study even if the team appreciates the preserved nature in the protected areas, it does not emphasise this on products and does not take enough advantage of the extra value this could give. This and other thoughts shared by Maria lead me to conclude that the team does not consider the fact that their lands are protected areas an essential prerequisite for business development. The farm's website mentions that the land was in a bad ecological state when their activities started.

Conclusions

As we see from the diverse case studies presented above, the social impact that protected areas have on local entrepreneurs cannot be defined by a single characteristic. Each case has its own specificities and each producer his or her own interpretations of the benefits and challenges. They depend mostly on management's plans of protected areas. Most entrepreneurs in the project's network are more concerned about their livelihoods and business development than environmental protection. For some the latter is not even present in the conversations and respectively I cannot analyse a cultural model of environmentalism that does not exist in their minds. A cultural model of environmentalism is not widespread among producers. In fact, of 11 entrepreneurs only two appreciate nature itself and express concern for its conservation. But even they do not emphasise the extra value conserved nature gives to products, as the project experts do. I could summarise by saying that entrepreneurs of the

younger generation are more ecologically oriented and influenced by global conservation ideas.

Environmental concerns are mainly the priority of NGOs. Such external-to-local places, organisations and projects popularise and attempt to implement concepts such as harmony between nature and business, and conserving nature being a prerequisite for business development. As my studies have previously shown these organisations have a significant role in identifying opportunities (especially in conserved nature) that could contribute to the business development of small producers. They follow global tendencies of neoliberal conservation, which embodies commodification of nature and biodiversity and aims to increase incomes and economic growth for small family producers in protected areas. But does this approach really help nature conservation? As one of the producers states, we need a long period of research to find out what these practices really give to nature and whether they are ecologically sustainable.

The study outlines another case study in which conflict between cultural models of environmentalism and developmentalism are definitely emerging in one of the big national parks that has a strict management regime. Under these circumstances business development and nature conservation cannot exist together. For the animal breeders what is important is their business and livelihood, and for the directorate it is biodiversity and the protection of the Park's environment. They represent different points of view and cultural models that depend on their own interests. The team of an organically certified farm in the same region has another perception of nature and development. The farm's philosophy is based on nature protection, its development depends on this and so there is no conflict. For both case studies grazing in protected areas is not a significant factor that counts towards building a sustainable livelihood.

The research leads me to the conclusion that the ideas of the For the Balkans and the People project has not succeeded in reaching or changing producers' perceptions of nature and local development in-depth, and neither has it reached society as a whole. As entrepreneurs point out, clients are not aware what the significance of Natura 2000 areas are and what their real value is for the products produced in these areas. The need to clarify this leads to the emergence of a new project named NATURA 2000 in Bulgaria – New Horizons, managed by another NGO. The project aims to achieve a significant change in public awareness of, and attitude towards, the Natura 2000 network using flagship, easily identifiable, species from the EU Directives on Birds and

Habitats. Undoubtedly the previous project managed to create a successful business development model for small family producers in protected areas with a less negative impact on nature. But my conclusion is that as a result of the project we have business development of individual entrepreneurs and cannot indicate any overall sustainable local development of certain regions. Despite the project's efforts, conserved nature remains unappreciated among entrepreneurs and the general public.

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Notes

¹ From the For the Balkans and the People guide.

² See the short resume called the For the Balkans and the People initiative: The Bulgarian Success Story for the interconnectedness of Nature and Small Local Businesses in one of the channels of the project – website of Association of Parks in Bulgaria – <https://parks.bg/initiativata-za-balkana-i-horata-balgarskata-istoria-na-uspeha-za-vzaimosvarzanostta-mezhdu-prirodna-i-malkite-mestni-biznesi/>.

³ Natura 2000 areas, national parks and nature parks.

⁴ An ethnoecology is any society's traditional set of environmental perceptions – that is, its cultural model of the environment and its relationship with people and society (Kottak 1999: 26).

⁵ This is the official name of the project, but it is well known by its other name: For the Balkans and the People.

⁶ For more details, see official information on the website of Bioselena organisation <https://bioselena.com/проекти/завършени-проекти/проект-за-балкана-и-хората/>.

⁷ More official information about the results of the project can be found at (in Bulgarian only): <https://bioselena.com/en/projects/завършени-проекти/проект-за-балкана-и-хората-en/>

⁸ V. T., male, about 50 years old, Yagodovo village, Montana region, interviewed in 2021, personal archive.

⁹ N. C., male, about 60 years old, Kalofer, Plovdiv region, interviewed in 2021, personal archive.

¹⁰ A. I., male, about 50 years old, Berkovitsa, interviewed in 2021 personal archive.

¹¹ For more information see Stancheva 2018a, Stancheva 2018b. For more studies exploring what social impact protected areas have on locals and local development in Bulgaria see Petrov 2021, Markov & Pileva 2021.

¹² P. T., male, 31 years old, Melyane village, Montana region, interviewed in 2021, personal archive.

¹³ Slow Food is a global, grassroots, organisation founded in 1989 in Italy to prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions. Its philosophy is based on three interconnected principles related to food: good (quality, flavoursome and healthy food), clean (production that does not harm the environment) and fair (accessible prices for consumers and fair conditions and pay for producers).

¹⁴ K. D., male, about 35, Belene, interviewed in 2022, personal archive.

¹⁵ T. D., male, about 30, Dragash voivoda village, Pleven region, interviewed in 2021, personal archive.

¹⁶ M. L., male, 41, Kalofer, interviewed in 2021, personal archive.

¹⁷ P. K., male, 65, Kalofer, interviewed in 2021, personal archive.

¹⁸ M. L., male, 41, Kalofer, interviewed in 2021, personal archive.

¹⁹ M. L., male, 41, Kalofer, interviewed in 2021, personal archive. From the For the Balkans and the People guide.

²⁰ M. R., female, around 30, Sofia, interviewed in 2022, personal archive.

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Old Shrines, New Worshipers: Cultural Practices for Connection with Nature

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Abstract: There are many ancient cultural sites in Bulgaria that not only attract tourists but are also believed to facilitate a person's connection with deities and natural forces. Today, cultural practices performed at these sacred places from the period of antiquity and the early Middle Ages are often associated with neopaganism and the New Age movement, while also incorporating elements of Bulgarian traditional culture. Through 'mysterious' rituals, the participants seek to connect with a higher spirituality, which they feel is missing in their everyday lives. Interest in ancient paganism is also one of the manifestations of contemporary nationalism. The feasts, reenactments and rituals presented serve to 're-establish' man's relationship with nature, with the aim of achieving health, well-being, and spiritual growth in an uncertain world. These practices often interweave esoteric and environmentalist ideas with strategies for the development of cultural tourism.

Keywords: sacred sites, neo-paganism, New Age, worship, nature

Introduction

Numerous traces of ancient cultures have been preserved on the territory of Bulgaria. Apart from being objects of tourist interest, these places are per-

ceived as facilitating contact with deities and natural forces through the use of explanatory models of esoteric teachings, para-scientific and ‘profanised’ narratives of ‘energies’ and ‘powers’ by followers of New Age and neo-pagan approaches¹. There is a widespread belief among New Agers that the ancient peoples were more sensitive to the energies of the earth than we are today (see Ivakhiv 2001: 18). Neo-pagans also see nature as sacred and try to reconnect with it by incorporating elements of folk tradition, which they believe will revive ancient spirituality (Magliocco 2010: 4). The ideological roots of the phenomenon are linked to Romanticism and nationalism (Aitamurto, Simpson 2013: 5). In the era of globalisation, neo-paganism is characterised by what is known as the experiential turn (since 1980), with (inter-)subjectivity increasingly affecting the mystical experience (Gründer 2014: 263). Unlike organised religion, which plays a mediating role in the spiritual realm, New Age practitioners favour individual experience (Dubish 2016: 149). Political and economic liberalisation after 1989 in formerly socialist countries led to religious liberalisation (see Gauthier 2022). In Eastern Europe, neo-paganism emerged as one of the forms of religious pluralism after the political changes of the 1990s. Researchers associate this trend with ethnic nationalism as a particular reaction to the influence of foreign cultures (Wiensch 2013: 12). Alternative forms of spirituality in the post-socialist countries often emphasise the need for a return to nature and the restoration of the broken relationship between man and nature (see Pranskevičiūtė 2012).

Today cultural practices performed at sacred places from the period of antiquity and the early Middle Ages in Bulgaria can be associated with neopaganism and New Age and with references to elements of Bulgarian traditional culture. Such sites are usually discovered through archaeological research, and subsequently promoted as cultural and historical heritage to the public. In the second half of the 20th century, with the development of mass tourism, corresponding infrastructure for these sites was developed (roads, museums, accommodation bases, establishment of archaeological reserves). However, during socialist rule, which had a strong atheist agenda in the country, and with the majority of the population being Orthodox Christians, places of cultic practice in antiquity were used only as tourist attractions.

After the political changes in 1989, there was a significant shift in the spiritual domain with the rise in expression of the traditional faiths as well as of new religious movements. Some of these have existed for decades² (such as the

White Brotherhood of Peter Danov/Beinsa Duno), while others appeared in the context of ideological rethinking in the post-socialist period. The numerous followers of New Age ideology³ and the smaller number of neo-pagans in the country belong to the latter category. These esoteric activities observed in the country are in line with similar processes that were part of the movement to the post-secular phase and alternative spiritualities noted by researchers in the Western world (Possamei 2019). In the Bulgarian esotericism of the 20th century, the idea of the necessary connection between man and nature is strongly expressed (see Nazarska 2020), a tradition that continues in contemporary spiritual activities.

As previously mentioned, many adherents of New Age and of neo-paganism believe that ancient people possessed special knowledge that enabled them to sense the sites of energy and construct sanctuaries in precisely those locations. Such beliefs are very popular and often motivate visits to ancient holy places in search of inspiration in the traditions of the Proto-Bulgarians and/or the Thracians (see Dimitrova 2007; Troeva 2014; Troeva 2018; Troeva 2020). Today, eco-trails have been created to a number of ancient sites, serving as a tool for their socialisation. Reenactments, holidays and festivals are organised at these locations, showing their interwoven connection with eco-ideas and strategies for the development of cultural tourism.

One such holiday, which involves visits to and rituals at ancient (holy) places is Midsummer Day. In Bulgarian traditional culture, the celebration of the summer solstice is associated with fortune telling and the picking of herbs which are believed to have particularly healing properties when harvested on this day (Ganeva-Raycheva 1990). Today, this holiday is celebrated with a variety of reenactments and festivals that aim to revive the traditions of the ancestors. Many rituals are performed at places revered as sacred in antiquity or thought to have been sacred in the past, typically on or around this date. These contemporary reenactments and rituals aim to re-establish man's relationship with nature, with the hope of attaining health, well-being, and spiritual growth in an uncertain world.

In this paper, I present my ethnographic observations of several (natural) sites that accommodated a number of cultural practices in the past and have recently been intertwined with new mythology and ritualism, transforming them into religious landscapes. The research⁴ uses personal observations from field work at places of worship and interviews conducted in Madara, Brezovo

and Buzovgrad in Bulgaria, as well as media sources about these places. While Madara is a well-known cult site not only to the Bulgarian public but also to foreigners, the other two sanctuaries (near Brezovo and Buzovgrad respectively) were recently discovered and are newly emerging cult centres.

Madara: between mysticism and nationalism

Madara is one of the most important places of ancient worship as well as being a contemporary destination for patriotic, cultural and mystical tourism and practices. The rock massif was used as a cult site by Thracians, Romans and Proto-Bulgarians, with the visible remains of shrines, temples and a church (Fig. 1). The complex owes its popularity to the famous Madara Rider, which was declared a UNESCO world cultural heritage site in 1979 (Unesco-bg.org 2009) and became a global symbol of Bulgaria in 2008 (News.bg 2008).

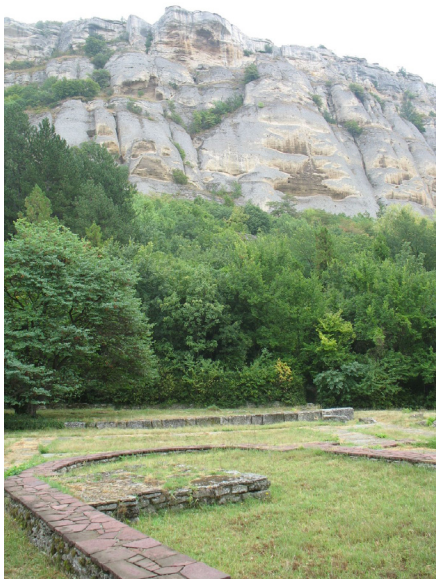


Figure 1. Madara reserve with archaeological remains, ph. E. Troeva, 2012

Efforts have been made over the last century to turn the Madara area into a nature park. In the first half of the 20th century, it was proclaimed a national park, and later became a National Historical and Archaeological Reserve, with

a museum building, fountains, and paths to the sites. The area, which was nearly devoid of vegetation at the beginning of the 20th century, underwent reforestation and a road was built from the village of Madara to the rock massif (Report 1945: 11). Gradually, Madara became a nationally significant tourist site, and in the years after 1989 it began to attract seekers of alternative spirituality. The water in the antique shrine of the three nymphs, which flows down the rocks, is believed to have healing properties (Iskamdaletya.com 2020). The claim that Madara is a highly energetic place is visible on signs throughout the reserve (Fig. 2), broadcast on television (Ezoterikabg.com 2014) and popularised on social networks (Spreaker.com 2022).



Figure 2. Sign in Madara reserve, ph. E. Troeva, 2012

Since 1993, followers of Petar Danov⁵ from the White Brotherhood have gathered on the ridge of the Madara rocks near the ancient fortress. They organised their first festival there, following the pattern of Brotherhood's gatherings at the Rila Lakes. In the Madara archaeological reserve, Danov's followers welcome the sunrise, perform the paneurythmy dance, and participate in lectures

and discussions on spiritual topics⁶. In 2006, a conflict situation arose when a pyramid with a base of 4 by 4 metres and a height of 2.70 metres was built on the rocky plateau above the Madara Rider and over the foundations of a medieval church that was a shrine dedicated to Mother Mary (see Krumov 2006). Although the Bulgarian White Brotherhood denied any involvement with this pyramid, some media publications associated it with Russian followers of Danov, particularly with Tatyana Mikushina, who was titled the ambassador of the great White Brotherhood. Metropolitan Kirill of Varna defined what happened as a desecration of the medieval Orthodox church (Krumov 2006).

The perception of the Madara Archaeological Reserve as a place of energy has led to the emergence of spiritual practices in the nearby village of Madara. In 2009, the Madara Academy of Mysteries was established there with the support of the municipality, aiming to “revive the mysteries of the Thracians, Egyptians and Bulgarians”. It organises practical workshops at the sacred sites in the area, which are declared “some of the most energetic places not only in Bulgaria but also in the world” and are seen as energy portals for communication with the spiritual world (Ezoterikabg.com 2011). The Madara Spiritual Academy advertises its aims and activities as follows:

Establishing an energetic connection between nature and humans, re-establishing the connection of rocks, waters, plants, animals and all the energy of planet Earth with our energy system, conducting training in various mysteries and spiritual practice, achieving a state of relaxation, balance and harmony, learning visualisation and meditation practices and activating patterns of happiness, joy and success, discussions, conversations, sharing experiences, working with the energies of nature for healing, prosperity and personal ascension, uniting people with similar interests and needs in the field of spirituality (Ezoterikabg.com 2011).

The Academy organises seminars and excursions on spiritual topics in the Madara National Park on the spring equinox and the winter solstice (Ezoterikabg.com 2020). It also publishes the electronic esoteric e-journal *Harmony and Light*, which promotes ideas about a holistic way of life, ley lines, energy places, numerology, regression, family constellations, and other New Age ideas. Every year in August, the Academy holds a summer camp in the reserve to commemorate its founding. The program for the August 2017 camp includes:

meditations, rituals, attunements, power mantras, rejuvenation, regression sessions, past lives, general and individual numerological guidance for the year, quantum healing, ritual of power, creating a unified energy of the triple flame for self-healing, crafting orgonite, familiarisation with the basic concepts of ethereal engineering, discovery expeditions on or under the Rock Crown of Madara and the Church of Our Lady with healing energy (hiking), expedition to the 'Secret Path' and 'Secret Terrace', exploration of the rock niches (monasteries) and the lion's head (new destination), individual healing sessions and individual regressions or past rebirths.

The participants make orgonites (amulets) from resin, crystals, seeds and herbs and work in pairs with Tibetan musical bowls to harmonise and balance the energy of the chakras and aura. They practice meditation both day and night, physical exercises, special breathing, healthy rituals, rejuvenating massages, group regression into past lives, dowsing. A thanksgiving ritual is performed at the 'rock of power' at the foot of the cliffs (Ezoterikabg.com 2017). The activities of the Madara Academy listed above suggest that it is associated with the New Age paradigm (see Timothy, Conover 2006: 142).

The area is also used for yoga weekends, advertised as being:

... in nature, away from the big city, in harmony with ourselves. We offer you a program that combines yoga practices and meditative techniques together with walks in sacred places: the Madara reserve, the living water cave, the sequoia planted by Tsar Boris III, the Madara Rider, the Temple: a Thracian sanctuary associated with God Tangra (Yoga-hridaya.com 2022).

Hotel St. Michael has been built in the village of Madara, in which, in addition to guest rooms, two chapels were erected, the St. Michael and Virgin temples. The complex is owned by a man who, after a tragic accident, began to prophesy the future and to whom needy people come from all over the country. In one of the chapels in the complex, there are portraits of Vanga and Venerable Stoyana, revered as great prophets⁷ in Bulgaria. The desire of the owner to show his connection with a prophetic tradition in the country is obvious.

In 2016, the Regional History Museum in Shumen started the Magical Madara National Medieval Festival, with the key participation of the Avitohol reenactments association from Varna. The idea behind the festival is to present

reenactments of rituals and customs that “take us back to our roots and to the Bulgarian antiquity” (Yorgov 2019). The Magical Madara festival is held annually in the reserve around Midsummer Day in June⁸, presenting traditional summer solstice practices and beliefs. The goals that such reenactments set for themselves fall in the spectrum of patriotic and/or nostalgic messages. In the words of one of the organisers of the event:

The place and time of the festival were not chosen by chance. Midsummer – the ancient holiday of the summer solstice, combining Christianity and paganism, and losing its traces back to prehistoric times. In connection with this time, rituals and rites will be restored and performed, Christian and pagan, returning us to our roots, to that Bulgarian antiquity lost in time in which we should look for strength and support in order not to lose ourselves as a people.

During the festival, Bulgarian traditional rites are extrapolated to proto-Bulgarian beliefs. In 2019, reenactors demonstrated the traditional custom of Enyova Bulya, in which a little girl expressed wishes for health, fertility and well-being to the participants (Fig. 3). The participants at summer 2019’s Magical Madara festival also recharged themselves with energy touching the rock, the proto-Bulgarian Daul Tash sanctuary (Fig. 4).



Figure 3. Enyova Bulya custom, ph. E. Troeva, 22.06.2019



Figure 4. Charging with energy at Daul tash, ph. E. Troeva, 22.06.2019

Since 2017, the organisers of the Magical Madara festival have been collecting soil from so-called old Bulgarian lands, carrying it in a procession and pouring it at the foot of the Madara Rider. With this rite, soil was brought from Nagy Saint Miklos (now in Romania, a place known for an early medieval treasure associated with the proto-Bulgarians in the popular narrative), from the tomb of King Samuil (on the Island of St. Achilles, now in Greece), one of the last rulers of the medieval First Bulgarian Kingdom, and from the area of Lake Doyran (known in the national narrative for the heroic battle of the Bulgarians during the First World War, now in the Republic of North Macedonia), all places of particular importance in the national historic memory. According to one participant at the 2019 event, the idea of collecting soil from historical sites and of laying it on the foot of the Madara Rider was “to gather Bulgarians from everywhere”. The respondent herself intended to bring soil from the Danube Delta (*Ongal*), where the first Balkan settlement of the Old Bulgarian tribe of

Khan Asparukh was in the seventh century. On May 6th, part of the Shumen garrison paid homage to St George at the foot of the Madara Rider, regardless of the pre-Christian nature of the monument.

In the post-socialist period, the region of Madara and its archaeological remains became a point of attraction for people and organisations seeking spiritual experiences. Peter Danov's followers hold their gatherings in Madara in May. Reenactors revive the old days with their festival in June, and the Academy of Mysteries organises its summer camp in August. Thus, Madara gathers worshipers for cultural activities with different focuses. Among Danov's followers, these are sun worship and paneurythmy, while esotericists perform a complex of practices characteristic of the New Age. Participants in the Magical Madara festival are involved in neo-pagan rituals with patriotic messages. The archaeological reserve is included in the Energy Recharge tourist route of holy places, offered as a tourist product abroad (Brat-bg.com 2015). The region, with its numerous sacred places, could be described as having "sites within the site" (Bowman 2008: 277), which undoubtedly contributes to its popularity among various interest groups.

The Lyulyakovo sanctuary: neo-paganism and local festivity

The second case presented in this paper is a contemporary festival created in an attempt to socialise a presumed Thracian cult monument the Lyulyakovo/Lilac sanctuary, located in the municipality of Brezovo in Sarnena Sredna Gora (Fol, Konstantinov 2019). The Lilac sanctuary was 'discovered' by chance by a member of the Srednogorets tourist association in Brezovo. The newly discovered Thracian sanctuary is called Lyulyakovo because of its location among lilac bushes (Dikova 2012). The sanctuary has not been investigated archaeologically so far, and its categorisation as such is made based on its external signs. According to the thracologist Valeria Fol, this is the only solar stela (in the form of a flame) in Bulgaria (Brezovo.bg 2013). The beginning of the functioning of the sanctuary is thought to have been in the third millennium BC (Youtube.com 2016). Its discovery led to the advent of the Sun Festival, a new element in the cultural calendar of Brezovo municipality. One of the main elements of the celebration is a spectacular reenactment of a Thracian worship rite for the

Great Mother Goddess and the Sun God. The emphasis in the reenactments is on the individual experience, in synchrony with the observed ‘affective turn’ in history itself (Agnew 2007). The Sun Festival has the ambition of creating a bridge between the ritual practices of the ancient inhabitants of these lands, the Thracians, and the contemporary ritual culture of the Bulgarians, by ‘reviving’ sun worship. The annual celebration of the sun on the longest day of the year (the summer solstice) started in 2012 (Dikova 2012). The organisers are the Municipality of Brezovo, the Srednogorets tourist association and the Treskeia Thracian Society with the assistance of professor Valeria Fol. The festival is financially supported by the municipality in its efforts to develop cultural tourism in the region. To facilitate access to the site, a marked eco-trail has been created. The newly built tourist centre in Brezovo provides information on the route to the site and to other megaliths in the region.

The festival gained popularity due to its attractive reenactment of a rite of bloodless sacrifices in honour of the Thracian gods, which is performed by members of Treskeia. Its chairman Georgi Mishev authored a book on ancient magic and its remnants in Bulgarian traditional culture, which was defended as a dissertation work supervised by professor Fol. At the June 2016 event⁹, the professor gave a short lecture on the upcoming ritual. She explained that this was the best preserved shrine to the Sun God and showed the present rock-hewn altar “with the most sacred liquid of the gods – rainwater”. The priest and the priestess had made a wreath of herbs and wheat around it, and there was a stone altar with bread on it, a gift to the Great Goddess. The youths from Treskeia were barefoot and dressed in white shirts with ancient patterns with wreaths of herbs on their heads. The rite began with the burning of incense over the food and drink prepared for the gods, which were placed on a tablecloth with national embroidery. The priest and priestess mixed honey with olive oil, wine and milk and made a libation in the sacrificial fire (Fig. 5). They then climbed the rock to a pool filled with rainwater and raised a flat bread and a vessel of drink toward the sun. The priest burned incense before the bread and took it in his hands, and the priestess poured some of the liquid onto the ground. They then returned to the sacrificial fire and said prayers to the Mother Goddess, the Sun God, and the ancestors, with each sentence being first spoken by the priest and then repeated by the priestess:

God of the Sun, who with your eye eternally illuminates the world above us and the world below us, who bestows warmth, who bestows life, for whom there are no secrets, but whose heart is veiled with secrets for us mortals, grant us your blessing, bless our lands, bless our souls. May all impurity, all disease, all evil, all that afflicts body and soul depart from your rays, so that we may be worthy children of the gods. God, graciously accept this offering. Through it may the connection between immortals and mortals be preserved and remain holy for the future. May those who roamed these lands, our ancestors who left their blood and bodies, may they also bestow their blessings on us. Let them fill our homes with life, fill our lives with joy, fill our joy with valour, so that we may be their worthy heirs. Goddess and God, take this offering with favour. May the bond between immortals and mortals be preserved through it and be holy forever. Let us raise [this offering] for fruit, let us raise for life, let us raise for joy.



Figure 5. Libation in the sacrificial fire, Lilac sanctuary, ph. E. Troeva, 25.06.2016

During the prayer, honey and fruit were offered to the gods. The priest and the priestess broke a loaf of flat bread high above their heads and the priestess distributed it to those present. The pipers were the first to go to the stela in

the procession, with the explanation of professor Fol that “they open up the way with their music“. They were followed by the priests, then professor Fol with flat bread in her hand, and then the event guests. The priest stood first on the rock stela and laid down the offerings. He turned to the sun with his arms raised, followed by the priestess. This ritual is inspired by the (supposed) ritual of the ancient Thracians and can be referred to as part of the spiritual sphere of neo-paganism (see Timothy, Conover 2006: 140). Following professor Fol’s instructions, each person present rested palms on the stela with fingers spread, then leaned back on the stela and turned palms to the sun, mentally forming a wish or a prayer “for good things” (Fig. 6). Eyes closed, one relaxed and was “filled with energy” when the sun was most powerful: “you will feel the energy entering you”, said professor Fol. The participants left gifts such as flowers, herbs, and pieces of bread. Visitors took photos as souvenirs, and a representative of the municipality helped people to cross the rocks and explained that the stela was man-made. Then the pilgrims returned to the shrine by another route to form a sacred circle and danced (*horo*). On the way back to the parking lot, in the forest, the culinary school in Brezovo presented an exhibition related to Thracian food. At the opening, the students briefly introduced the guests to the history, lifestyle, livelihood and food of the Thracians. Teachers and students prepared a rich table on which they displayed food and drink typical of the Thracian era, including sourdough bread, cheese, yogurt, apple pie, spinach and cheese pie, chicken with mushrooms and onions, trout, honey with walnuts, pancakes with spinach, cottage cheese with garlic and walnuts, wine. Food and drink were displayed in clay vessels. The participants at the celebration were invited to taste the Thracian specialties prepared by the students. Signs with information about plants used in antiquity, prepared by Treskeia, were hung on the surrounding trees.

In recent years, the Lilac sanctuary has been popularised and has been included in the programs of various tourist agencies. A number of individual, family and group excursions are organised to the megaliths in the area, and reports, accompanied by travelogues and photos, can be found on the Internet.

Professor Valeria Fol and Treskeia play a major role in the construction of the festival. The use of ancient texts in the rite gives reason to consider it as a manifestation of so-called reconstructionist paganism (Magliocco 2015: 653). The desire to restore elements of the Thracian faith and rites was realised at the sun-honouring festival thanks to the support of the municipality and the

desire to develop cultural and historical tourism in the region. The Sun Festival gives participants the opportunity to escape from the usual rhythm of everyday life into nature and to observe and participate in a spectacular rite for health and well-being. The holiday carries the elements of both historical reenactments and so-called living history, as well as neo-pagan rites. Thus, the boundary between scientific expertise and cultural management is blurred, a phenomenon characteristic of our time. In the rituals reflecting on Thracian antiquity, researchers turn into priests, tourists into pilgrims, and local people become aware of themselves as heirs of Thracian cultural heritage. Thus, the Sun Festival allows for changing social roles, reconsideration of personal and group identities, and the relationship between man and nature.



Figure 6. Charging with energy at the solar stela, ph. E. Troeva, 25.06.2016

The Buzovgrad Megalith: neo-paganism and folk festivals

The last example of a cult centre with references to the religion and rituals of the ancient Thracians is the so-called Megalith located on a rocky peak south

of the village of Buzovgrad, in Kazanlak region. The area of Kazanlak is known for its numerous monuments (mounds) from the time of the Thracians. According to local history research in the village of Buzovgrad, a team of scientists from Russia visited the megalith in 1991, and the measurements they made showed a strong geomagnetic field, positively affecting human psychophysiology (Stoyanov et al. 2010: 16). In the 1990s, the rock complex near Buzovgrad was recognised as an archaeo-astronomical site by archaeo-astronomers (Stoev, Maglova and Yotova 2008: 128). Thracologists popularised it as a cult place, functioning from the end of the Eneolithic and into the early Bronze Age (Stoev, Maglova and Fol 2005). The popular name Gate of the Goddess was given to the complex during the implementation of the eco-trail construction project in 2004–2005, with the name coming from ‘Solar/Sun Gate’ by analogy with a cult facility described by Homer in the *Odyssey* (Stoev, Maglova and Yotova 2008: 132).

On March 19, 2006, after the death of the famous thracologist professor Aleksandar Fol, some of his ashes were scattered through the opening of the megalith (see Hristova 2006). The ritual was performed by his wife Valeria Fol in the presence of his friends and students. The professor was sent on his last journey according to a rite described by ancient authors, the border between the worlds being opened and subsequently closed with incantations and libations of water and wine. A dark red woollen thread was stretched through the rock opening, symbolising the boundaries between the world of the living and that of the dead. According to Valeria Fol, the place could be identified as Homer’s Sun doors, from where the souls of the dead pass into the afterlife.

A children’s and youth’s theatre group was formed at the community cultural centre in Buzovgrad, performing reenactments of Thracian rituals at the megalith on the summer solstice. Since 2007, the reenactment has also been performed on the autumnal equinox, and in certain years the event merges with the traditional village festival on St Petka Day when a celebration called Honouring the Mother Goddess is held. Local youths present the heroisation of the priest king by the Mother Goddess, bacchanals give the audience flowers and fruit, wine is poured into the rock crevice in memory of the dead and as a sign of gratitude to the goddess (Stoyanov et al. 2010: 16). These activities cause a reaction in some Orthodox circles, for example Pravoslavie.bg published material critical of the manifestations of new Bulgarian paganism, among which the sacrifices at the megalith were listed (Pravoslavie.bg 2009).

On the summer equinox in 2012, Sila (Strength), the Plovdiv Association for Ancient and Medieval Reconstructions, recreated a ritual “in honour of light, brilliance, power and its ancient gods, celebrated by the ancient world in its various incarnations” (Fakti.bg 2012). Due to a lack of evidence of ancient worship (probably only in the late Iron age, see Dimitrova 2007: 117–119; Uzunov 2011: 153–155), the site was officially declared in 2012 a natural landmark bearing the name Megalith (Kazanlak.com 2012). Nevertheless, the local authorities continue to organise reenactments of Thracian rituals at the “cult site” with the purpose of developing cultural tourism.

In the years following, the site gained popularity both among locals and visitors from distant areas. According to an interviewed resident of Buzovgrad, the Thracians did not choose the location by chance. Locals come to the megalith to charge themselves with energy and bring their guests and friends to the rocks “so that their lives go well“, as they say. A female respondent who visits the site every week, claims to radiate the positive energy she has received even while talking on the phone.

In 2015, the eco-path leading to the megalith was renovated with support from Eagle’s Nest, a local tourist association that also organised a hike along the newly opened eco-trail, called Buzovgrad: A Path through the Ages (Tdorlovognezdo.com 2015). Since 2015 the Municipality of Kazanlak has also been organising eco-hikes to the megalith as a part of the In the Valley of the Thracian Kings festival. At the top, next to the rock complex, children and youth from the community cultural centre in Buzovgrad perform rites of bloodless sacrifice with wine, bread and fruit (Fig. 7). The head of the community centre in Buzovgrad explains to march participants that this is:

a holy place both for our Thracian ancestors and for us.... These megaliths were made and studied by the Thracians precisely in such highly energetic places. And that goes on, we feel it when we go to these energy places, we feel this energy.

The August 27, 2016, march to the megalith during the In the Valley of the Thracian Kings festival took on the form of a pilgrimage¹⁰. In the organised eco-hike, the goal was to give the reenactments a ritualistic character in which tourists could participate. The theatre group from Kazanlak played a central role, with a significantly expanded performance compared to the previous years. Near the top, the leader of the theatre group warned participants to be

careful as “the procession entered a sacred ritual” and people could awaken mysterious forces. The priests led the way and no one was to cross their path. At the foot of the megalith and next to it, actors performed sacrificial rites in gratitude to the Mother Goddess, and recited Orphic incantations (Fig. 8). At the end of the reenactment, those present were invited to make a sacrifice to the gods by throwing a piece of fruit through the rock opening. Afterwards, all participants and guests received a certificate for walking the Path of Light and being initiated into the ancient Thracian sacraments; they then enjoyed a glass of wine and some dancing.



Figure 7. Reenactment of Thracient ritual, ph. E. Troeva, 29.08.2015

Dozens of people gather at the megalith near Buzovgrad to perform similar reenactments during the summer solstice, while the reenactments of the autumnal equinox mainly involve residents from the surrounding villages. The megalith has gained popularity as the most energetic place in Bulgaria, thanks in part to coverage in the mass media and social networks. Group meditations and other spiritual practices are held at the site, and various events are organised nearby, such as the Sacred and Energetic Places travelling seminar held on the

summer solstice (June 21) 2015 (E-bulgaria.org 2015). The Kailash Yoga Club also organises meditations and pranayama sessions at the site (Yoga-kaylash.com 2016). A visitor to the megalith meditated nearby and reported experiencing a vision of energy beings who, supposedly, also contacted the local shamans 6,000 years ago. The pilgrim explained:

such an energy passed through me that after that it was as if I had passed into another dimension... I was not stepping on the ground... I collected some pebbles. Later, my mother also joined the gathering. Of course, I always ask the permission of the place and the entities there, so that I know that these are gifts and not theft. With these stones I then made a mandala in my father's garden and also made some energy seals to test my new skills after the meditation at the Gate (Akashic-records.eu 2013).

The definitions of the rock complex, introduced by thracologists, are freely employed by visitors who narrate their experiences. The case of the megalith near Buzovgrad is emblematic of the construction of a cult centre in our times. Regardless of whether the rock complex had religious or astronomical functions in ancient times, it can be seen as a new cult site that has been functional for the past dozen years. Its construction was inspired by physicists, astronomers and thracologists, while its socialisation was supported by the local authorities, aiming to promote cultural tourism. Reenactments are organised next to the megalith during particular moments of the solar calendar (equinox and solstice) to showcase the Thracian mysteries as an attraction and to spark interest in them.

The local community of Buzovgrad and the surrounding villages is mainly involved in the Honour of the Mother Goddess festival, celebrated on the autumnal equinox and advertised as a fertility festival. The Solar Gate near Buzovgrad is becoming a popular destination for both tourists and followers of the New Age and neo-paganism.

The megalith in Buzovgrad has become an emblematic neo-pagan cult site in Bulgaria, where spiritual and ritual practices are carried out throughout the solar calendar. These practices aim to restore Thracian rituals related to fertility, connection with the deceased, and promoting health and well-being for the living. The megalith's growing popularity due to its exposure through electronic media has attracted seekers of alternative religiosity and experiences.

For them the (supposed) Thracian sanctuary is a place to reconnect humans with nature and its energies. The highest attendance occurs on the summer solstice, also known as *Enyovden*.

Conclusions

There are many other Thracian sanctuaries in Bulgaria that attract neopagan or New Age pilgrims, such as Begliktash (near Primorsko), Kabile (near Yambol), and old shrines in the mountains of Rodopi and Strandza. According to followers of New Age ideology in Bulgaria, the Thracians and Proto-Bulgarians, like other ancient peoples, were sensitive to energy sites and built sanctuaries at those locations.

The three case studies presented in the article have both similarities and differences. Madara is a cult site with a thousand-year history which assumed a top position in the pantheon of national shrines in the 20th century. The rock sites near Brezovo and Buzovgrad have been recognised as ancient cult places relatively recently and are in the process of being developed as contemporary cult sites.

The area of the archaeological sites in Madara is designated a national reserve, which provides some institutional control over the activities carried out there. The municipality, museum, reenactment clubs and cultural managers organise official events there, including the main Magical Madara festival, which bears the characteristics of living history with some reconstructions of rituals from Bulgarian traditional culture. Rites with nationalistic messages related to cultural memory are also observed within the festival.

Followers of New Age and new religious movements perform their practices in Madara in smaller groups, or individually. In the cases of the megalith near Buzovgrad and the Lyulyakovo sanctuary near Brezovo, the organisers of the new holidays are the municipalities and tourist associations, due to their location in nature, in mountainous areas. Organised visits are defined as hikes, and eco-paths are created to the objects. Reenactments of ancient rituals carried out within the framework of official events in Buzovgrad have the character of artistic reconstructions, while those next to the Brezovo stela can be defined as neo-pagan rites.

The events organised in the three locations are called *sabor* (congregation), festival, or holiday. They are of a complex nature and include various cultural activities such as seminars, reenactments of ancient rituals, traditional music and dance (*horos*), reenactments of Bulgarian folk customs, meditation, lectures on spiritual topics and hikes.

In the observed neo-pagan rituals many people participate out of curiosity, without sharing deeper knowledge of the essence of the performed rituals or about their possible ancient prototypes. Tourists hike to the sun stela and megalith, and the participation in health and wellness rites is an additional attraction when spending free time with family or friends in nature. In contrast, the more specialised practical workshops held by New Age followers consist mainly of people with similar interests. The most popular points in time for cultic activity are connected with the solar cycle, with the greatest frequency at the summer solstice and autumn equinox.

The increased interest in such cult places observed in recent decades is motivated by spiritual searches, the problematic present and attempts to make sense of reality. Through 'mysterious' rituals, participants desire to join a higher spirituality, which they lack in everyday life. The new ritual practices are perceived by the participants as actual reenactments of past rituals, with only a few questioning their authenticity. The practice of neo-pagan and New Age rituals for achieving health, spiritual growth, and being in harmony with the universe is completely in tune with New Age ideas in many countries around the world. The interweaving of esoteric ideas with pseudoscientific hypotheses is one of the main characteristics of this type of spiritual activity. The interest in ancient paganism is also one of the manifestations of contemporary nationalism. The presented cultural activities show the interweaving of esoteric and environmentalist ideas with economic strategies for the development of cultural tourism.

Notes

¹ About the differences and similarities between New Age and neo-paganism, see Zwissler 2018.

² About the esoteric traditions in Bulgarian society in the 20th century, see Nazarska 2020.

³ About the differences between the followers of the New Age and the new religious movements, see Hanegraaff 1998. About followers of the New Age in Bulgaria, see Manova 2022.

⁴ The article is a result from the Religious Notions, Traditional Beliefs and the Nature – Culture Opposition (New Realities, Theoretical Approaches and Interpretations) joint research project between the Institute for Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the Estonian Literary Museum and the Estonian Academy of Sciences.

⁵ For the teaching of Petar Danov, the Danovism, see Toncheva 2015.

⁶ See for example the schedule of the gathering in 2022 (Beinsadouno.org 2022).

⁷ Personal ethnographic observation in 2019 and 2022.

⁸ Personal ethnographic observation of the festival in June 2019.

⁹ Personal ethnographic observation of the event on June, 25, 2016.

¹⁰ Personal ethnographic observation of the march to the megalith in August 2015 and in August 2016.

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The Self-representation of Secular Spirituality Movements in Virtual Space: The Case of Lithuania

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Abstract: In the second half of the 20th century, along with the alternative New Age spirituality movement, the practice of self-improvement became widespread, and by the end of the 20st century it had become extremely widespread, permeating the most diverse areas of life in the Western world, practically becoming a mass cultural phenomenon. Accordingly, it can be described as a secular phenomenon with minimal links to traditional spirituality: the concept of spirituality has changed significantly, is often not linked to transcendental ideas and is focused on the self and self-improvement and the search for personal well-being and happiness. Relevant practices in the 21st century are particularly widespread in Lithuania.

The article examines the peculiarities of the self-presentation of spiritual self-improvement practices in Lithuania. The self-presentation of the phenomenon in virtual space is analysed and texts written by some service providers are studied. Aspects of the social communication of spiritual practices in the online space are examined from the perspective of linguistic analysis and marketing, and spirituality practices are distinguished and discussed. In this context, the needs–wants–demands relationship emerges, along with the need for self-actualisation. The online descriptions of the services offered by providers of spiritual practices are constructed according to commercial logic. The results of the linguistic analysis correlate with the findings of previous researchers about the orientation of the offered spiritual practices towards self and secular practices.

Keywords: spiritual movements, secular spirituality, New Age spirituality, spiritual practices, Self, self-actualisation, needs, text functions, text analysis, online texts

Introduction

Various self-improvement practices (such as meditation, yoga and mindfulness practices, reiki healing, various events to express femininity or masculinity, and others) are extremely popular in the Western world, including Lithuania. In the West, these practices began to spread in the 1970s due to various social and cultural changes. In the 21st century, alternative culture has gradually become a mainstream cultural phenomenon.

Representatives of various scientific disciplines, such as anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, cultural scientists, and others, have studied this phenomenon, generally from the perspective of religious studies, which became particularly popular at the end of the 20th century. The phenomenon is often associated with new religious movements and is often treated as ‘New Age’ spirituality (Lewis 1992; Heelas 1996; Heelas 2011; Hanegraaff 1998; York 2004), as post-traditional spirituality, postmodern spirituality (Kotila 2006; Motak 2009), everyday spirituality (MacKian 2012), alternative spirituality (Partridge 2004), popular spirituality (Knoblauch 2014), or is linked to concepts of pseudo-religion or quasi-religion (Tillich 1963), etc. The phenomenon could also be interpreted as postmodern magic (O’Loughlin 1999) and has traits of magical thinking.

Various research point out that the meaning of the term spirituality, which has been used in the Christian world since ancient times, has changed in modern times (e.g. King 2004). The term 'spirituality' was originally associated with the Christian tradition and was originally derived from biblical pneumatics, or 'spirituality', which means the control of God's Spirit, and then applied to the inner life of Christians. In Christian theology and practice, this term, which is associated with the human search for holiness and inner perfection, means primarily the search for God. In modern times, the concept of spirituality has been separated from its Christian theological roots and it is now commonly used in various religious traditions, although there is no strictly equivalent concept to 'spirituality' in non-Western languages. Spirituality has gradually begun to be understood anthropologically, as an exploration of what it means to become fully human. Thus, spirituality is seen to be inseparable from the human subject itself, as an inner dimension linked to a general search for meaning, wholeness, self-transcendence, and connection with others. In this sense, the term 'spirituality' can function in multiple secular contexts and can be postulated as a potential dimension that is latent in every human being (King 2004).

These changes in the concept of spirituality began to emerge especially in the second half of the 20th century. Wouter Hanegraaff links its emergence to the New Age movements of the 1970s. He distinguishes these phenomena from earlier New Age movements in the restricted sense (which had their origins in Theosophy and Anthroposophy) (Hanegraaff 1998). According to Steven Sutcliffe, the concept of New Age spirituality gradually spread from the "subcultural pioneers" to the broader "countercultural baby boomer" groups. Between 1967 and 1974 the meaning of the term 'New Age' changed and the term 'spirituality' began to be used in a broader sense than the old religious sense to encompass a variety of alternative spiritual activities and practices (Sutcliffe 2002).

At the turn of the 21st century, the concept of 'spirituality' continued to expand. According to Boas Huss, spirituality can now be defined simply as a way of improving one's life independently of structured and institutionalised spaces. Today, spirituality is practically understood as a way of improving one's life, with an emphasis on spiritual practices rather than theories and doctrines (as opposed to the characteristics of the earlier New Age movement) (Huss: 2014).

Cornel W. Du Tois proposed the concept of secular spirituality as a name for this phenomenon, defining it as a modern phenomenon of spirituality

experienced in spheres that are separate from structured, institutionalised religion (Du Tois: 2006). This term is useful when talking about the broader phenomenon of self-improvement ideas not directly associated with any religion (even those traditionally associated with New Age traditions), formal healing or psychological practices. In many cases, these practices are not related to religion today even though there are some outward signs of it.

Most of the researchers analysed separately the peculiarities of one or other of the practices related to this phenomenon of spirituality, the origins of specific practices and the development of their diffusion, emphasising how these contemporary ideas and practices of spirituality are very eclectic and intertwined, often linked to different religious traditions, psychology, medicine, healthy lifestyles, etc. They often mean very different things to different people. Systematising these practices is very problematic. It is often difficult to distinguish them from each other, from one religion or another, or from psychological or healthy lifestyle practices recognised in the academic world.

Spirituality is closely related to general trends in the postmodern world such as individualism, religious pluralism, secularisation, etc. Consequently there is distrust of traditional authorities, institutionalised traditional religions or religion in general, the popularity of Eastern religious traditions and mystical teachings, the development of academic psychological science, transpersonal psychology, the human potential movement, the spread of ecological ideas, etc. The sociologist of religion Steven Bruce linked the 'New Age' to the milieu, the general social environment, social context (Bruce 2006).

Most of the researchers pointed out that people who engage in the self-improvement practices offered by spirituality training often do not want to associate themselves with one or other institutionalised religion, or with religion in general, but rather describe themselves as engaged in the search for spirituality, or simply say that they want to improve themselves or their quality of life in some way. Their ideas are simply a particular philosophy of life and a particular relationship to the world. Accordingly, the philosophy of secular spirituality and the self-improvement practices associated with it, unlike those associated with traditional spirituality, turn away from transcendence and focus on this material world, on the personal 'self'. Secular spirituality emphasises the interconnectedness of body, mind and spirit, and focuses on a person's physical and emotional well-being, success, 'happiness', and material gain. Belief

in the existence of a “core or true self” and the idea of “personal growth” are widespread (Hammer 2001).

Note that the development of relevant ideas and practices is closely related to the baby boomer generation, sometimes called the Me generation, which is characterised by self-oriented traits (Lasch 1984). The important cultural aspirations of this generation are self-realisation and self-fulfillment rather than social responsibility. These cultural aspirations are even more evident in the Millennial generation (Stein 2013), among whom ideas and practices of secular spirituality are even more prevalent. Undoubtedly, the development of the Internet has facilitated the mass dissemination of these ideas and practices.

In Lithuania, regardless of the specific historical context, the relevant ideas of spirituality began to spread at a similar time as in other countries in the Western world, i.e. in the 1970s and 1980s. At the beginning of the 21st century, there has been a revival of the relevant ideas and a particular spread of various spiritual practices related to these ideas, which can already be described as secular spirituality.

Some research has been devoted to the development of this phenomenon in Lithuania, especially in the field of religious studies (e.g., Ališauskienė 2014; Kuznecovienė 2016; Peleckis 2022; Pranskevičiūtė 2014).

This article analyses the self-representation of the phenomenon of modern secular spirituality and related self-improvement practices (also referred to as spiritual practices in the text) in Lithuania and its representation on the Internet. The focus is on those self-improvement practices that are believed to be unrelated to traditional spirituality but are associated with secular spirituality, which aims to improve physical and material well-being.

We assume that the popularity of this phenomenon is determined by the demand-supply principle, which means that service providers offering related services either consider and respond to the needs of society or create the necessity for the service. Service providers disseminate information about themselves in public discourse. The Internet is the dominant medium today, and communication models that are specific to virtual space are expressed within it. In this article, we have chosen to examine only texts published in Lithuanian on the websites of service providers related to the phenomenon of spirituality. They publish basic information and create the image of a trustworthy service provider.

We want to find out how this phenomenon, subject to business logic, manifests itself in a specific country (Lithuania) and language (Lithuanian).

The aim is to define what self-improvement practices are offered and what narrative of personal growth and self-help they create. From the perspective of linguistic pragmatic, the following tasks are set: conduct quantitative and qualitative research on the content published on the websites of providers of spiritual practices, distinguishing thematic directions and dominant social communication.

Methodology

The variety of self-improvement practices offered in the virtual space is abundant. According to the google.lt search engine, the keywords 'spiritual practices' in Lithuanian provide ~ 268,000 (viewed in November 2022) results. Often, as in all other countries, these practices are related to various alternative medicine practices, psychology, ideas of healthy living, etc. It should be noted that the same service providers are often not attached to a specific spiritual practice. Often, they offer different spiritual training. For example, the same service provider may offer both yoga, mindfulness, and rebreathing sessions, while another service provider may offer theta healing workshops as well as various retreats, other spiritual practices, and so on.

To explain the popularity of certain secular spiritual practices, key words related to a certain spiritual practice and its proposed activities (teachings, courses) were entered into the Google search engine, and it was observed how the information search algorithm prioritizes the results at a given time. According to the search engine google.lt in Lithuanian, the obtained results are arranged in the order of popularity presented in Table 1 (see Table 1).

The 17 specific well-known spiritual practices listed in Table 1 (the concepts 'Crystals' and 'Stones', 'Minerals', 'Femininity', 'Masculinity' used in this text are respectively referred to as 'Crystals practices', 'Stones practices' and 'Mineral practices', 'Femininity practices', 'Masculinity practices' or related trainings) were selected for further analysis. It should be noted, however, that this study does not distinguish the popular practice of 'meditation' separately, as it is part of the spectrum of many different spiritual practices (such as yoga, mindfulness, or other practices).

The information that appears on the first ten pages of the Google search engine for each practice was reviewed. Websites of service providers offering

services to spiritual practitioners (e.g., training, courses, internships) were selected for the study. Obviously, Google's search engine prioritizes sites promoted by the service providers themselves. Information on the Internet is changing and adapting to the searcher should also be considered.

Table 1. Results of frequency of mentioning spiritual practices in Google search system according to data from November 2022.

Spiritual practice	Mentions
Yoga	318,000,000
Reiki	51,600,000
Energic medicine	10,000,000
Aromatherapy	2,350,000
Stones	833,000
Crystals	746,000
Mindfulness	639,000
Angelic Support	565,000
Femininity	426,000
Masculinity	419,000
Minerals	220,000
Human design	137,000
Rebreathing	106,000
Taping	74,000
Forest Bathing	49,300
Theta healing	31,500
Retreats	11,600

The study of the websites focused on the texts. The strategies used by providers to communicate the content used to represent spiritual practices in article were analysed. To clarify this, a discourse analysis and (in some respects) a rhetorical and stylistic analysis were conducted. The texts were processed by the Text function determination tool <https://sitti.vdu.lt/teksto-funkciju-nustatymas/> developed by the Center for Computational Linguistics of Vytautas Magnus University, which obtained a word frequency list and a prototypicality table

of functions (hereafter – KLC tool). The nature of the functions of these texts is explained in the article. The analysis of the social communication aspects of the practitioners is based on the perspective of linguistic pragmatics (Marcinkevičienė 2008; Koženiauskienė 2013; Smetonienė 2009, Gabrėnaitė 2007).

Later, the frequency list of words used in the presentations was analysed and the lemmatized words repeated in the descriptions of the spiritual practices were counted. These recurring words are called ‘spotlights’ in the study because they highlight the most important aspects of each practice. This makes it possible to identify similarities and differences between spiritual practices.

Diffusion of Secular Spiritual Practices on the Internet: Linguistic Aspects

Without exception, all spiritual practices discussed in this study and practiced in Lithuania are represented in many ways: the providers of these services, who spread information about them as their field of activity, have websites, blogs, or accounts in social networks (mostly Facebook), less – on Instagram and only a small part – on YouTube. Internet media is the main communication channel, so the intentions of the service provider unfolding in it presupposes the nature of the information provided to the addressee.

On the Internet, spiritual practices are most often presented in the form of segmented texts of 400–500 words, illustrated with associative or photos of service providers (person, practice space/facility). Considering that the average human reading speed is 150–300 words per minute, it means that it takes about 3–5 minutes to read such a text. As these texts are published on web pages and/or blogs, they provide basic, essential, little or no change information about a particular spiritual practice, related services and/or providers. These types of text presentation strategies are suitable for people who are always in a hurry and save their time.

Using the KLC tool, the dominant (about 45%) texts representing spirituality practices are characterized as academic prose texts, according to their prototypicality for functions. This type of text is characterized by its descriptive and directive nature. This means that they are characterized by the expression of the modality, the present tense, the naming of alternatives and conditions.

Argumentative language characterizes academic prose texts. Academic prose texts are characterized using argumentative language, trying to influence the listener or reader, as well as long sentences, impersonal constructions. They also capture from a bit of spontaneous expressiveness, when spontaneity is infused, a bit of spoken language intonations and connections with a narrative or conversational situation.

Texts with the characteristics of an official document (17%), a fictional text (15%) and a substantive discussion (13.6%) are more than twice as common. The characteristics of official documentary texts are directive and narrative, i.e., they are modal, use the present tense, list conditions and alternatives, have third-person pronoun dominance and prepositions denoting spatial relations. In addition to these features, appellativeness and spontaneous expressiveness characterizes the official document-type essays, i.e., the use of argumentative language to influence the reader, the use of spoken language and expressiveness, and the content of the text being linked to the narrative situation. Fictional texts are characterized by spontaneous and non-spontaneous expressiveness, which can be seen in the highly expressive rich vocabulary, the features of spoken language and the links to the narrative/conversational situation. There is a directive and appellative quality in texts of this type, which means that they show signs of modality, the use of the present tense and the use of alternatives and conditions to list and argue to influence the addressee. Appellativeness and spontaneous expressiveness characterize the type of substantive discussion texts. In other words, such texts aim to influence the addressee by argumentation, spontaneity, expression and spoken language, and by focusing on the narrative situation. In other words, such texts aim to influence the addressee by arguments and facts, to actualize the content of the text, using spontaneity, expression and spoken language, and focusing on the narrative situation. Personal and emotional aspects do not play a significant role in the substantive discussion type of texts.

The smallest group of texts in terms of prototypicality of functions is identified as spoken texts (8.5%). Spontaneous expressiveness and directive characterize these texts. This means that they are characterized by spontaneity, features of spoken language, links to a narrative or conversational situation and high expressiveness. They are also appellative texts, which means that they record the use of argumentative language to influence the reader.

Looking at all the texts studied from the point of view of textual functions, the most characteristic feature of all of them is spontaneous expressiveness, which is expressed through the intonations of spoken language and a high degree of expressiveness. Spontaneity is considered a feature of spoken language, but as seen from the texts under study, it is also a feature of the written text in the given situation. The texts published on the Internet presenting spiritual practices or their service providers are part of a public discourse influenced by the global democratization process. As a result, public discourse expands and breaks canons: public speaking (i.e., public discourse) begins to take on the intonations of speaking in writing (i.e., colloquial speech). This means that the aim is not to write formally, but to write as if naturally, to give the impression of a free, lively, popular, and persuasive text. The result is an educational text with a promotional implication and/or a non-aggressive promotional text and a description of the services offered.

A closer look at these texts reveals that they are used online to make a detailed case for the relevance of their services or worldview to a potential customer, based on certain sources, such as scientific data (*Rebefingas veikia visais lygiais: fiziniu, psichiniu ir dvasiniu. Fiziniam lygmenyje keičiasi anglies dvideginio ir deguonies kiekio santykis kraujyje, tai veikia ir kitų cheminių elementų pusiausvyrą organizme, dėl to gerėja savijauta ir visų organų veikla, valosi organizmas.* [Rebreathing operates on all levels: physical, mental, and spiritual. On the physical level, it changes the ratio of carbon dioxide to oxygen in the blood, which also affects the balance of other chemical elements in the body, resulting in improved well-being and the functioning of all the organs, as well as purification of the body.]). The degree of explication of this argumentation is not uniform: the arguments are based on the thoughts of authorities (e.g., the Dalai Lama's statement: *Būkite geri, jei tai įmanoma. O tai įmanoma visada.* [‘Be kind if you can. It is always possible.’]; or *Jogai teigia, kad fizinių ir protinių tobulumą gali pasiekti kiekvienas, kuris sistematingai ir kryptingai atlieka jogos užsiėmimų programą.* [Yogis claim that physical and mental perfection can be achieved by anyone who follows a systematic and purposeful yoga program]) or their written works, thus demonstrating the ‘weight’ and uniqueness of the proposed spiritual practice; or the argument is strengthened by mentioning the founder of a particular spiritual practice and/or briefly presenting his/her views (e.g., *Šią jogos rūšį vakarų pasauliui pristatė Sri K. Pattabhi Jois.* [Sri K. Pattabhi Jois introduced this type of yoga to the western world]). Another

strategy is the positive personal experience of the service providers themselves and testimonials from satisfied clients, which encourages them to strive for the described result (*Didelis ačiū, Neringa, Human Design konsultacija kol kas yra geriausia, kas man padėjo pažinti save ir suprasti, kodėl gyvenime sekasi arba nesiseka*. [Thank you very much, Neringa, the Human Design consultation is the best thing so far that has helped me to get to know myself and to understand why I am succeeding in my life, or why I am failing in it.]). The recent example shows that one of the most influential persuasive tools is utilized – a specific positive result has already been achieved, making advertising of this nature quite evident in such posts. However, in other words, these texts have an advertising function, but they can only be described as typical advertising. These texts do not offer a concrete material object that can be easily represented (such as a car, ice cream or flowers), but a state of mind (which, for example, *padeda tapti sąmoningesniu, suvokti kas iš tiesų ESI ir K O D Ė L nori daryti, elgtis vienaip ar kitaip* [helps to become more awareness, to realize what you really ARE and what you WANT to do, to behave in one way or another]), which is essentially determined by a number of factors, the most important of which is the recipient of the service (the customer). Of course, some spirituality practices (e.g., stones, crystals, aromatherapy) use certain attributes (oils, minerals, etc.) to help achieve the client's desired outcome. The most essential element in these texts is the promise of transformation, which is expressed by focusing on certain objects of attraction.

The texts presenting spiritual practices, or their service providers highlight certain centers of attention, i.e., the objects on which they focus. These objects are described by nouns: nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and numerals. Numerals refer to the number or order of things, which are very rarely recorded (mostly referring to the days of the week on which the activities take place), and therefore will not be the focus of this class of nouns. Nouns dominate in the texts studied. The concept of a noun includes the names of things, phenomena, actions, or properties. Obviously, depending on the topic (or, in other words, on the direction of the practice of spirituality), the dominant words are those that name the practice of spirituality and/or the service provided: e.g., In the context of 'Human Design', different forms of the Lithuanian noun 'žmogus' (usually paired with 'design') or its English equivalent 'human' (+ 'design') are most common, while in the context of energy medicine, the dominant forms are variants of nouns and adjectives with the root 'energ-' (e.g. *cosmo-energy, cosmic, cosmo /*

bio-), and so on. However, when summarizing all the texts studied, there are 2 dominant nouns – ‘žmogus’ [human] and ‘gyvenimas’ [life] (e.g., *Continuous self-development of the personality in the four main spheres of a human's life* [here and further in the text underlined by the authors]: *managing emotions, building harmonious relationships, pursuing life goals, and achieving financial well-being*). This suggests a focus on the person and his/her earthly existence.

Adjectives describe the characteristics of things: in a specific case, this part of speech is used to describe a spiritual practice/service (*klasikinėmis autentiškomis jogos žiniomis*) [with classical authentic knowledge of yoga] and the benefits it provides, the expected effect (*ugdome dorybingas charakterio savybes, lankstų kūną; kuriam harmoningą santykį su pasauliu ir savimi*) [we develop virtuous character qualities, a flexible body; which has a harmonious relationship with the world and oneself] to a potential client, claiming only positive future experiences and/or results (*vidinę darną*) [internal harmony]. In this regard, it is important to note that adjectives are used to name and describe change, i.e., as if a promise is made to help replace the inadequate present with the desired harmonious future. However, the transformation is often described using the verbs (*pagerinti, padėti, lavinti*, etc.) [improve, help, educate, etc.].

A pronoun that refers to things or their properties is quite common in the texts studied. This pronoun is expressed in the texts in two ways: by direct naming (*Tavo širdis, tikruoju AŠ, jūsų protą*, etc.) [*your heart, your true self, your mind*, etc.] or by the endings of the verb (note: in Lithuanian, the number and person categories can be expressed without pronouns, using only verb endings) (*patyrinėsimė* – ,meš, *pakeisk* – ,tuš, *pailsėsite* – ,jūsš, *kviečiu* – ,ašš) [(we) will explore – ‘we’, (you) change – ‘you’, rest – ‘you’, invite – ‘I’]. In the texts studied, the most frequent pronouns were possessive pronouns (*savo, jūsų, tavo*) (note: All three translate into English as ‘yours’), less frequent – personal pronouns (*mes, jie*) [we, they] and reflexive pronouns (*savęs*) [self], quite rare – demonstrative pronouns (*pats*) [self] and their different cases. Considering the context of use, these pronouns emphasize the relationship between the service provider and the client, a clear orientation to the latter’s personal life, identity and awareness, and physical body. The proper pronouns are used to emphasize the introspective focus of spiritual practitioners, the objects, things, or actions that the potential client controls, and the environment that is important to him (e.g., he is encouraged *dar labiau pamilti, suvokti save, savo kūną ir savo aplinką*) [to love himself, his body, and his environment even more]. The most com-

mon forms of verb endings are plural first (we) and second (you). On the one hand, it is an expression of polite communication with the client. Then again, it expresses solidarity with the client, showing the commonality of interests.

Self-actualization Need: A Supply-side Perspective

Providers of spiritual services follow a commercial logic: they offer services that relate to the needs and desires of service recipients, which influence demands. A word count analysis in the descriptions of the services presented on the internet pages of the service providers reveals the spotlight of each of the practices examined (see Table 2). Spotlight shows specific suggestions for how to meet demands. Demand is based on transforming customer wants into needs.

Table 2. Spotlights in spiritual practice descriptions

Spiritual practices (in alphabetical order)	<i>The most actualized words</i> (in decreasing order)
<i>Angelic support</i>	<i>angels, archangels, human, energy, message</i>
<i>Aromatherapy</i>	<i>oils, essential, aromatherapy, group, self, works</i>
<i>Crystals</i>	<i>workshops, crystals, stones, life, observation</i>
<i>Energic medicine</i>	<i>energy, massage, practice, healing, meridians, channels,</i>
<i>Femininity</i>	<i>self, life, femininity, happiness, relationships, alone, we can</i>
<i>Forest bathing</i>	<i>forest, nature, bathing, therapy, connection</i>
<i>Human design</i>	<i>self, human, me, life, you, system</i>
<i>Masculinity</i>	<i>man, life, education, self, energy</i>
<i>Mindfulness</i>	<i>mindfulness, awareness, self, practice, thoughts, emotions, stress</i>

<i>Minerals</i>	<i>minerals, self, can, human, planets</i>
<i>Rebreathing</i>	<i>awareness, self, life, energy, practice, emotion, human, body, our</i>
<i>Reiki</i>	<i>energy, practice, life, health, body, healing, human</i>
<i>Retreats</i>	<i>retreats, self, practice, time, life, body, awareness, journey, to experience</i>
<i>Stones</i>	<i>course, life, self, person</i>
<i>Taping</i>	<i>angels, categories, message, energy, self</i>
<i>Theta healing</i>	<i>theta, healing, thetahealing, during, sessions, beliefs, technique, course, can</i>
<i>Yoga</i>	<i>practice, self, body, human, spiritual, life</i>

On the other hand, there are common denominators in the descriptions of these practices (see Table 3). Common denominators are the most frequently used common root words in all descriptions of spiritual practices. The common denominators with the highest frequency of use in the practice descriptions were selected for analysis. The number of actualizations shows how many practices mention a particular lemmatized word. Lemmatization was chosen because the Lithuanian language contains many derived words and their active variants.

Table 3. The common denominators in the descriptions of analysed spiritual practices.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Common denominator (word)</i>	<i>Number of actualizations in 17 practices</i>
<i>1.</i>	<i>Self</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>2.</i>	<i>Life</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>3–5.</i>	<i>Energy</i>	<i>6</i>

3-5.	<i>Human</i>	6
3-5.	<i>Practice</i>	6
6.	<i>Body</i>	4
7.	<i>Awareness</i>	3
8.	<i>Healing</i>	3

Analysing the data obtained, in the emic lexicon, service providers usually refer to their services as ‘practices,’ i.e., reality-changing activities (yoga, energetic medicine, retreats, rebreathing, mindfulness). The spiritual practices presented are the most ‘self’ (aromatherapy, femininity, human design, masculinity, mindfulness, minerals, rebreathing, retreats, stones, taping, yoga) actualizing, i.e., the essential being of a person that distinguishes him or her from others, especially when considered as an object of introspection or reflexive action. In this context, another important concept is ‘life’ (human design, reiki, retreats, yoga, stones, rebreathing, masculinity, femininity, crystals).

Namely, the addressee, i.e., ‘human’s’ (angelic support, minerals, reiki, yoga, human design, rebreathing) life, is a ‘reality’ that service providers offer to transform through ‘energy’ (understood as general life force and close to the East Asian concept of ‘qi’) (reiki, rebreathing, masculinity, angelic support, energetic medicine, taping). The use of this energy can be treated as a magical practice that can be used to improve the physical life of a person – the self. The emphasis is on ‘body’ (rebreathing, reiki, yoga, and retreats) because the focus is on the present time, the physical presence in the present. This can be achieved through ‘awareness’ (rebreathing, mindfulness, retreats): some of the activities offered by the practices encourage concentration and reflection on the actions that you are doing. The practices that are clearly associated with alternative medicine use the word ‘healing’ (energetic medicine, reiki, theta healing) to introduce themselves, which indicates the patient’s dissatisfaction with the current situation, both spiritual and physical, and actualizes the holistic concept of health and offers a healing.

The apparent focus on ‘self’ reveals that in the practices discussed, ‘spirituality’ is not understood in the traditional Western sense, where the search for God is important. In the context of these practices, ‘spirituality’ is more associ-

ated with the concept of 'energy' that permeates the entire world and each self. This shows that in Western culture, the concept of 'spirituality' is not related to any religion. In contrast to traditional spirituality, the practices studied do not focus solely on inner perfection, but this orientation is two-fold (both inner and outer), aiming for inner harmony and physical and psychoemotional comfort. While religion projects human actions and thoughts into another, afterlife existence, these practices are oriented towards being 'here and now'.

The particularly strong dominance of the concept/pronoun 'self' shows that, according to Abraham Maslow's pyramid of needs (Maslow 1943), all needs below self-actualization are less important. This shows that there is a correlation between the services offered and certain socio-economic groups of the society to which the services are directed. For the client of these practices, the lower needs in A. Maslow's hierarchy of needs are no longer a priority (already satisfied), so they focus on the highest level of the needs pyramid. In this context, the recipient of such services represents the middle or upper class. The latter findings support the insights of previous authors (see Introduction) regarding self-actualization and socio-economic orientation. According to marketing logic, it is obvious that service providers form the demand for self-realization needs. From the representative texts of spiritual practices on the Internet, an image of a person lacking in self-actualization is formed. The most important need realized through spiritual practices is the preservation of the sovereignty of a person's identity, self-actualization. Physical well-being is related to the inner state of a person: physical health determines the internal state and vice versa, so it is especially important to focus on physicality and conscious awareness of it.

In the pluralistic context of spiritual practices, the user/client/patient is presented with a range of practical solutions or combinations thereof that offer a process (search, ongoing dynamic) and guarantee an outcome (positive change, tangible benefit), although this depends on the practice offered and various other variables.

Conclusions

In the 21st century in Lithuania, as in other countries of the Western world, it is possible to observe an extremely rich spread of various self-improvement practices, which in one way or another have their origin in the ideas of the

New Age movement. These practices have permeated the most diverse areas of people's lives. The phenomenon can be described as secular, with minimal links to traditional spirituality.

Based on the results of Google search, it can be said that there is a lot of information about various spiritual practices in Lithuanian language on the Internet. There is abundant information, but most of it is provided about yoga, reiki, and energy medicine. From the point of view of the principle of supply and demand, it can be assumed that these practices are currently in great demand in Lithuania. Since the Internet is a dominant medium, the information published on it creates a certain discourse about spiritual practices. The content and language of the texts circulating in these media allow us to draw conclusions about the phenomenon of spiritual practices themselves, and to focus on the spotlights.

Analysing the service description texts provided by self-development service providers in the online space and using the prototypicality function determination tool, it became clear that most texts representing spirituality practitioners are, according to their prototypicality, academic prose texts. Texts of this type are characterized by descriptiveness and directiveness. These categories indicate that the goal is to provide the addressee with information and a more accurate picture of what is being said, and to encourage and inform the addressee to take certain actions. The following are texts that meet the characteristics of an official document, a fictional text, and a current discussion. When evaluating the texts from the point of view of text functions, the most characteristic feature of all of them is spontaneous expressiveness, which is spread by the intonation and high expressiveness of spoken language.

Of course, each of them strives to be unique and different from the others. However, most of them have common denominators that allow us to speak about the practices studied as a common phenomenon of modern spirituality.

The descriptions of services that providers call 'practices' are based on commercial logic. Services and products are offered to satisfy and develop the needs and desires of customers. The focus is on the needs of the customers, on the pronoun 'self' and on self-actualization. The comfortable physical condition of a person in this life is actualized, and 'energy' and 'awareness' are most often used to achieve the changes. Linguistic analysis shows that the spirituality practices presented to clients in Lithuania emphasize the same features of contemporary spirituality practices that have already been noticed by previous researchers.

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Constructing Sacred Sites as a Form of Collective Memory: The Sacrificial Stone on Toomemägi Hill in Tartu

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Abstract: Sacred natural sites retained their relevance in Estonian culture during and after the shift from mainly oral to mainly literary culture. However, the framework for conceptualising sacred natural sites has changed. Premodern sites have acquired new meanings and functions (notably those associated with national identity) and new sites have been taken into use. The article will present a typology describing the different ways of conceptualising the sacred natural sites that is current in Estonian culture and will offer a case study of a sacred site with a pivotal role in Estonian national identity, the sacrificial stone on Toomemägi hill in the city of Tartu.

Keywords: sacred natural sites, national identity, collective memory, Estonia

Introduction

The conservative landscape patterns of Estonia have included and include to this day a network of sacred natural sites, including but not limited to sacred trees and groves, springs and sacrificial stones. It can be presumed that sacred sites adjacent to villages that are known to have existed in the Late Iron Age (from 1050 AD to 1200 AD) have been used as such from before the nominal

Christianisation of Estonia in the 13th century (Valk 2017: 139–143; on sacred natural sites in general, see Wild, McLeod 2008). Local oral tradition, typically recorded since the end of the 19th century, associates sacred natural sites with practices such as celebrating feast days, healing and other magic as well as orally transmitted folktales.

Since the inception of the project of constructing Estonian national identity in the 19th century, sacred natural sites in Estonia (both as generalised, abstract categories like sacred groves, and as concrete sites) have also acquired new meanings derived from more modern schools of thought as important signifiers of national identity. In addition, new sacred natural sites have been created since the 20th century. Such sites give tangible form to conceptions, spread by means of Romantic literature, of perceived ‘ancient Estonian’ sacred sites. However, the premodern meanings and functions of many sites have persisted, changed and intertwined with modern ones.

In order to facilitate the comprehension and analysis of this varied picture, I will first present a typology describing the different ways of conceptualising sacred natural sites that is current in Estonian culture. My aim is to shed light on how premodern and modern attitudes, narratives, customs and practices intertwine and blend in association with different physical landscapes and even non-material, purely semiotic or symbolic places of memory (*lieux de mémoire*). Consequently, I will present a case study of the sacrificial stone on Toomemägi hill in the city of Tartu that will demonstrate the commingling of both premodern and modern notions on sacred natural sites that operate in different layers of collective memory.

The treatment is partly informed and inspired by the theory of collective memory developed by Aleida Assmann (2006) that distinguishes between different layers of collective memory: (1) **social memory**, which extends the individual memory into the communication of a small group and lives and dies in interaction between people (cf. “Folklore Is Artistic Communication in Small Groups”, Ben-Amos 1971); (2) **cultural memory**, which both (a) defines a canon of heritage for a larger group (such as the imagined community of Estonians) and (b) allows for the recording of dormant heritage not current in functional memory; (3) **political memory**, which forges the identity of a nation, including rituals of national importance that symbolically unite the polity. It is crucial to understand that relationships between these notional lay-

ers of collective memory are fluid and dynamic and that the borders between the layers are porous.

Shifting meanings and changing functions of Estonian sacred natural sites

The typology below differentiates between various cultural practices for conceptualising and making sense of sacred natural sites and representing or reflecting on such sites. The purpose of the typology is to provide a framework for describing in a generalised manner the different fates of traditional sacred natural sites in Estonia and concurrently to provide an analytical tool to facilitate the empirical description of such sites. In total, I will distinguish eleven types on the two axes representing, firstly, different types of practice and discourse and, secondly, different types of sacred natural site. The key distinction on both the axes will be between premodern (traditional) and modern (literate, post-traditional), while allowing for hybrids as well as the absence of a practice and practices divorced from real locations. The distinction between premodern and modern will roughly correspond to the different (sub)systems of culture distinguished as orality vs literacy or non-written vs written culture (*sensu* Ong 2002 and Lotman 2019). In the typology below, the premodern and traditional practices, conceptions and other phenomena of culture also tend to be local, whereas the modern and literary tends to represent wider cultural phenomena, often with a common national background.

Constructing Sacred Sites as a Form of Collective Memory

	No practice	Premodern tradition	Modern tradition	Both premodern and modern tradition
No site (or deterritorialised, disembodied site)	∅	I Informed ethnographic nostalgia , cultural memory as dormant archive records	II Romantic nostalgia , landscape representations based on European literary examples, such as 'ancient Taara sacred oak groves'	III Hybrid ideas drawing both on national myth and folklore publications, for example, a desire to offer coins or ribbons in a sacred oak grove
Premodern site	IV Abandoned sites: knowledge of the site may be confined to archives dormant possibility of a 'second life'	V Premodern vernacular tradition on the wane: old people know the site and may adhere to the tradition	VI Former sacred natural sites become profane landmarks , previous traditions are transformed beyond recognition	VII Local living and transforming tradition at a traditional site used by the local community along with new religious or spiritual movements
Modern site	VIII Abandoned modern sacred sites , especially from the 1930-1940s and 1990s formerly used by new religious movements	IX Premodern customs find new sites: ribbons or coins offered to sites not considered sacred in the past	X Modern sacred groves of civil religion; sanctuaries of new religious movements	XI Intermingled premodern and modern traditions at modern sites , for example offerings of ribbons to bases of stork nests as a fertility rite at weddings

Table 1. A typology of the current ways of conceptualising sacred natural sites in Estonia.

I Firstly, a premodern tradition relating to the nature of and practices in sacred natural sites can be displaced and disembodied, that is, it becomes estranged from its contexts so that it is connected to no particular site. This can be construed to mean **informed ethnographic nostalgia**: orally transmitted texts originating as from within the *social memory* of a small group can be conserved as dormant archive records and thus enter *cultural memory*. Consequently, there are people familiar with the Estonian tradition of sacred natural sites through the mediation of such archive texts, or, alternatively, through previously local oral vernacular memory that has been decontextualised. At a generalised level, such information has taken root as part of Estonian functional cultural memory. A tradition of this kind can be re-embodied and re-actualised as social memory in locations perceived or recognised as appropriate, forming practices classified below in types VII, IX, and XI.

II Secondly, a typical and dominant form of the expression of a modern tradition with no spatial context can be termed **Romantic nostalgia**. This follows the 18th- and 19th-century Western European Romantic literary tradition of finding the sublime and sacred in nature, ‘localising’ it into the Estonian national discourse, although, typically, without spatial references. This includes lofty ideas of ancient ‘Taara sacred oak groves’ which are ultimately of literary origin. Such imagined landscapes migrate from text to text and have played an important role in discourses forming and conveying Estonian national identity, thus representing an instance of *cultural memory* that in turn supports *political memory*. When embodied and actualised as *social memory* in new landscapes designed to follow such representations (or in existing landscapes found to conform to them), this tradition contributes to the formation of practices described in types X and XI below as well as contributing to those classified into type VII.

III Thirdly, elements of the above two ways of perceiving sacred natural sites in Estonia (here treated as historically and conceptually distinct) often appear in conjunction with each other. Such **hybrid ideas** draw on sources that are mainly literary in origin and character (such as national myth, Romantic notions of the sublime) as well as those that are derived from local oral tradition, such as publications of folklore. This can be expressed by a desire to offer coins or ribbons (as in local vernacular tradition) in a sacred oak grove (as represented in Romantic-era art celebrating the ancients’ purported affinity with the

sublime in nature) that can be embodied in practices analysed below in types VII, X and XI. Again, this represents *cultural memory* that can be actualised as *social memory*.

IV Fourth, a large proportion of Estonian historical sacred natural sites can currently be described as **abandoned** if there is no current active knowledge of the former use of the site as sacred by people who are familiar with the physical landscape in question. Within the Assmanns' model, this represents *social memory* that has ceased to exist as such. Knowledge of such sacred natural sites might be confined to archives as *cultural memory* (dormant, waiting for someone to connect the record of a legend or a local practice with a place on the map or a landscape). This allows for the theoretical possibility of a 'second life' in cases where the physical landscape has not changed too drastically. Therefore, if people in possession of disembodied knowledge about such a site (as sketched in types I and III above) come into contact with an abandoned site, this can result in a revival or reinvention of tradition as described in types VI and VII below.

V Fifth, the 'preservation' of vernacular tradition in a traditional sacred natural site (for example, with knowledge of the tradition confined to older people who know local legends and may or may not adhere to traditional customs) can in practical terms mean an instance of a preliterate oral **tradition on the wane**. This conservative preservation of tradition within local *social memory*, beloved of the antiquarian sort of ethnographic interest, is to be distinguished from practices that form type VII below, as this type includes living and thus naturally transforming traditions that take on new features or elements over time. Some traditions on the wane can find themselves reinvigorated by hybridising into practices discussed under type VII. Alternatively, the significance of the site could be perpetuated in a different and profane way (see type VI) or can be forgotten leading to the abandoning of the site (see type IV above).

VI Sixth, in some cases, former sacred natural sites have become **profane landmarks**: premodern vernacular tradition has gone extinct, transformed beyond recognition or been supplanted by a modern one, while the location or landscape itself has retained symbolic significance. This can mean the repurposing of a historic sacred natural site as a natural monument while the sanctity of the place is forgotten, representing *social memory* that has been subsumed by *cultural memory*. This is to be distinguished from the 'heritagisation' of a

site whereby it is transformed from a focus of religious and magical activity to a historical monument by means of putting the oral traditions into a different context (cf. type VII below). However, if dormant knowledge of the former sanctity of such a site is reawakened from the archives (see type I above), there is a chance that a sacred natural site can be 'restored' (see type VII below).

VII Seventh, the local living and **transforming tradition** at a historic sacred natural site can be seen where the site has retained functions at least partly similar to those of the premodern or preliterate age among the local people and has been concurrently taken into use by new religious or spiritual movements. It is common enough that traditional sacred sites become associated with motifs disseminated through Romantic-era or later nationalist literature. This can be a part of the wider process of transforming local sacred natural sites into national historical monuments and giving them new functions within a national heritage that has been minted in Estonia since the 19th century. It is also possible that there is no perceived or significant discrete boundary between older and newer practices and conceptions for the people using the site, with the different layers of tradition embodied in the practices at the locus blending together. I consider such processes of hybridisation, where local *social memory* is supported by the wider *cultural memory*, to be signs of a healthy and evolving tradition that can remain viable in the future: sites that have such hybrid heritages seem more likely to be remembered and stay relevant in culture for longer.

VIII Eighth, there are **abandoned sacred natural sites that had been taken into use relatively recently**. Due to the scarcity of empirical data, this category can be expected to include a few examples and is dominated by two kinds of site: firstly, private sacred groves (*koduhiis*, see H. S. 1944) founded from the 1930s and the 1940s by adherents of the *taarask*, the 'national religion' (saturated with Romantic nostalgia as described in type II above; see Vakker 2012) and abandoned by the 1950s due to the persecution of the faith under Soviet power; secondly, there was a brief but intense blossoming of new religious movements and spirituality movements in Estonia in the 1990s just before and after the implosion of the Soviet Union, which probably spawned landscapes of special spiritual importance that subsequently fell into disuse. Both categories represent now extinct *social memory* inspired by larger currents of *cultural memory*.

IX Ninth, viable **old customs tend to find new sites**. This can be seen in ribbons or coins offered to sites not considered sacred in the past. Such migration

of customs to new sites is natural within a living tradition, as new settlements can be expected to acquire new sacred natural sites as long as the tradition remains alive and productive beyond preserving old localised practices and as long as the tradition has functional value among practitioners. This partly depends on traditional ways of recognising inherently sacred sites. However, based on current Estonian data, it is difficult to reconstruct such 'traditional' selection criteria for sacred natural sites (if there ever was such a coherent, comprehensive and stable set of criteria). Current selection criteria for new sacrificial sites can depend on simplified extrapolations of ethnographic material known within the canon of today's active *cultural memory*, with such new sites possibly representing embodiments of vague nostalgia described under type I above, constituting innovative islands of social memory.

X Tenth, new sacred natural sites have been founded and invested with traditions deriving from modern ideas. This category includes the new sacred groves of civil religion (such as newly planted oak groves) as well as the natural sanctuaries of new religious movements (such as 'energy' sites discovered by people claiming to have powers of extrasensory perception). In the case of new civil religion sacred sites, symbolic representations from the current active layer of cultural memory can be seen to induce changes in landscapes that in turn create new islands of social memory and concurrently support rituals belonging to the sphere of political memory that provide symbolic support for the cohesion of the nation. This is an example of the intertwining of different layers of collective memory.

XI And, last but not least, hybridisation of old and new traditions at new sacred natural sites is possible. Offering coins to stones and ribbons to trees is a premodern tradition that has remained known and widespread even today, and both can be observed at sites that have been taken into use following their identification as sacred following a modern-era conception. An example of this type is the custom of visiting stork nests as part of a wedding ceremony and tying ribbons around the tree or electricity pole on which the stork nest is located. Another example of this type is the stone commonly referred to as the 'sacrificial stone' next to the mediaeval cathedral on the Toomemägi hill in Tartu, which I will discuss in detail below. The stone probably came to be seen as an ancient sacred site due to Romantic notions of the role of the hill before Christianisation (Tvauri 2001: 74–75).

The sacrificial stone and surrounding landscape on Toomemägi hill in Tartu

Due to the prominence of the location in Estonian culture, the most notable example of the intertwining of different layers of collective memory at a modern sacred natural site can probably be given by describing the different cultural and landscape processes involving the sacrificial stone and surrounding landscape on Toomemägi hill in Tartu.

The stone has attracted, in addition to offerings of coins and ribbons, new kinds of tradition such as the ritual burning of lecture notes by students at the end of the term or playing a role in wedding ceremonies. Stones that have offerings to divine or otherworldly forces placed on them are a staple of Estonian landscapes. With 400 sacred stones recognised as national monuments, there is on average a sacred stone for every three and a half thousand people and many are both logistically and culturally accessible, retaining a role in the collective memory. In the following, I will present a somewhat paradoxical case study of the best-known example to exemplify the hybrid and inclusive nature of contemporary landscape processes around Estonian sacred natural sites.

In the following, I will first discuss the modern-era literary origins of the notion that Toomemägi hill had been an important sacred site in the period before the Baltic Crusade in the 13th century, moving on to an examination of the known history of the sacrificial stone. A more detailed account will then be made of activities of the Tõlet religious group in their vigorous use of the stone and the surrounding landscape as a sacred site in the 1980s and 1990s, concluding with some remarks on the current role of the stone.



Figure 1. The hill of Toomemägi in the centre of Tartu. The ruins of the cathedral are marked '25' in the centre of the map, the sacrificial stone (marked with a blue square) is located to the northwest of the ruins between footpaths marked in dashed lines. The main building of the University of Tartu is marked '18' in the east. Red squares denote architectural monuments. Background map by the Estonian Land Board.

The name Toomemägi in Estonian means Dome Hill and is derived from the German *Domberg* (historically also *Thumb*, *der Thums Berch*, *Domb Berg*, *Duhmberg*, *Doemberg*; see Hermann 1965: 633; Ernits 2016) after the mediaeval cathedral (*Domkirche*) located on the hill. The cathedral itself, built in the 13th century shortly after the Baltic Crusade, has been in ruins since the 16th century. At the end of the 18th century, the hill was used as a pasture for goats and cows from the city below.¹ However, part of the cathedral was renovated and taken into use as the university library at the beginning of the 19th century after Russian emperor Paul I endowed the university with the area (Kõivupu 2011: 174). At the same time, the hill itself was landscaped and became a picturesque park, and is now a popular recreation area complete with pathways, benches and children's playgrounds. The main university building, the intellectual heart of the city, is a short walk away and students' daily pathways cross the hill. The city of Tartu in turn is considered the intellectual capital of Estonia as the seat of, from 1802, the only, and now the leading, university in the country.

Toomemägi hill, in the centre of Tartu. The ruins of the cathedral are marked '25' in the centre of the map, the sacrificial stone (marked with a blue square) is located to the northwest of the ruins between footpaths marked in dashed lines. The University of Tartu main building is marked '18' to the east. Red squares denote architectural monuments. Background map by the Estonian Land Board.

According to a widely accepted but unproven belief originating in the 19th century, the hill was an Estonian sacred site before the Baltic Crusade and the construction of the cathedral in the 13th century. The stone near the cathedral has been identified as a sacrificial stone despite the absence of archaeological evidence or records of vernacular traditions on the matter. The pre-Christian sanctity of the site was asserted as an indisputable background fact in a text that is foundational to the Estonian nation, the fictional 'legend' *Wannemunne's Sang* ('The Song of Vanemuine') by Dr Friedrich Robert Faehlmann, released in 1840: "Da kam nun Alles zusammen, was Leben un Odem hatte, um unsern Domberg herum, auf dem ein heiliger Hain stand." ('There came all together who had life and breath onto our Dome Hill where a sacred grove stood.') (Faehlmann 1840: 43.) Toomemägi (as Taaramägi near the river Emajõgi) is also one of the few sacred natural sites mentioned in the Estonian national epic *Kalevipoeg*, written by Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald (1862), that can be topographically identified as a reference to a real landscape in our world (Heinapuu 2019: 270).

Tvauri (2001: 74) remarks that Faehlmann was probably inspired by the view, commonly held in the 19th century, that the word Tartu, recorded by the chronicler Henricus de Lettis as *Tarbatu*,² is to be derived from the name Tharapita, or Taara, reported to be the 'great god' of the Estonians by the same chronicler during the Baltic Crusade.³ In the introduction to the first three of his eight fictional legends, Faehlmann explains the name as Taara paik 'site of Taara': "Der Name ist Estnisch, und mag Anfangs Tara paik (erinnert an den alten Deutschen Namen Tarapat) geheißen haben." ('The name is Estonian, and it may originally have been Tara paik (remembered in the old German name Tarapat).') (Faehlmann 1840: 40). However, subsequent onomastic and etymological research considered it more probably that *Tarbatu* is derived from the archaic Estonian word for the European wood bison (*Bison bonasus*), *tarvas*. *Tarwanpe*, the attested name of the fortified settlement in the centre of today's city of Rakvere, whose Lower German name *Wesenbergh* supports this etymology, as *wesent* is bison in Lower German (Ariste 2010; Ernits 2021).

Another probable supporting factor for considering Toomemägi hill is the hypothesis, popular in the national mythology, that Catholic churches in the 13th century were built on earlier Estonian sacred sites, which makes it seem plausible to speculate that the location of any 13th-century Gothic church might be a former sacred grove, although it is nigh impossible to find any proof either supporting or contradicting this claim. This serves as an example of how, due to the scant documentation of early mediaeval Estonian history and the crucial role of historical narratives and symbols in the nation-building process of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the boundaries between the methods and narratives of Estonian academic historiography and historical fiction have often become blurred, not least in the eyes of the wider audience.

A generation after Faehlmann, the pseudohistorical Romantic imagery the hill had attracted was aptly summarised by Dr Theodor Mühlenthal, who sequentially conjures up scenes from the supposed initial discovery of the hill relating to the ancestors of the Estonians, the cult of ancient gods, and the historical conquest of Tartu by Yaroslav the Wise, Grand Duke of Kyiv, in 1030, and forward to the subsequent fall of the Estonian fortress to German crusaders in the early 13th century:

A dark thicket of wood covered the slopes of the valley, as a mighty oak grove grew on the western ridge. ... Thunder roared and out of the clouds fiery bolts of thunder flashed into the oak grove. "Up there on the hill", the spies said, "lives Taar, this is a mound of thunder." ... Taar or Tör was the highest god of this people of hunters. ... Centuries passed. ... On the said Töripää columns of sacrificial smoke shot up, here was the holiest site for worshipping Taar, here in the sacred oak grove the ghostly rustling of the leaves was united with the sounds of Vanemuine's zither and with the words of prayer spoken with the words of the Estonian people's song. ... Yaroslav took his warriors to the indicated place. The Olympus of the Estonians was vanquished. ... Two centuries had passed into the folds of time since Yaroslav and there came pious pilgrims with cross and sword from the west. They, too, reached the same site near the river Emajõgi, vanquished the fortress and, on the stead of worshipping Taar they built a cathedral in honour of Saint Dionysius. (Quoted by Dr Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald in a letter to Dr Georg Schultz-Bertram dated 18 September 1872, published in Kreutzwald 1959: 309–310.)

The assumption that Toomemägi had been an Estonian sacred site before the Baltic Crusade is uncritically repeated in later literature, such as in the poem “Isade hiis” (‘The Sacred Grove of the Fathers’) by the poet Gustav Suits (1950: 17–22), as well as by archaeologists and scholars of toponymy writing about the hill. It is remarkable that the assumption was accepted as true and ‘deriving from folklore’ by the City Archaeologist of Tartu, Romeo Metsallik, when interpreting excavation finds as late as in 1996:

Accepting the position, derived from folklore, that ancient Tartu, Tarbatu, had a wide religious background in the neighbourhood (this was after all the location of the sacred hill [hiiemägi] or place of Taara [Taaraapaik], the sacrificial stone [Ohvrikivi] and the Holy River Emajõgi [Püha Emajõgi], it seems plausible that items produced in a workshop that had been fit into a scheme that has a symbolic meaning in nature might have had affixed magic powers to them by certain rituals. (Metsallik 1996: 1359)

In summary, despite extensive research into how the fictional and literary pre-Christian Estonian pantheon came into being (e.g., Viires 1991), the wider public and even intellectuals not directly related to philology could not be expected to distinguish between Romantic literary invented traditions and texts deriving from recorded oral vernacular folklore. Thus hybrids of these two are probably bound to continue circulating within wider Estonian cultural memory for some time yet.

The archaeologist Andres Tvauri supposes that the notion of the hill’s sanctity can be traced to Faehlmann’s assertion as well as the presence on the hill of a smooth-surfaced stone with two regular-shaped depressions that has been identified as a sacrificial stone (Tvauri 2001: 74–75).

Friedrich Ludwig von Maydell’s illustration to Wannemunne’s Sang by Fr. R. Faehlmann, published as a plate alongside the legend in *Verhandlungen der Gelehrten Esthnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat 1(1)* in 1840, shows birds and animals as well as people gathering in the sacred grove on Toomemägi hill to listen to the song and harp of Vanemuine, the fictional ancient Estonian god of song and music.

A sacrificial stone symbolic of antiquity

Against the backdrop of the wider cultural forces described above, the purported sacrificial stone has become a signifier in the landscape that symbolically embodies and represents all the notions described above, as it is the only visible element in the semiotically overburdened landscape of the hill that can be unambiguously associated with ‘ancient Estonian’ indigenous heritage. In addition to the ruins of the cathedral, which currently house a historical museum as well as a two viewing platforms in the twin spires, and the sacrificial stone, the inhabitants of the hill also include seven monuments to poets, scientists, scholars and intellectual leaders of the Estonian nationalist movement from the 19th and 20th centuries. However, these other monuments are seen to have their origins in the second millennium *post nativitatem Christi*, whereas the sacrificial stone, dated in official sources to the first millennium (e.g. Metsallik 2011) can be seen to hold the symbolic continuity of Estonian culture from the golden age of ancient, pre-Christian independence to this day. This, along with its central location, makes the stone a potent symbol that keeps attracting new meanings and practices.

Despite the prominence of the stone’s current location, its initial location as a sacrificial stone is unknown (Metsallik 2011). According to Tvauri, there are no records or any other data about traditional vernacular sacrificing activity at the stone and the two depressions in the surface, which probably motivated the notion that the stone was sacred, are probably natural in provenance. Tvauri concludes that there is no certain evidence to associate the stone with the pre-Christian settlement of Tartu as the stone’s smooth surface implies that it was unearthed in the 19th century when sand and gravel were being excavated at nearby Kassitoome (Tvauri 2001: 74; Kõivupuu 2011: 174).

The first mentions of the stone from the 1880s state that it was exhibited near the Old Anatomical Theatre about half a kilometre southeast from where it is now, and was dug into the ground either in 1879 or 1880 as a ‘heathen relic’ (Tvauri 2001: 74; Metsallik 2011). This decision was reversed after the 10th Russian Archaeological Congress, in Riga in 1896, and the stone was again exhibited on Toomemägi hill (Metsallik 2011). After several subsequent moves, the stone was placed in its current location in 1926 (Tvauri 2001: 74; Kaasik 2017:

94–95), but this fact remains little known and therefore the majority of people seeing might naturally assume that it had been there since time immemorial.

Thus, the stone has come to play the role of the physically most accessible sacrificial stone to 20th-century Estonian students and professors of archaeology. With its imposing appearance, it is no wonder that it became, despite its exceptional nature, akin to a yardstick against which other sacred stones in Estonia were measured, as Tvauri notes (Tvauri 2001: 74). The stone has attracted and retained, in addition to offerings of coins on the stone and ribbons tied to adjacent trees, there are new traditions such as burning lecture notes, etc., as mentioned above. Marju Kõivupuu notes that during the Soviet era (before 1991), newly married couples went to the stone, where wishes were made, champagne offered and pictures taken; coins and candles could almost always be found on the stone. In independent Estonia, the stone's association with wedding ceremonies has remained alive and the area around the stone has served as an outdoor backdrop for theatre performances by Vanemuine theatre. (Kõivupuu 2011: 174–175.)

The burning of lecture notes (Kõivupuu 2011: 174) has caused some damage to the stone, prompting Malle Salupere, a noted researcher into the cultural history of Tartu, to write an op-ed piece in the city's newspaper *Tartu Postimees* in 2004:

The oldest exhibit on Toomemägi is the ancient Estonians' sacrificial stone, wrought and brought here by the ice sheet at least a dozen millennia ago. Just ten years ago, it seemed that the smooth-surfaced stone with polished depressions could stand for centuries but now it is on its way to irreparable collapse: the whole upper surface has splintered and the decomposition continues. Soon the depressions will no longer be visible. I thought that the adverse weather conditions of the last few years were to blame but some days ago I was enlightened by a knowledgeable resident of Tartu. In fact, students have developed a custom of burning lecture notes on the stone, and sometimes flames reaching the treetops have been seen. (Salupere 2004)

Due to the spread of information technology as well as the better availability of both printed and digital materials to students, the importance of previously central hand-written lecture notes has declined and so, as Marju Kõivupuu notes, the custom of burning lecture notes on the stone has all but vanished (Kõivupuu 2011: 175).

Experimental use in a tumultuous age

In the late 1980s, the area around the sacrificial stone was taken into more active use by the Tõlet religious youth group, who strove towards the formation of an Estonian revivalist native vernacular religion. As part of the wider and immensely popular heritage movement in the late 1980s, which was one of the vehicles for the restoration of the Republic of Estonia's political independence, Tõlet was nominally founded as a 'heritage protection club' in 1987 and became one of the founding local associations of the nationwide Estonian Heritage Society in the same year (on the group in general, see Kaasik 2000; Kuutma 2005: 58–70; Västriik 1996; Dresen 2020).

The membership of Tõlet included university and secondary school students and other young people aged between 17 and 25 who resided in Tartu, although they were from different parts of Estonia, including a significant group from rural backgrounds. The most productive and persistent form of the club's activity is remembered to be communal meals and discussion on Thursday nights, called *pudruõhtu* ('porridge night'). In addition to the formal members of Tõlet, this circle included other people and hangers-on interested in the discussions and in company. (Kaasik 2000; Västriik 1996.) Thus, a loose community with a centre and peripheries and its own distinctive social memory was formed.

The number of formal members in the club never exceeded twenty although the number of those involved in the activities seems to have been larger by an order of magnitude. Ergo-Hart Västriik notes that in 1992, the list of participants in the spring school held by Tõlet in the sacred grove of Samma (Tammealuse), a place fairly distant from larger Estonian population near the village of Viru-Nigula in Virumaa, extended to 130 names. By publishing their own journal, with a circulation of several hundred copies, writing articles in mainstream newspapers, giving public presentations at public events, arranging public events of their own and appearing on TV, the members of Tõlet succeeded in promoting their agenda to a wider audience (Västriik 1996: 88). This agenda always had wider ambitions to steer Estonian culture back towards its perceived roots among the traditional cultures of other Finno-Ugric indigenous peoples in the former Russian Empire, who in turn formed part of the wider sphere of Northern Eurasian (and, by extension, North American) Indigenous peoples.

Ergo-Hart Västriik notes the close association of the group with the so-called folklore movement and calls Tõlet “the extremist wing of the folklore movement” (Västriik 1996: 94, 98). The aim of the folklore movement was to promote, often in urban contexts, knowledge and practical skills pertaining to authentic traditional music and dance by creating possibilities to learn traditional ways of singing and songs, continuing the living traditions of playing traditional instruments known to village musicians with no formal musical education, and promoting traditional ways of dancing, as practiced at vernacular rural celebrations. This movement started in the 1970s in opposition to official Soviet cultural policies that promoted ‘folklore collectives’ or groups convened for stage performance whose repertoires included adaptations of folk songs into the Western musical tradition and staged performances of dance numbers. In contrast to the official ‘folklore’ groups, whose purpose was to perform to audiences, the folklore movement emphasised transplanting the vernacular mechanisms of transmitting this heritage into an urban environment from their former rural settings. This included an emphasis on singing, playing a traditional instrument and dancing as a mainly communal activity with no dedicated ‘performers’ or ‘audience’ and undertaken for one’s own pleasure. The folklore movement was supported by researchers into folk music whose mutual contacts were institutionalised in the eight Finno-Ugric folk music conferences held between 1976 and 1996. The conferences included concerts and common celebrations and provided learning opportunities for enthusiasts of folk music.

Ahto Kaasik, a former member of the group, notes in his reminiscences that the sacrificial stone on Toomemägi hill “received offerings already before Tõlet” but claims that the activities intensified on the initiative of the group:

Flowers from wedding parties, candles from heartbroken young people, coins, as usual, from the common people. ... But now Tõlet took possession of the site, going there to give offerings on Thursday nights, making fires on solstices and accumulating strength on other (festive) days. The example found followers. More and more other folk started visiting the sacrificial stone for the same reasons. (Kaasik 2000.)

Probably the most influential single event in this process was a public ceremony held at the stone on the eve of the Tartu Heritage Protection Days on 13 April 1988. The festival, held in Tartu from 14 to 17 April 1988, was formally the fifth

nationwide assembly of heritage protection clubs and is now remembered as the first mass political event on the path to the reestablishment of the independent Republic of Estonia as it brought together several thousand people who openly displayed support for Estonian independence (see Lukas 2013).

The ceremony, as with similar ones there and in other locations, was called a 'public incantation' (*avalik loits*), referring to a traditional genre of word magic that indeed played a central role in the ceremonies. Jonathan Roper defines incantations or verbal charms, commonly known as "spells" as "traditional verbal forms intended by their effect on supernature to bring about change in the world in which we live" (Roper 2003: 8). Incantations were traditionally used to persuade or deter certain creatures or phenomena, to alleviate tensions, cure diseases or harm something or someone, to increase one's own power and reduce that of ill-wishers, or to convey messages to the universe and higher powers, nature and people (Kõiva 2019: 9). The perhaps unknowing innovation here in contrast to the Estonian vernacular tradition was that the incantations in the ceremony were collective and performed in public, whereas in Estonian folk religion, incantations are to be said in a private and concealed way so as to maximise the efficacy of the magic (Loorits 1935). According to a description by Paul Ariste, "incantations were uttered in a silent and rapid manner" (Kõiva 2019: 24).

According to the account by Tõlet members Lauris Toomet and Art Leete (1992) summarised below, the ceremony was performed by members of Tõlet, of the alternative student theatre group Munev Aine, as well as by secondary school students in Tartu. To lead and introduce the proceedings, Tõlet had co-opted the actor Jaan Kiho, founder and leader of the Munev Aine theatre group.⁴

The ceremony was preceded by the collective singing of archaic folk songs (an activity that can also have nearly religious connotations, especially in the case of mythological songs) about hundred meters away from the sacrificial stone near the monument to the poet Kristjan Jaak Peterson. As the singing stopped, Jaan Kiho started drumming with a shaman drum next to the sacrificial stone, attracting the crowd. During the drumming, in a wider circle around the sacrificial stone, torches were lit by performers in the ceremony, who then moved through the crowd towards the stone and, by putting their torches on the ground, lit a bonfire next to the stone that had been prepared for the occasion. The other performers remained standing in a small circle around the leader and two girls with torches remained standing between the crowd and the circle,

one of them holding a vessel with grain. Jaan Kiho started the incantations by more rapid drumming and then sang a traditional archaic folk song that has also been used as an incantation for making clouds part (*Mis on see ilmuke udune*; variants of the song have also been arranged as choral pieces) before continuing drumming to accompany the rhythm of the three incantations performed by two members of Tõlet. (Toomet, Leete 1992.)

The first of the three incantations pleaded with the ancient Estonian gods to return to the land and in particular to Tartu, using the 13th-century name Tarbatu for Tartu and the equally archaic Oandi ~ Ugandi for the lands around it:

Meie enda oma maa jumalad / Maa jumalad kust te olete ära läinud ...
Tulge siia Toome hiide / Tarbatusse Oandi maale ... Ugandimaale uut elu
tooge / Väge rahval te viimasel külvake / Hiis see seisab veel tammine ...
(*Gods of our own land / Gods of the land whence you have gone away ...
Come here to the Toome grove / to Tarbatu in the land of Oandi ... Bring
new life to the land of Ugandi / Sow power to the last people / The oaken
grove still stands ...*) (Toomet, Leete 1992.)

The second incantation turned to the land, the skies⁵ and the gods in more detail:

Mida sa maa oled maganud / Mida sa ilm oled oodanud / Omad jumalad
maa jätnud ... Päeva jumalad maa ootab päikest / Vihma jumalad maa
ootab juua / Põllu jumalad põld ootab pidajat / Maa jumalad / metsa
jumalad / Oandi ootab oma isandaid / Jõe jumalad / järve jumalad.
(*Earth why have you been sleeping / Sky what have you been expecting /
Earth you have left your gods ... Gods of the sun the earth expects sun /
Gods of the rain the earth longs to drink / Gods of the field the field longs
for a farmer / Gods of the earth / gods of the forest / Oandi longs for its
masters / Gods of the river / gods of the lake*) (Toomet, Leete 1992.)

At the beginning of the latter part of the second incantation, grain was offered by participants throwing it into the fire, marked by the words “Maa vilja anname” (‘We give the fruit of the earth’), and the incantation pleaded with the gods to give “luck” and “power” (*õnn, vägi, jõud*; all central concepts in vernacular religion) as well as independence to the land, forest, field and people. The third incantation sought to increase the knowledge, power and numbers of the people, probably in reference to the political processes underway: “Tundjaks me saagu,

saagu teadijaksi ... Tugevaks me saagu, saagu vabaksi ... Saagu meid kolmi, saagu kolmi nägijaksi / Saagu meid kolmisadaksi, kolmisada nägijaksi / Saagu meid kolmituhandeksi, kolmituhat nägijaksi / Nägijaksi, jõudijaksi ...” (‘Let us become knowers ... Let us become strong and free ... Let there be three of us, three who will see / Let there be three hundred of us, three hundred who will see / Let there be three thousand of us, three thousand who will see / Will see, will have the strength ...’) The incantation was finished with an acceleration in the drumming and concluded with a single strong stroke by Jaan Kiho, who then sang a traditional adjourning song (Toomet, Leete 1992).

The ceremony was notable as it was relevant on all the three levels of collective memory discussed here. At its core was the social memory of a small group of activists experimenting and trying to find or rediscover an authentic and archaic vernacular religion for themselves (cf. Västriik 2015; subsequently, similar but less prominent ceremonies were held near the stone on the solstices and the site was used in some of the wedding ceremonies of couples from the Tõlet circle). However, the ceremony also had important dimensions in the common cultural memory and was part of an effort to mobilise Estonians as a political entity that has become a part of the national political memory.

On the wider level of collective cultural memory, the ceremony drew on well-established myths of the sanctity of the place where it was performed as well as an image of archaic pre-Christian Estonian culture. Traditional incantations, known from printed collections of folklore and especially from the Finnish national epic *Kalevala* (Lönnrot 1849; the epic was called virtually a sacred text at least by the prominent Tõlet member Lauris Toomet at the time), have played a symbolic role in both Estonian and Finnish collective cultural memory both before and after the ceremony described. Archaic incantations tend to follow the same metre as archaic runo song (*regivärss*, Kalevala-metric songs; Kõiva 2019: 19; Siikala 1999: 64) and thus the incantation genre has influenced later literary poetry and music. A prominent example is the choral work *Curse upon Iron* for tenor, bass, mixed choir and shaman drum⁶ by the Estonian composer Veljo Tormis (1973), based on the text of an incantation for healing wounds from sharp iron tools included in the *Kalevala* (Lönnrot 1849: 51–56), translated into Estonian by August Annist and further modified by the poets Jaan Kaplinski and Paul-Eerik Rummo, which can be considered the best-known work by Tormis, performed often both in Estonia and elsewhere in the world.

Stylistically, the texts of the incantations demonstrate a hybridisation of traditional incantations, the style of 19th-century Estonian patriotic poetry that, in an Ossianic vein, sprang from imitating traditional folk song style but ended up establishing a new poetic language with its own canon of metre, style and vocabulary, most notably in the epic *Kalevipoeg* (Kreutzwald 1862). Another work of art that can be counted among the probable influences on Tõlet incantations is “Taevatelgede laul” (‘Song of the Sky Loom’), performed by Tõnu Tepandi, an actor at Vanemuine theatre between 1970 and 1983. The text of the song is a Native American invocation or prayer starting with the words “Maa – meie ema, / ilm – meie isa, / meie oleme teie lapsed” (‘Earth, our mother, / sky our father, / we are your children’), translated by the Estonian poet Jaan Kaplinski presumably from an English translation (credited only as ‘Indian folklore’) into slightly archaised Estonian free verse. The song, half chanted and half sung in an idiosyncratic way was performed at numerous concerts by Tõnu Tepandi among other renderings of Estonian poetry and reached a still wider audience after being published on an LP record (Tepandi 1982). The significant step taken by Tõlet was to blend these strands of cultural phenomena together into an explicitly religious ritual that was performed at a location considered to be an ancient sacred site.

Finally, the ceremony was doubtless a ritual of political significance with the aim of uniting heritage protection movement activists, numbering several thousand, who had come together in support of Estonian cultural identity and political independence during a period of rapid change in society. With regard to the political memory of the nation, the ceremony was a ritual exhibiting symbols of continuity drawing on the mythos of the golden age of the Estonian nation before the Baltic Crusade. As with the whole heritage protection movement, history had the role of legitimising national aspirations for the future. The public ceremony was part of a very important political event in the brooding national awakening, as Tartu Heritage Days are in hindsight seen as a formative moment in the process of regaining Estonian political independence.

Wooden statues of gods on Toomemägi hill (1989–1992)



Figure 2. The sacrificial stone on Toomemägi. The stone plate next to the stone, designed and installed by the engineer Johannes Maadla in 1960, says in Estonian and Russian: “The archaeological monument sacrificial stone is under state protection.” Photo: Raul Veede, CC BY-SA 3.0 he vicinity of the sacrificial stone on Toomemägi hill. Photo: Raul Veede, CC BY-SA 3.0

From the autumn of 1989, members of Tõlet erected altogether three statues of gods (commonly referred to as *puuslikud*, ‘wooden images of gods’) next to the sacrificial stone on Toomemägi hill. This was a part of a more comprehensive vision to make the area around the sacrificial stone into a sacred site and a space for conducting ceremonies. The statues stood on the hill until April 1992 when they were taken down and destroyed against the backdrop of a conflict between Tõlet and the Word of Life evangelical Christian congregation.

In the era of transition from the authoritarian and highly regulated regime of the Soviet Union to a more liberal legal system under the restored Republic of Estonia, all law and regulation was in flux to the point of occasional anarchy,

so that such an initiative within the public space of the city seems to have fallen into a regulatory grey area of spatial planning. The first statue was erected in October 1989. The largest of a three, a statue of a fertility deity (*sigivushaldjas*) took the strength of ten men to erect in March 1990, with the third erected in the autumn of 1991. The statues were carved from the trunks of fallen trees. (Leete 1992; Kaasik 2000; Västriik 1996: 92.) The statues were displaced and restored to their locations several times in March and April 1992 and were finally destroyed and disappeared. According to most accounts, students from outside Estonia who were studying at the local Word of Life movement Bible Seminary were implicated in the demise of the statues (Västriik 1996: 92; Ringvee 2012: 279; Leete 1992).

The Word of Life charismatic Christian movement had been persecuted by the Soviet authorities, including the KGB (as were virtually all smaller denominations due to the perceived risk that such subversive groups were dangerous to the existing system of power) and was denied official registration before 1990. Despite this, it had a notable underground following among students in Tartu with meetings conducted in private apartments. In 1990, the Tartu congregation of the Word of Life movement founded their own Bible Seminary, the first of its kind in the Soviet Union. The seminary attracted students from Russia (Khabarovsk, Abakan, Yakutsk), Ukraine (Lviv, Kyiv) and Armenia (Yerevan). (Eier 2000.)

Despite their differences, Tõlet and Word of Life shared some similarities, starting with partly overlapping aims, as both groups were in favour of Estonian political independence and facilitating the downfall of the authoritarian Communist Party regime. Roughly similar in size and strength and drawing their followers mainly from the among students, both were also somewhat visible in the public space in Tartu. Somehow a public ideological confrontation between the two groups came about and there was a 'public meeting' between Tõlet and the Word of Life congregation on 5 March 1992 that apparently failed to bring about any reconciliation (Leete 1992).

However, Art Leete has refused to put the full blame for the demise of the statues of gods on 'external culprits', citing the indifference of the Tõlet community toward the statues:

Now would perhaps be an appropriate time to stop seeking culprits from without and to consider our own actions. Was it necessary to start taunting

the people of the Word of Life? ... How often did we go to feed the statues on Toomemägi? How much did we care about them? Who knows. In any case, our own mistakes should count as a cause for the disappearance of the statues. (Leete 1992: 22.)

Ringo Ringvee cites the destruction of the statues as the most extreme occurrence of overt confrontation between Christians and representatives of ‘other spiritual practices’ from the transition era of the 1990s, noting that there had been only one other comparable case, one of vandalism and arson against the properties of a Baptist congregation in the small city of Rakvere by young people interested in Satanism in 1999 (Ringvee 2012: 279–280).

Thus, the initiative of erecting wooden statues of gods turned out to be a controversial religious innovation that failed to make a lasting mark on the landscape of the hill.⁸ In the following, I will discuss the probable cultural sources of the innovation. I consider it likely that there were three main sources of the idea to erect wooden statues of gods known in the collective social memory of the Tõlet circle: first, a report in the 13th-century *Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae* about the destruction of Estonian ‘images and likenesses of gods’, second, the traditions surrounding the Seto god Peko known from the 20th century (see Ränk 1934; Valk 2019), and third, the living tradition of making statues of deities in the Khanty tradition of Western Siberia, known to some members of Tõlet from first-hand experience.

Though brief, the description by the chronicler Henricus de Lettis of the felling of wooden statues of Estonian gods somewhere in the north of Estonia in 1220 is the first written account of an Estonian sacred natural site as well as one of the most thorough depictions of Estonian vernacular religious practices in the 13th century. It amounts to a few sentences:

There was there a mountain and a most lovely forest in which, the natives say, the great god of the Oeselians, called Tharapita, was born and from which he flew to Oesel. The other priest went and cut down the images and likenesses which had been made there of their gods. The natives wondered greatly that blood did not flow and they believed more in the priest's sermons. (Henricus 2003: 193–194.)⁹

The interpretation of this passage has led to much speculation since the 19th century but due to the absence of any other written or material evidence pertaining to the events directly most of it remains hypothetical. However, the passage has established itself as one of the staples of Estonian collective cultural memory and is now conventionally linked – albeit with scant evidence – to Ebavere hill in Virumaa (see Heinapuu 2019: 267–268).

A depiction of missionaries cutting down Estonian images of gods by Friedrich Ludwig von Maydell (1842).

Tõlet members' intense interest in the Siberian Khanty and other Finno-Ugric (as well as other Northern Eurasian and North American) vernacular traditions was ideologically motivated by the notion that an important part of Estonian ethnic religious tradition had been lost in the centuries after the Baltic Crusade. This narrative has been present in Estonian culture since the Romantic national awakening that produced the discourse of yearning for an ancient golden age (see Type II above). This type of nostalgia has subsequently been hybridised with informed ethnographic nostalgia (see Type I above), which came to extend its interest beyond the boundaries of strictly Estonian tradition. Such developments follow and parallel the post-Jacob Grimm interest of German scholars in delving into mediaeval Icelandic written tradition to construct a more holistic picture of pre-Christian German religion and share the same scholarly comparative-historical approach.

Ants Viires (1991: 142) notes that Estonian public discourse in finding appropriate cultural symbols to unite the Estonian nation under Soviet power and in the conditions of 'intensifying Russification' turned toward 'ancient times' and toward the cultures of other indigenous peoples of the Eurasian forest belt and the arctic peoples of Northern Eurasia in the 1970s and 1980s (see also Kuutma 2005). One further motivation for this was the notion that peoples speaking other Uralic (Finno-Ugric and Samoyed) languages share a history with Estonians as 'kindred peoples' (*hõimurahvad*). Finno-Ugric cooperation started as trilateral between the three newly independent nations of Hungary, Finland and Estonia in the 1920s against the backdrop of a modern European cultural framework and institutions, including trilateral cultural congresses.¹⁰ Paradoxically, the forced annexation of Estonia into the Soviet Union in 1940 facilitated, in the following decades, research in Estonia into the Uralic languages spoken by peoples living in the territory of the current Russian Federation. As travel within the Soviet Union was unhindered and inexpensive, this made

ethnographic and folkloristic research into the cultures of these peoples easier and further advanced interest in the more archaic features of these cultures, partly as an extension of efforts to gain a better insight into the undocumented eras of Estonian prehistory.¹¹

This initially mainly academic interest became the basis of more personal contacts and some convergence among academics, writers and artists from Estonia and the Finno-Ugric peoples of the current Russian Federation. Ethnographic and linguistic fieldwork as well as scholarly cooperation starting in the 1960s (the congresses of researchers in Finno-Ugric studies remain the pinnacle of this cooperation) was later, from the 1990s, supplemented by Finno-Ugric folklore and theatre festivals, as well as some cultural and NGO cooperation verging on ideas of mutual Finno-Ugric political solidarity, including the world congresses of Finno-Ugric peoples and the Youth Association of Finno-Ugric Peoples (MAFUN).

In the case of Tölet, some members' personal contacts with the Khanty culture in Western Siberia came to play a significant role in the religious development of the group. Other Finno-Ugric cultures were seen to provide crucial knowledge, experience and information that could be used to fill gaps in Estonian tradition. In addition to material images of local gods, points of interest included a native tradition of shamans or priests who are communally recognised authorities in vernacular religion and pass on their specialist skills and knowledge to following generations of similar specialists; communal vernacular religious practices (as opposed to personal and secret magic practices); non-Christian traditional funeral rites and, more generally, the search for a holistic system of vernacular ethnic religion, which was felt to be lacking. As Ergo-Hart Västriik notes, members of the Tölet circle "tried to synthesise the Ugric spirit from the experience" of other Finno-Ugric traditions. The idea was that the more and less distant kindred nations in Russia (for example the Mari, Mordvinians, Udmurts, Komi, Mansi and Khanty) had retained something (i.e. a certain world outlook or spirit) that Estonians had lost. (Västriik 1996: 95.) However, the Khanty language is linguistically quite distant from Estonian: the closest language to the Ob-Ugric Khanty and Mansi language is Hungarian. Likewise, the Khanty traditional way of life is similar to other Siberian peoples and is based on hunting, fishing and reindeer herding in contrast to mainly agrarian Estonian traditional culture.¹²

In the Khanty tradition, the best-known deities (lun̄k or jun̄k) are “spirit-protectors of single kin and settlements, and protectors of the Khanty living along a certain river.” (Kulemzin 2006: 107) Of these local spirits, images have been always made: “simple wooden columns with rough anthropo- or zoomorphic features” (Kulemzin 2006: 108). These Khanty wooden figures of gods are shaped like horizontal poles that can be higher than a metre and a half (Karjalainen 1918: 175). The rough manufacture of these images is due to the traditional prohibition on making them similar to people or animals. The sites where these statues stood has played an important social role, as the gods required periodic and occasional visits, connecting the Khanty settled in isolated kin groups (Kulemzin 2006: 108).

Although the statues of gods on Toomemägi hill failed to remain standing, similar statues of supposed ancient deities have been erected more recently in less prominent places in Estonia. Mare Kõiva and her co-authors cite influences from the Erzya woodcutting tradition from the 2000s, another fruit of Finno-Ugric cooperation, as a contributing factor (Kõiva et al. 2020).

A Khanty wooden figure of a deity from a sacred site near Salekhard (Karjalainen 1918: 175).

Conclusion

Various cultural forces have conspired for more than a century and a half to make the sacrificial stone on Toomemägi hill one of the most prominent sacred natural sites in Estonia, weaving together strands of perceived mediaeval history, Ossianic myth, vernacular religion and student customs. The stone on the hill has become a focus for living and viable wedding customs as well as a sight for people interested in pre-Christian Estonian heritage, coming to embody valuable elements of cultural memory.

Following earlier designation as a monument and respective measures of official protection, the sacrificial stone on Toomemägi hill, as it is known, has been designated an archaeological monument under the Estonian Heritage Protection Act (Allik 1997) and, more recently, also a protected sacred natural site (Terik 2022). I agree with Marju Kõivupuu’s opinion that the stone actually functions as a sacrificial stone (Kõivupuu 2011: 174) and consider such protection as well founded, but rather due to the stone’s contemporary significance

from the 19th century onwards than its earlier history, which remains unverifiable and speculative.

The rich pseudohistorical speculation and newer Romantic-inspired mythology around the stone and the practices centred on the stone that are reinforced by this cultural heritage make it in fact one of the most prominent sacred natural sites in Estonia today, definitely meriting designation as a national monument. It is an issue of heritage policy to consider whether the current designation as an archaeological monument is appropriate or should such phenomena be accorded some other official form of protection, perhaps even under a more flexible general scheme of classifying monuments.

Perceived ancient heritage played a central role at the inception of modern Estonian national identity and cultural memory in the 19th century, as a glorious past seemed a *conditio sine qua non* for the existence of a nation. Toomemägi then became a focus of the notions of an ancient golden age. These notions were drawn on in the flamboyant rituals – not without political connotations – on the hill in the late 1980s. Since then, Estonian national identity has become less political and confrontational. This development is aptly mirrored by the fact that the sacrificial stone on Toomemägi hill became a backdrop of family-friendly summer theatre productions such as *Robin Hood*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or *Ronja, the Robber's Daughter* in the late 1990s.

The Estonian language is perceived to be at the core of Estonian national heritage (Kultuuri-päranditeadlikkus 2023, Heinapuu 2023). Thus, the national awakening and a yearning for strong national symbols with political connotations in the late 1980s, as exemplified by the Tartu Heritage Protection Days of 1988, can be construed as a backlash against official measures taken to limit the use of Estonian and promote the use of Russian by the authorities of the Soviet Union in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s. During this period, signs of cultural heritage were perceived and emphasised as proof of Estonians' existence as a distinct cultural group, and, by extension, as proof of a right to exist and persist by speaking and thinking in Estonian.

The reestablishment of Estonian government institutions after the collapse of the Soviet Union made it possible to restore the status of the Estonian language as the most usual language in services provided by both the government and private institutions. An Estonian citizenship has allowed a civic Estonian identity to develop next to the ethnic one. The re-established Office of the President of Estonia as well as Estonian Defence Forces and other state

institutions can am-ply provide ready-made ritual for cementing a common political memory. Additionally, it could be argued that the presence of Estonian government representatives alongside those of former colonial powers in international bodies like the institutions of the European Union have created a new symbolic repertoire of political memory. Thus, the photographic record or a television news report of an official visit of a Western European head of state or government into Estonia may – by asserting the status of Estonia as a valid political and cultural entity – today serve a similar purpose as a torchlit ritual next to a sacrificial stone in 1988. I consider these developments as an important background factor that has shaped the current role of the sacrificial stone mainly as a locus of rituals that are limited to smaller groups, such as participants in wedding parties while it retains its strong symbolic value in mainly non-performative cultural memory.

Notes

¹ In Estonian vernacular religion, sacred natural sites are usually considered off limits for this kind of activity. However, the ability of the community to enforce such traditional rules was often hampered by the German-speaking authorities who could not be expected to share such sensibilities.

² *Castrum Tharbatense, in provinciam Tharbitensem, in Darbeten, apud Tarbeten, in Tharbete, in Tharbata, prope Tarbatam, eis Tarbatenses, in Tarbeta, in Tarbetam* (HCL XV 7, p. 126; XV 7, p. 128; XIX 3, p. 160; XXIV 1, p. 210; XXV 2, p. 222; XXVI 7, p. 234; XXVII 3, XXVII 5, p. 242).

³ *Tharapita, Tarapitha, ut Tharaphitam, Tharapitha, Tharaphita* (HCL XXIV 5, p. 216; XXX 4, p. 268; XXX 5, pp. 270, 272; XXX 6, p. 272). For general treatments of Tharapita, see Sutrop 2004 and Viires 1990.

⁴ While this can be seen to shift the whole event well onto the theatre side of the fluid boundary between theatre and ritual, it is important to note that aspects of theoretical and practical shamanism were not completely alien to the theatre scene in Tartu and actors there could even be expected to be most experienced people in archaic ritual techniques at the time. By the late 1980s, an influential movement within Estonian theatre centred in Tartu had long been experimenting with ritual elements from the shamanistic cultures of Northern Eurasia (including the use of shaman drums) along with more local Estonian folklore. This included melding texts and practices of these traditions together in theatre productions to develop a language of theatre that would offer a more indigenous alternative to the prevailing Western European theatre tradition, a way of

both going ‘back to the roots’ and simultaneously cultivating a new creative tradition for the future. The leader of this strand of theatre has been the director Jaan Tooming who also led the in-house acting school, or ‘studio’ within the large institutional theatre Vanemuine in Tartu from 1972 to 1976 and again from 1985 to 1989. The instruction of future actors included a lecture course from 1973 to 1974 by the polymath folklorist Uku Masing, a dissident with a notable following in Tartu, on the mythology, folklore and shamanism of the boreal, or circumpolar, indigenous peoples of Northern Eurasia and North America. On the basis of notes by participants and Masing’s manuscript, the text of the lectures was subsequently distributed in the intellectual *samizdat* scene of Estonia and finally published in print in the more liberal *glasnost* era (Masing 1989). Masing’s thesis that the vernacular Estonian culture and religion belonged to the circumpolar indigenous circle had been accepted a core tenet by Tõlet.

⁵ Following archaic usage, the word *maa* here is ambiguous, as it can polysemically mean either land, country, earth, the lower half of the cosmos, or the country of Estonia in particular, or all of the above. The word *ilm* in the next verse likewise polysemically means weather, sky and the heavens above, or the upper half of the cosmos. As a compound, *maailm* means the world, or the whole cosmos. In archaic Finno-Ugric myth, the sky (*ilm*) is associated with the deity Father of the Sky and the earth with Mother Earth (Siikala 2002: 24–25; Loooris 1998: 67). However, myths clearly explicating this complex have not been recorded in the Estonian folklore archives, excepting the possible obscure hint at *hieros gamos* reflected in the belief that the land is dangerous to sit on before thunder has struck the first time in spring.

⁶ The drum that inspired Tormis to write the piece and the one he used during the first performance of the work was a Koryak shaman drum brought back from an expedition to the Kamchatka Peninsula by the writer, documentary film director and later Estonian president Lennart Meri in 1960 (Lõhmus 2020; Kaljuvee 2007). Although elements of shamanism can be found in Estonian traditional religion, there is no known vernacular tradition of drumming in the vein of Siberian shamanism and neither are there any reliable historical records about such a practice in Estonia. This is in contrast, for example, to the Saami tradition where there is no living vernacular tradition of drumming but ample historical records and oral traditions relating to the practice.

⁷ ‘Feeding statues’ refers to the custom, also known in the Seto and Khanty tradition and apparently revived by Tõlet, of giving offerings to supernatural beings by leaving food beside their physical images or statues. This may include spreading fat on the mouth or lips of the statue of a god.

⁸ For a more comprehensive account of recent wooden deity statues in Estonia, see Kõiva et al. 2020.

⁹ In the original Latin: “*Ubi erat mons et silva pulcherrima, in qua dicebant indigene magnum deum Osiliensium natum, qui Tharapita vocatur, et de illo loco in Osiliam volasse. Et ibat alter sacerdos succidens imagines et similitudines deorum ibi factas, et mirabantur illi, quod sanguis non efflueret, et magis sacerdotum sermonibus credebant.*” (HCL XXIV 5: 216.)

¹⁰ Most of Europeans, including the former colonial powers of all the three independent Finno-Ugric nations of Hungary, Finland and Estonia, speak languages belonging to the Indo-European family of languages. In the historical linguistic sense, the Uralic language family is not related to the Indo-European languages. Uralic languages share several prominent typological traits with Turkic languages that gave the rise of the hypothesis, not currently supported by the current consensus of linguists, that both Uralic and Turkic languages are branches of a proposed larger Ural-Altai or Turanic language family.

¹¹ Calling the language family ‘Uralic’ was partly motivated by seeing the original, pre-dispersal home of the Uralic languages and peoples somewhere in the east, perhaps close to the Ural mountains. This has been a contributing factor for the notion of seeing the Siberian and Arctic peoples as an image of a prelapsarian Arcadia from which the Uralic-speaking peoples to the west have diverged.

¹² For a general overview of Khanty traditional religion, see Glavatskaya 2021 and Kulemzin et al. 2006.

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Plants and migration

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Abstract: The article focuses on the ethnobotany, analysing the migration of plants that accompany Bulgarians to new destinations. The functions and meanings of these plants are outlined. Plants 'in migration' in this way are considered in the light of the relationship between culture and place. Some plants perceived as traditionally Bulgarian are rediscovered and transferred to the receiving country and are present in the stories, cultural practices, and everyday lives of migrants. These plants can be examined through the lens of sensory anthropology, as bearers of knowledge and emotion through perception in the form of vision, smell, touch, taste. Plants can be seen as a synecdoche of the homeland. According to the interviews, Bulgarians abroad perceive some plants as emblematic of Bulgaria. Plants transported abroad are recognised by migrants as Bulgarian cultural heritage, through which cultural values and symbols are maintained. Bulgarians take abroad plants that give them aesthetic pleasure and remind them of Bulgaria, of home, of family, of childhood. An emotional connection with the homeland is also provided by the plants, the cultivation of which in the new place is an experiment with no guarantee of success. 'Bulgarian' plants taken and grown abroad (flowers, fruits, vegetables, spices, herbs) offer a wealth of sensory perception and have an aroma and/or taste often defined by respondents as the "aroma and taste of Bulgaria". Plants in migration develop versatile functionality, facilitate adaptation, and concentrate narratives.

Keywords: ethnobotany, cultural heritage, migration, place, plant, sensory anthropology.

Large-scale migration is one of the clearest manifestations of globalisation, along with the movements of capital, goods, symbols and services. The powerful migration processes of recent decades have been the subject of multiple studies with different emphases: political, sociocultural, demographic, economic (see e.g. Bansak, Simpson and Zavodny 2015; Brettel and Hollifield 2000; Castles et al. 2014; Elliot and Urry 2010; Smith and Favell 2006; Zimmermann 2005). The ‘migration’ of plants also is the object of a number of studies (see e.g. Bhamra et al. 2017; Kujawska *et al.* 2017; Bhamra *et al.* 2014; Ceuterick *et al.* 2008; Pieroni and Vandebroek 2007; Pieroni and Quave 2005). Plant migration is the subject of research by botanists, climatologists, hydrologists and ecologists and takes in factors such as climatic changes and human activity. The present research combines the approaches of ethnobotany and cultural anthropology. The emphasis is on a specific type of cross-border movement, i.e. the ‘migration’ of plants as a result of human migration. The purpose of the research is to outline the functional and emotional relationships of Bulgarian emigrants who travel abroad with plant species. The methods of observation and semi-structured interview are applied. In the cases considered, the functions and meanings of these plants are analysed. Plants ‘in migration’ are considered in the light of the relationship between culture and place. Some plants, perceived as traditionally Bulgarian, are rediscovered and transferred to the receiving country and are present in the stories, cultural practices, and everyday lives of the migrants. This study also looks at plants that migrants take with them from the receiving country back to their homeland.

Plants have social lives (Petrov *et al.* 2021b: 5) and are a presence in migrants’ lives. They support and shape social relations, symbols and practices (Petrov et al. 2018: 317). In turn, migrants affect the biological lives of plants, growing them in a new, different environment. Biodiversity is maintained through various measures, among which are rules for the transfer of plants across borders. Plants for personal use can be transported within the European Union provided they are “free from pests and diseases”¹. In order to prevent plant invasion and disturbances of the biological balance the importation of plants to a number of countries outside Europe is prohibited or restricted. For these reasons, the transcontinental transfer of plant specimens by Bulgarian migrants is a more complicated process.

As for bilateral plant–migrant relations, they are revealed in the garden as “a space formed in co-authorship between the gardener and the plants” (Petrov

et al. 2021b: 5). Canadian anthropologist Natasha Myers, in her research, pays special attention to the ability of plants to involve other creatures in their care and their propagation (Myers 2017, 2019). Plants can be seen as symbolic capital. On the one hand, the migrant takes care of the plants, on the other hand, the plants provide the migrant with a sight, smell and taste of his or her homeland.

Plants can be seen as a synecdoche of the homeland. Bulgarians abroad perceive some plants as emblematic of Bulgaria. Migrants satisfy their homesickness in various ways, one of which is cultivation or use of fresh or dried “native” plants. The function of plants in this case is not so much utilitarian as sentimental. Plants transported abroad are recognised by migrants as Bulgarian cultural heritage, through which cultural values and symbols are maintained. Plants as cultural heritage are an important element of knowledge of and ideas about the homeland; they are part of its co-experience (See Bokova 2021: 385). The plants taken abroad by Bulgarian migrants can be examined through the lens of sensory anthropology (See e.g. Pinc 2010; Dassié, Gélard et al. 2020) as bearers of knowledge and emotion through perception, i.e. vision, smell, touch.

The research was carried out within the framework of the Ethnicity, Religiosity and National Identity in Bulgaria and Lithuania (Traditional Elements and New Transformations) project². For the purposes of the study, 38 interviews were conducted with Bulgarians living in Europe (Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, Iceland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Cyprus, Georgia, Hungary, Romania), North America (the USA, Canada), Africa (Morocco), the Middle East (Bahrain), and Oceania (New Zealand). The interlocutors are friends and acquaintances of the author living outside Bulgaria. They were asked whether they felt the need to take, or had taken, plants (fresh or dried) from Bulgaria to the respective receiving country. Interlocutors knew that the author would not cite their names in the research. The interviews were conducted face-to-face or via social media (e-mail, Facebook, Messenger) in May, July and September 2022. The interviews³ were conducted with 31 women and seven men between the ages of 30 and 70 who have lived for more than five years in their respective new countries. All interlocutors are first-generation emigrants. Most respondents have higher education and work in different fields. Some of the interlocutors are migrants, others are abroad on business, and a few have already returned to Bulgaria permanently. I also consulted ethnobotanists for the purpose of the research.

The plants mentioned by the respondents are well known in Bulgaria and are identified by their popular names. Fifty-four species of plants (fresh or dried) transported abroad were given, of which 15 were flowers, 13 spices, 11 herbs, 8 vegetables, 3 fruits and 3 trees and/or shrubs. The flowers, (seeds of) vegetables, fruits and herbs, saplings and shrubs were intended to be grown in the receiving country. The rest, i.e. the spices, herbs, vegetables and dried fruit, were intended for consumption.

The interviews outlined the following picture: plants taken abroad by Bulgarian emigrants have several functions.

Aesthetic function

A number of the flowers and bushes that accompany Bulgarians in migration have an aesthetic function⁴. Such plants are bigroot geranium, horsehoe geranium, snowdrop, rose geranium, lily of the valley, rose, begonia, petunia, fritillary, violet, tulip, lilac, *Tagetes patula*, etc. The flowers decorate the yards and homes of the respondents in the receiving country and have an aroma and beauty associated with Bulgaria, creating emotional connections with the birthplace (see Petrov et al. 2018: 328). The informants rarely mention flowers such as the lily of the valley, petunia, fritillary, begonia. More popular among the Bulgarians abroad are bigroot geranium, horsehoe geranium, rose geranium.

Bigroot, or Bulgarian, geranium (*Geranium macrorrhizum*)⁵ is a particularly popular flower among Bulgarian migrants with seventeen respondents indicating that they grow bigroot geranium in their new country. Aromatic plant as a symbol of health, well-being and longevity in Bulgarian traditional culture was used in a number of ritual practices from the family and calendar rite cycle, such as weddings, births, caroling, New Year, Saint George's day, etc. (Stoynev 1994: 145; Marinov 1994: 105–106). Today, the ritual use of bigroot geranium has been reduced, although its symbolic value has been preserved and Bulgarian migrants revere the plant, associating it with the homeland. Here are a few examples:

A respondent in Hungary says: "Here the local Bulgarians consider bigroot geranium a Bulgarian plant".

An interlocutor in Paris (France) says that after each trip to Bulgaria, she returns with a bunch of bigroot geranium.

A female respondent in Chicago (USA) tells of buying a new home in another neighborhood, where she was surprised to find bigroot geranium planted in the garden. This Bulgarian geranium, grown by previous American owners of the house, pleased the new owner and reminded her of her homeland.

The distribution of the cold-resistant and evergreen bigroot geranium in the temperate zone (in a number of receiving countries respectively) does not debunk its perception by migrants as a Bulgarian flower. Bigroot geranium, grown in the homes of Bulgarian migrants, regardless of whether it was brought from Bulgaria or originated in the host country, carries an emotional connection with the birthplace and native culture through its aroma and appearance.

Another flower, often taken abroad by Bulgarians, is horsehoe geranium (or zonal pelargonium *Pelargonium Zonale*, L'Hér ex Aiton)⁶. Five of the respondents indicated that they took it to the host country and grew it there. Zonal pelargonium is among the flowers present in the garden and on the maiden's posy in traditional Bulgarian culture, although it originates from South Africa. Even today this flower decorates Bulgarian garden and balconies. Bulgarian migrants grow horsehoe geranium in their homes in receiving countries and see its bright colours as a reminder of home.

An interlocutor in Morocco says that she took zonal pelargonium with her because in Bulgaria there are zonal pelargonium blossoms that she has not seen anywhere. This emotional connection (as with bigroot geranium) is not disturbed by the frequent use of horsehoe geranium in exterior landscaping throughout Europe.

Four of the respondents have transported and grown rose geranium (or sweet scented geranium *Pelargonium graveolens*, L'Hér)⁷ abroad. This aromatic plant is used as a flower, spice and herb. Rose geranium has been widely adopted in Bulgarian culture, although it too originates from South Africa.

The flowers mentioned so far are popular in Bulgarian traditional culture. They have symbolic resources and with their appearance and/or aroma reproduce the comfort of the homeland. In this way, the plants help immigrants adapt more smoothly to the receiving society.

Sometimes respondents take flowers with them that are not strongly perceived as Bulgarian, as they are reminiscent of the respondents' own homes. An interlocutor in Baltimore (USA) says:

I used to carry a branch of Christmas cactus (Schlumbergera) from our home in the town of Dupnitsa, as a symbolic resettlement of the family spirit, because at home it always bloomed around Christmas. I transported it as pure contraband (a sprig of Christmas cactus was wrapped in wet napkins, no soil, in a jar stuffed in a plastic bag, in a large travel bag full of clothes). It was very difficult for it to take and I waited many years for it to bloom, but it did, and I was very happy.

This flower reminds the interlocutor of her childhood, home and family, all of which she missed in the USA and with which she symbolically connects in this way. The feelings with which the respondent associates this plant are so strong that she took the risk of bringing the flower to her new home, despite the prohibitions.

Utilitarian function

Another function of the plants taken abroad by Bulgarians is utilitarian: for consumption and medicine, for example vegetables, fruits, spices and herbs.

Food can act as a cultural marker of identity (Ludwinsky et al. 2021). Eating as a social activity links people to their cultural heritage through affective memory of dishes and specific ingredients (ibid.). At the end of the 20th century, when a large wave of Bulgarian emigration began, there were no Bulgarian shops abroad as there were not enough Bulgarian emigrants (See Karamihova, 2004: 39–41) and nostalgia was felt particularly acutely. Then many Bulgarian migrants in the USA planted various 'native' plants in order to recreate a Bulgarian environment in their new habitat, i.e. vines, fruit trees, vegetables.

A Bulgarian man in Chicago says:

When I was first abroad, in 1998, I remember very well the nostalgia of the Bulgarian community here for the nettle, basil, savoury and other Bulgarian spices the aroma and taste of which we lacked. Like many others, I have received letters with tomato seeds stuck to the sheets. I did not

have a place to plant them in the apartment and gave them to friends to plant in their garden. There was no harvest, but it was enough for a photo with Bulgarian tomatoes. At this time, US customs strictly monitored the import of such products. Some of the Bulgarians “entered” the computers as trespassers.

The ban on the import of uncertified seeds and vegetables in countries outside Europe has caused migrants to use various tricks to get plants across the US border, although over time this issue has been resolved: “The owner of Malincho, a Bulgarian food shop,⁸ took out a permit to import Bulgarian spices and sacks of basil, fenugreek (*Trigonella*), savoury, cumin and everything else necessary for Bulgarians’ tastes come to Chicago”. The resourceful merchant found a legal way to satisfy the needs of large Bulgarian communities in North America for Bulgarian-flavoured food (including plant based food).

A Bulgarian woman in New Zealand says: “I had asked my mother to send me certified seeds with English translation on the package. I wanted Bulgarian pink tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, okra, and I especially hoped there would be summer savoury. Unfortunately, I could not grow many of them because the climate is different”.

Under the influence of the Ottoman empire in Bulgaria, a significant number of oriental spices were adopted into Bulgarian traditional cuisine and are now perceived as Bulgarian (See Dechev 2010). Especially popular among Bulgarians abroad is summer savoury (*Satureja hortensis*)⁹, which, according to the interlocutors, is difficult to grow even in countries with a climate similar to Bulgaria. Twenty of the respondents indicate that they take summer savoury, as a spice that is dried and ground, to the receiving country.

A Bulgarian woman in Lyon (France) says:

*When we [my family] go home to Bulgaria, I stock up on dried summer savoury. We like a lot of summer savoury, I put it in dishes with pork or chicken, but also in various salads, and in France I couldn’t find a spice that can replace it. For example, I successfully replaced spearmint (*Mentha spicata*) with peppermint (*Mentha piperita*). It happened that I brought dry spearmint from Bulgaria, because it grows in the village, in my father’s garden, but in practice it is not something that I miss.*

This woman tells how, on one of her trips back to Bulgaria, she forgot to get summer savoury, but found it in an airport shop before the flight to France at a very high price. As she says: “To sell summer savoury at the airport it means that we are not the only ones who lack this spice and are ready to buy it at an ungodly price before boarding the plane”.

Summer savoury became the favourite spice of an interethnic family in Romania, where the husband is Bulgarian. He says: “We certainly use summer savoury [from Bulgaria] most often and in huge quantities, because you cannot find it in Romania. The children learned to cover bread and butter, omelettes, and salad with summer savoury”.

A female respondent in Hungary talks about the book *With the Aroma of Summer Savoury and Spearmint: Culinary Recipes of Bulgarians from Hungary* (2009), a bilingual Bulgarian–Hungarian edition from the Bulgarian Republican Self-Government in Hungary. The idea for the book was born from an annual culinary exhibition by the Bulgarian community in Budapest. The publication includes recipes for dishes perceived as traditional Bulgarian (See Dechev 2010), with a separate section dedicated to spices. The title of the book unambiguously indicates that the aroma of summer savoury and spearmint are hallmarks of Bulgarian cuisine and confirms the status of the two as the most popular and sought-after by Bulgarians in Hungary.

Eight of the respondents indicate that spearmint, popular in Bulgarian cooking, is a herb that they take to the host country. From the quote above, it is clear that spearmint has a replacement, although the respondent takes spearmint from Bulgaria because her father grows it. The attitude towards this plant is more emotional than utilitarian, symbolising a connection with the family.

An interlocutor in London (UK) says that she grows parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*) in the garden yard of her Syrian neighbour. Immigrants giving parts of their gardens to other immigrants in order to grow ‘native’ plants is indicative of the importance of these plants, as well as of migrant networks, in successfully adapting to the receiving country.

Interlocutors also take herbs in dried form to their new destinations to make tea. Here, herbs are arranged in descending order of popularity according to the number of mentions by the interlocutors: thyme (6), linden flower (5), basil (4), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) (2), mursala tea (*Sideritis scardica*, mountain tea) (2), chamomile (1), oregano (1), fig leaves (1), rosehip (1), mint (1), and others (all with 1 mention). This group of plants also contains an emotional

charge in addition to their healing properties. Some of the plants with practical applications that Bulgarian migrants take abroad can be used both as herbs and spices: thyme, basil, mint, oregano.

Ritual function

Some plant species play a ritual role in Bulgarian culture, embodying relevant symbolism. Migrants take and grow some plants abroad to use them in traditional ritual practices. Geranium (*Geranium macrorrhizum*) as a symbol of health is present at every Bulgarian holiday and is also used in the rituals (Photo 1).



Photo 1. A bunch of bigroot/Bulgarian geranium for sprinkling with holy water in the Bulgarian Orthodox St. Archangel Michael and St. Archangel Gabriel, and St. Venerable Paisius of Hilendar church, St Lazar's day, The Hague (Netherlands), 08/04/2017. Photo by Mariyanka Borisova. National Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage (NCICH) archive at IEFSEM - BAS. FtAIF 1609, Nr 37.

Willow (*Salix*) is used on Palm Sunday, when branches of a consecrated willow tree are taken from the church. A respondent in the USA shared a photo on his Facebook account with the following caption: “The willow for the Bulgarian Orthodox St John of Rila church in Chicago is ensured. The branches from the two willow trees in the garden will enter the Bulgarian church this year again, and stay on the altar overnight” (Photo 2). The collected willow branches ensure observance of the orthodox ritual on Palm Sunday. In this case, the ritual plants grow in the host country and their procurement does not involve cross-border transport.



Photo 2. The willow for the Bulgarian Orthodox St John of Rila church in Chicago is ensured. The branches from the two willow trees in the garden will enter the Bulgarian church this year again, and stay on the altar overnight, 13/04/2014. From the Facebook account of a Bulgarian in the USA. He gave his consent for the publication of the photo.

Cornel (*Cornus mas*)¹⁰ is a symbol of health in Bulgarian traditional culture (Georgieva 1993: 47; Marinov 1994: 93–94). The ritual role of this plant is associated with toughness and strength, with the specificity of blooming earliest in the year and bearing fruit latest. Cornel twigs are used for the New Year’s ritual *survachki* and for luck during New Year’s baking¹¹. ‘*Survachka*’ is

a decorated cornel twig, with which, according to Bulgarian custom, people ‘survakat’ each other after New Year’s Eve, on January 1st, lightly hitting their backs with wishes for health, happiness, and well-being. On the other hand, a cornel bud, a vine bud, a coin, and a bean are among the lucky charms for New Year’s baking, according to Bulgarian tradition. A cornel bud means health throughout the New Year.

Bulgarian cultural heritage (customs, language, music, dances, history, festivity, etc.) is a way for migrants to preserve their cultural identity. This is why they strictly follow traditions, customs, and holidays. Every year, children in Bulgarian schools abroad prepare *survachki* with flexible cornel branches. The cornel can be found in the gardens of Bulgarian immigrants in Spain, the USA, Canada. In the countries where cornel does not grow, branches from other trees or bushes are used, for example olive.

The reverse route of the plants – from abroad to Bulgaria – also deserves attention. An interviewed woman, who grows flowers professionally in Denmark, related how, when she returns to Bulgaria, she often takes her mother fresh flowers that she had grown herself, as well as tulip bulbs. However, when she noticed that large chain stores deliver the same rare flowers to Bulgaria, she stopped this complicated transfer of flowers by plane. Another interlocutor says that she takes seeds of a variety of tomatoes that she particularly likes from Cyprus to Bulgaria. For illustration, she sends a photo of the desired tomatoes. A respondent in Germany says that her acquaintance asked her to supply him with tomato seeds from Germany, as he was not satisfied with the taste of tomatoes grown in Bulgaria. Bulgarian women living in Greece and Spain often take flowers to plant in their Bulgarian gardens. This type of plant migration has aesthetic and utilitarian motives, although the subject of the route plants take from abroad to Bulgaria deserves a separate study.

Conclusions

Bulgarians take plants abroad that remind them of Bulgaria, of home, of family. My interlocutors emphasize that the walnuts they take are from “mother’s garden”, that father grows delicious spinach, and that zonal pelargonium and rose geranium are from “grandma’s garden”. Through these plants Bulgarian migrants symbolically connect with their families and with their places of birth.

An emotional connection with the homeland is also provided by the plants, the cultivation of which in the new place is an experiment with no guarantee of success: tomatoes and especially peppers don't withstand a cold climate; vines wither; snowdrops bloom too early, unlike in Bulgaria; and squirrels and birds eat the fruits of the cornel, etc.

The plants taken abroad, perceived by respondents as Bulgarian, also remind them of childhood. A female interlocutor in Jena (Germany) says: "I always try to get [dried] linden [blossom] in Germany. This is the taste of childhood." A respondent living in Sibiu (Romania), says: "Specific aromas remind me of Bulgaria and childhood. In this regard, I remember that I once asked my grandmother to send us honey garlic (*Allium siculum* subs. *dioscoridis* (Sm.) K. Richt.)¹¹ especially. In her native village [Shanovo, Stara Zagora district] [the honey garlic] is a traditional spice, rubbed with salt [and dried]". Abroad, even local spices such as the honey garlic, popular in south eastern Bulgaria, are associated with the motherland. The plants carried by migrants abroad, along with their aesthetic, utilitarian, and ritual functions, satisfy nostalgia, carry emotional memory, maintain a connection with the carefree time and place of childhood and/or youth.

The topic of plants that Bulgarian migrants take abroad is pleasant for interlocutors, they willingly talk about it and share stories about their own and their friends' experiences of bringing, growing and using fresh and dried plants and seeds abroad.

Bulgarians who live abroad have a sharp awareness of Bulgarian aromas. Therefore, they define the aromas of, for example Spanish thyme and oregano, or geranium from the Isle of Man, etc., as different. These plants are probably different spices of the same genus, hence the different aromas. A respondent living in Baltimore (USA), says: "Here you don't find Bulgarian flavoured savoury or the wonderful fragrant dried peppers for Christmas dishes." On the one hand, the taste and aroma of edible plants in the USA are different, on the other hand, nostalgia adds the romantic colours of memory and exacerbates the difference.

Conversations with the interlocutors outlined preferred plants for Bulgarians abroad. These are bigroot geranium as a flower and a symbol, and summer savoury as a herb and prerequisite for food to have a 'Bulgarian' taste.

The similarities between Bulgarian, Balkan and Slavic cuisines allow Bulgarians abroad to find the spices they need in Bulgarian, Turkish, Greek or Russian

migrant shops in the host country. Bulgarian online stores also allow shopping for spices without the respondents having to bring them from the homeland.

There are no plant import–export prohibitions in the European Union, although there are such prohibitions for other continents in order to protect the local flora from invasive species and plant infections.

The younger generation, distinguished by mobility, is more flexible in adapting to new places. A young respondent in Denmark says: “I don’t miss anything, because I eat everything, I like to combine cuisines and cultures. A tomato is Bulgarian when it is grown in Bulgaria. The seed is important for the appearance, the taste comes from the climate”. When a person emigrates at a more mature age, it is difficult to adapt to the new conditions in the host country and nostalgia is more of a factor; the person feels a tangible need for native plants. Therefore this age cohort tries, although not always successfully, to plant tomatoes, vines, eggplants, okra, zucchini, summer savoury, etc., from Bulgarian seeds.

In addition to the time and the youth–maturity correlation, space has a bearing on the migration of plants. When the country of migration is distant, the desire to grow and consume native plants is stronger. Therefore, it is not surprising that a respondent cultivates tomatoes in her apartment on the thirty seventh floor in Toronto (Canada). The reasons are emotional.

The type and quantity of plants transported abroad depends on various factors: the age of the migrant, the frequency of visits to Bulgaria, family status, whether his/her marriage is interethnic, etc. It is important to note that the interviews conducted for this research were with first-generation migrants. The situation with second-generation immigrants is different. Their relationships with plants are a topic for further research.

‘Bulgarian’ plants taken and grown abroad (flowers, fruits, vegetables, spices, herbs) offer a wealth of sensory perceptions and have an aroma and/or taste often defined by the respondents as the “aroma and taste of Bulgaria”. Plants ‘in migration’ develop versatile functionality, stimulate easier adaptation and concentrate narratives and social contacts.

The symbolic and social meanings of the plants that the Bulgarian emigrants take to their receiving countries are revealed through the migrant narratives about the transfer and cultivation, and about the connection with the home, the family, the homeland (See Petrov, Raycheva 2021a: 233). Narratives and associations have a sensory basis: plants can be seen, tasted, touched, smelled.

Migrants' shared stories delineate the biological and cultural identity of plants (ibid.: 9). The intimate migrant–plant relationship extends beyond the decorative and food role of the plants (Petrov 2021: 13).

Through transferred plants, Bulgarian migrants create and maintain feelings based on a nostalgic reaction, something that the American anthropologist Virginia Nazarea (2005) calls an out-of-place sense of place.

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Notes

¹https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/carry/meat-dairy-animal/index_bg.htm (7/01(2023).

² A joint project by the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) and the Lithuanian Institute of History, 2022–2024.

³ All interviews are in the author's personal archive.

⁴ For the aesthetic pleasure of plants see Petrov et al. 2018: 324.

⁵ See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geranium_macrorrhizum (18/08/2023).

⁶ See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pelargonium_zonale (20/08/2023).

⁷ See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pelargonium_graveolens (20/08/2023).

⁸ See: <https://malincho.com/departments/spices/imported-from-bulgaria.html> (08/01/2023). For more about the Malincho shop see in Matanova & Penchev 2021: 97.

⁹ See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Summer_savory (25/08/2023).

¹⁰ See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornus_mas (25/08/2023).

¹¹ See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allium_siculum (25/08/2023).

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Cattle colours with a dendrological component as an ethnolinguistic phenomenon

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Abstract: In Slavic languages, a large number of colour designations are derived from the names of trees; these designations are not only formed morphologically, but also in a lexico-semantic way. This mainly concerns the name of the birch tree, which is noticeable primarily in numerous Polish derivatives, some of which can be built up into Proto-Slavic prototypes. However, a similar phenomenon can be observed in other languages around the world. Generally speaking, these coloratives are of both narrow linguistic (etymological) and ethnolinguistic interest. They reflect the view of the Slavic peoples on the importance of dendroflora in material and spiritual life and help shed light on the worldview of the ancient Slavs.

Key words: colorative, dendronym, Slavic languages

Before turning to such an exceptional phenomenon as dendronymy as the basis for forming colour words, it is necessary to touch directly on the colour perception itself among the Slavic peoples.

For the folk culture of the Slavs, the white–black–red triad is primarily relevant, where white, representing the heavenly, sacred, pure, is contrasted with dark colours, which are associated with the earthly, chthonic, unclean.

This colour symbolism has a particular reflection in the traditional life of the Slavs in that it relates to the colours of animals' coats.

As regards the white–black opposition, there are, for example, beliefs that meeting a white sheep, horse or cow when first entering a village brings happiness, as opposed to the opposite for a black one (Tolstoy 1995a: 151–152). The idea of white celestial cattle led by drowned or hanged men stands apart and can be contrasted with black terrestrial cattle (Tolstoy 1995b: 504).

In turn, white and red are opposed in another way, for example, sick cows are said to have “white” coats, while healthy cows have “red” coats in one Belarusian magic spell from the Mogilev region (Tolstoy 1995a: 153).

The explanation for this is that white animals have an ambivalent interpretation among the Slavs since such animals are both related to death or evil spirits and considered opponents of the latter. At the same time, white has a sacred meaning and is associated with the other world. This applies, for example, to the fabulous image of a white horse, which is the most archaic in world mythological systems (Levkievskaja 2004: 201; Propp 2000: 147–148).

Animals with black coats are invariably associated with evil spirits, disease, and death (Levkievskaja 2004: 201). At the same time, black was considered a talisman. So, for example in the Smolensk region, they believed that a black shirt in which a newborn lamb was wrapped protected it from the evil eye. The Macedonian belief that a black dot painted on the forehead or face protects a person from the evil eye, is also significant in this sense (Belova 2012: 516–517).

Red animals are also characterised as having a duality in the minds of the Slavs (Levkievskaya 2004: 201), who believed that red brought happiness, for example, a red cow at the front of a herd was a harbinger of clear weather (Belova 1999: 650). One can also see a close connection between a red horse (for example, St George's horse) and fire, which is explained by their functional similarity as conductors between the two worlds (Propp 2000: 148), although sometimes with this correlation red can symbolise danger and anxiety (Levkievskaja 2004: 201).

Mottled animals are associated with evil spirits (Levkievskaya 2004: 201). It is noteworthy that black animals, including those with white spots, were used by Belarusians in black magic (Švied 2009: 18). To clarify the semantics of mottling, it is also important to correlate the horse with the night sky, something that relates to the mediation of the horse between heaven and earth, or

the secondary nature of this image as compared to the daytime horse of the Sun (Propp 2000: 151).

Here it is worth paying attention to the fact that the image of a white or golden horse was the most ancient one among the Slavs (Ivanov-Toporov 1974: 187). In the beliefs of the Baltic Slavs, who preserved paganism longer than others, the white colour of the horse that belonged to the main god Sventovit (the white colour corresponds to the concepts of 'day' and 'one's own') was contrasted with the black dirt on the horse after his nocturnal trips, while the black horse owned by the supreme god Triglav was associated with divination (Gamkrelidze-Ivanov 1984: 555; Ivanov-Toporov 1965: 32–33, 35).

Summarising the above, one should emphasise that in different parts of Slavia, white animals with dark spots and darker animals with white spots were considered either protected from the effects of evil spirits, or under their influence. It is also likely that initially, in earlier times, animals' coat colours had specific semantics, but as a result of the evolution of mythological beliefs, the colours acquired new meanings. However, it is also interesting that a coat colour similar to that of the owner's hair or a coat colour similar to that of the dog protecting the livestock, was considered auspicious on the farm (Levki-evskaja 2004: 199).

It is worth noting that coloratives with a dendrological component in Slavic languages are designations not only of the animals' coat colour, but also of animals' nicknames, as well as the colours of various objects, as discussed below.

Morphological coloratives

Since Slavic languages have a highly developed affixation, there are a number of derivational models for designating objects of reality, whose derivational stem is the names of other, outwardly similar, objects. In addition to colour, similarity of form is also implied here, with both expressible by one affix.

Most of the adjective affixes presented below are characteristic of the Proto-Slavic language, although it is impossible to talk about the formation of coloratives with their help, since these affixes characterise a generalised connection with the object called a generating word.

With the help of the affix *-ast-* the Proto-Slavic words ***berzastъ(jb)* (Proto-Slavic **berza* 'birch'), ***dъbъastъ(jb)* (Proto-Slavic **dъbъ* 'oak') and ***lipinъastъ(jb)*

(Proto-Slavic **lipa* ‘linden’) are formed (transcription used when recording Proto-Slavic vocabulary; reconstructions with two asterisks are the author’s).

The continuants of the first word are the Polish dialectal *brzeziasty* ‘about the colour of cattle: red-white or black-white with a light stripe along the back’ (Reichan 1986: 604), Serbo-Croatian *br̂žacm* ‘similar (in colour) to a birch tree: with red spots (about calves), with white or black spots on the head (about goats and sheep)’ (Stevanović 1962: 143). The reflexes of the second word include Polish *dębiasty* ‘similar to oak; similar to the colour of oak leaves’ (Karłowicz 1900b: 452) and probably Russian dialectal *дыбácm* ‘plant’ (Filin 1972: 234). The third word is reflected only in Old Polish *lipiniasty* ‘?’ (ESJP XVII–XVIII). With the help of the same suffix, Slovak *jablčastý* ‘(about a horse) which has darker round spots on its light coat’, is formed (Jarošová 2011: 425) (Slovak *jablko* ‘apple’).

The affix *-at-* (*-ovat-*) forms such Proto-Slavic lexemes as ***berzatǫjъ* and ***berzovatǫjъ*, their continuants being observed only in Polish.

The first word was reflected in Polish *brzeziaty* ‘bay, mottled, red and white’ (Karłowicz 1900b: 219), Polish dialectal *brzozaty* ‘mottled, especially about a sheep with mottled wool on its muzzle’ (Reichan 1986: 618) and Polish dialectal *brzeziaty* ‘about the colour of cattle: red-white or black and white with a light stripe along the back (about the colour of cattle)’ (Reichan 1986: 604). These continuants differ in both the root vocalism and the hard or soft character of the derivational stem. The first difference lies in the presence or absence of the results of the Lechite rearrangement (**berza* > **breza* > *brzoza* and **berza* > **breza* > *brzeza*), which took place in the history of Polish in the 9th and 10th centuries (Podlaska 2003: 37). As for the nature of the stems, this distinction existed even in the Proto-Slavic language (derivatives **berza* and ***berza*, respectively).

The second reconstruction is an extended version of the first (extension *-ov-*). It is reflected in Polish dialectal *brzozowaty* ‘like a birch tree’ (Karłowicz 1900: 618), Czech *březovatý* ‘like a birch’ (Jungmann 1835: 182), and Upper-Sorbian *brězowaty* ‘like a birch’ (Pful 1866: 46). The same affix forms the Polish *jabłkowaty* ‘about the horse, most often grey, less often brown and bay colour’ (Doroszewski 1961: 292–293) and Lower-Sorbian *jabłuškaty* ‘dappled, apple-shaped’ (Muka 2008: 519).

The antiquity of the affix *-at-* (*-ovat-*) is evidenced by Proto-Slavic lexemes formed according to the same word formation model, such as, for exam-

ple, ***gruševatŏ(jv)*/***kruševatŏ(jv)* (Proto-Slavic **gruša/kruša* ‘pear’) and ***dǫbovatŏ(jv)*, although their continuants do not denote any colours or shades.

The suffix *-av-* is typical only for Proto-Slavic **berzavŏ(jv)*, which is reflected in Polish *brzezawy* ‘bay, mottled, red and white’, *brzezawa* ‘mottled cow’ (Karłowicz 1900b: 219), Polish dialectal *brzezawa* ‘a cow with a white back and belly’, ‘a black cow with a white stripe on the back’ (Karłowicz 1900a: 127–128), ‘a black or red cow with white spots, with a light stripe along the back’ (Reichan 1986: 604), *brzeziawy* ‘about the colour of cattle: red-white with a light stripe along the back’ (Reichan 1986: 604), as well as Czech *březavá (kráva)* ‘a cow whose back and belly are white, and the rest is red or black’, Slovak *brezavý* ‘white and mottled (for example about oxen, about a cow)’, and Serbo-Croatian *brèzava* ‘mottled (about a cow)’ (Trubachjov 1974: 203–204). As in the case of ***berzatŏ(jv)*, Polish continuants are distinguished by the absence of the influence of the Lechite rearrangement (transition **ě > *o*) and have a different nature of the derivational stem; the latter feature, again, can go back to the Proto-Slavic era.

The affix *-ist-* (*-ovist-*) is used to form Polish *jablkowy* ‘about the horse, most often grey, less often brown and bay colour’ (Doroszewski 1961: 293) and Slovak *jablčistý* ‘(about a horse) that has darker round spots on its light coat’ (Jarošová 2011: 425). The suffix *-ist-* is characteristic of adjectives in all Slavic languages, however, it is found only in the Western Slavic area as a part of colouratives. This suffix is secondary to *-it-*, and both originate from the common Indo-European suffix of superlative adjectives (Vaillant 1974: 469).

The suffix *-it-* forms Polish *jablkowy* ‘about the horse, most often grey, less often brown and bay colour’ (Doroszewski 1961: 293). This suffix is characteristic exclusively of dialectal vocabulary and, together with the suffixes *-ast-*, *-at-*, *-ist-* characterises the similarity of the designated object with the object called the derivational stem (Bąk 1984: 233–234).

The affix *-ul-*, which forms substantives, is characteristic exclusively of Proto-Slavic ***berzula*. The latter is implemented in Polish dialectal *brzezula* ‘a black or red cow with white spots, with a light stripe along the back; nickname’ (Reichan 1986: 607), *briezula* ‘a black cow or sheep with a white head’ (Krasowska 2006: 199), Serbo-Croatian *brèzula* ‘a cow with mottled fur and the nickname of such a cow’ (Stevanović 1962: 144), Czech dialectal *brezula* ‘the one who talks in vain’ (SNČJ), Slovak and Slovak dialectal *berzula* ‘birch bark paint’ (Ripka 1994: 162). An indirect indication of the Proto-Slavic antiquity

of the named model may be in Lithuanian *Beržulė* ‘tributary of the Šušvė River (Šiauliai county)’ (Kolupaila 1935: 12) and Latvian *bērzulis* ‘reduced form from *bērzis*’ (Mīlenbahs 1923–1925: 292).

Another substantive colour designation is formed with the help of the suffix *-āk-*: Czech *jablečnák* ‘a white horse with round dark spots’ (Hujer 1935–1937: 1155). In Czech, this suffix softens the previous consonant. It forms the names of people, animals and plants, and their meanings usually have an expressive connotation (Dokulil 1986: 264). Since in the Proto-Slavic language the affix *-āk-* acquired the softness of the previous consonant when forming verbal words (Vondrák 1906: 458), then probably the same process began to take place later, when words were derived from nominal stems.

Morphological coloratives are also formed by word composition: Slovak *jablkovozelený* ‘who has the colour of green apples’ (Jarošová 2011: 426) (Slovak *zelený* ‘green’). The structure of the word indicates that previously it had the meaning ‘apple-green, green with a hint of green apples’.

*

In terms of word formation, adjectival models with the affixes *-ast-*, *-at-* (*-ovat-*), *-av-*, *-ist-* (*-ovist-*) and *-it-* are derived from suffix-less adjectives (by the way, the origin of the suffix *-ast-* is associated with a modification of the suffix *-as-*, also used in the derivation of coloratives (Vondrák 1906: 446–448)). The first three suffixes formed the corresponding Proto-Slavic words.

Coloratives with non-dendrological components can also be formed with the help of the affixes *-as-*, *-es-*, which is why a primary diminutive value can be supposed for derivatives from **berzъ(jъ)*, the only ancient colorative with a dendrological component. Similarly, coloratives with other components were formed, for example, Proto-Slavic **bělasъ(jъ)*, **bělavъ(jъ)*, **bělesъjъ* (using the example of **běvl(jъ)*) (Trubachjov 1975: 62–63).

The only Proto-Slavic substantive model with the affix *-ul-*, presented in Proto-Slavic ***berzula* probably represents derivatives from the corresponding adjectives, since formations from nouns are diminutive or affectionate names of the corresponding phenomena for example Proto-Slavic **bobŭla* < **boba* ‘something round, especially a berry’ (Sławski 1974: 110). Therefore, Proto-Slavic **berzъ(jъ)* ‘birch colours, with white spots or stripes’ must be considered the derivational stem (Sławski 1974: 212).

Lexico-semantic coloratives

There are a number of coloratives with a dendrological component, whose meanings are the result of rethinking previous meanings, which implies a lexico-semantic method of word formation. Such colour names generally refer to adjectival formations.

The coloratives with the component 'birch' include words that go back to the Proto-Slavic **berzovъ(jь)* and **berzъ(jь)*. The first word is associated with the Belarusian dialectal *берэзавы* 'grey (horse) coat' (Kryvicki 1982: 55). Attention is drawn to the uniqueness of this word (one of the rare Belarusian coloratives with a dendrological component), in particular, from the point of view of distribution (Polesie periphery of the Slavic language world). The colour designation of the second word, which, as mentioned above, is almost the only Proto-Slavic colorative with a dendrological component, is more widespread, for example the Polish dialectal *Brzeza* 'a cow's name' (Sławski 1974: 212). It is interesting that the Czech *březí* and the Slovak *brezí* 'pregnant (usually about pets)' (Trubachjov 1974: 188; Králik 2015: 81) may be the result of the influence of the model mentioned above (Králik 2015: 81). The reasons for this influence lies in the belief that cattle having a certain colour contributes to its fertility (Levkievskaja 2004: 199). The model itself, according to which the second word is formed, belongs to the prefix-free models that are the most ancient among models of Proto-Slavic adjectives.

In addition, in Slavic languages there are adjectives denoting colour that are formed in a lexico-semantic way, with the following components: 1) 'pear', Slovak *hruškový* 'associated with pear wood, made of pear wood, similar in colour and structure to pear wood; shaped like a pear, resembling a pear, pear-like' (Jarošová 2011: 199) (Slovak *hruška* 'pear'); 2) 'oak', Old-Polish *dębny* 'about the colour of leather tanned with oak bark; pale yellow', Polish 'the colours of oak or oak leaves; well tanned' (Sławski 1981: 191) (Polish *dąb* 'oak'); 3) 'viburnum', Polish *kalinowy* 'the colour of viburnum fruit', which is an occasionalism (Doroszewski 1961: 479) (Polish *kalina* 'viburnum'); 4) 'aspen', Old-Russian *осинный, осинový* 'the colour of aspen bark' (Avanesov 1987: 90) (Russian *осина* 'aspen'); 5) 'pine', Polish *soseńkowy* 'colour' (Linde 1812: 333) (Polish *sosna* 'pine'); 6) 'apple', Polish *jabłkowy* 'about the horse, most often grey, less often brown and bay' (Doroszewski 1961: 293) (Polish *jabłko* 'apple').

The following names belong to the substantive coloratives: Belarusian dialectal *ліліна* 'white', 'bloodless' (Jankoŭski 1970: 59) (Belarusian *ліна* 'linden') and Polish *sosenka* 'a pattern of fabric threads similar to the arrangement of pine needles; a raincoat or clothes with such a pattern' (Doroszewski 1966: 503-504).

At the same time, the presence of a dendrological component is doubtful in relation to the Belarusian dialectal *лілнскі* 'red (about the scarf)' (Jankova 1982: 179), although etymologically it is ascribed to the name of the linden tree (Trubachjov 1988: 136–137). Probably, the origin of this word should be associated with the Polish *Lipsk* 'Leipzig'.

Lexical and semantic coloratives, in contrast to morphological ones, do not indicate the colour of animals.

Phraseologisation

The colour designations formed from dendrological vocabulary also include some stable expressions, such as the Belarusian *у яблыкі, у яблыках* 'with dark round spots on the coat (about the horse)' (Liepiešaŭ 1993: 591) (Belarusian *яблык* 'apple'), Ukrainian *у яблука, у яблуках* 'dappled (about the colour of the horses)' (Piūtarak–Skapnienka 2006: 719), Russian *в яблоках* 'with dark round spots on the coat (about horse hair)' (Fjodorov 2008: 766) and Polish *w jabłka* 'darker spots of a roundish shape are most often in the grey, less often in the brown and bay colours of the horse' (Doroszewski 1961: 292). Not only is the East Slavic-Polish area of expression noted here interesting, but so also are the models 'в + Acc. pl.' and 'в + Prep. pl.'.

Parallels in the languages of the world

In addition, in various Indo-European languages, coloratives (or names whose meanings have a sememe that characterises the colour) are formed from dendrological names according to separate derivational models: Latvian *ābolainis, ābolains* 'dappled horse, piebald horse' (*ābols* 'apple') (Beitiņa 1981: 18, 19), English *oak* 'dark brown oak wood colour' (CED), *oak-wood* 'oak bark colour, a shade of brown' (Mahonina–Sternina 2005), *dappled, dapple grey* 'dappled horse' (perhaps historically related to the English *apple*) (Mjuller 2009, 114; OED), German *apfelschimmel* 'dappled grey horse', *geapfelt* 'dappled (about the

horse's coat)' (*apfel* 'apple') (Leping–Strahova 1976, 68, 334), Dutch *geappeld* 'dappled (about a horse)' (*appel* 'apple') (Mironov 1987, 63, 231), Norwegian *apalgrå* 'dappled grey (about a horse)' (*åpal* 'apple tree' and *grå* 'grey'), *eikemale* 'to paint under oak' (*eik* 'oak' and *male* 'to paint') (Arakin 2000: 43, 200, 328, 522), French *pommelé* 'dappled grey (about the colour of the horse)' (*pomme* 'apple') (Ganshina 1977: 653), Spanish *manzanil* 'resembling an apple in colour or shape' (*manzana* 'apple') (DLE) and Italian *pomato*, *pomellato* 'dappled (about the horse's coat)' (*pomo* 'apple') (Zor'ko 2002: 664).

As the examples above show, coloratives that are mainly adjectives are formed primarily in a morphological way. Thus, the suffix *-ain-* in Latvian is productive and characterises relative adjectives (Staltmane 2006: 187; Grabis 1966: 477), therefore, it should be assumed that the original meaning of 'apple' has narrowed and developed into the meaning of 'a dappled horse or piebald horse'. The suffix *-el-* in French and *-il-* in Spanish also form relative adjectives (Referovskaja 2001: 236; Arutjunova 2007), which also allows us to observe a narrowing of the meaning. Lexemes in German and Dutch are formed by circumfixation, (the circumfixes *ge- -t* and *ge- -d*, respectively). The word structure is typical for German and Norwegian (*åpal* 'apple tree' and *grå* 'grey'; *eik* 'oak' and *male* 'to paint'). In the case of the English word, we should speak about lexical and semantic word formation, specifically the metonymic transfers of '(something) oak' → 'bark' → 'bark colour'.

Similar coloratives are also recorded in the Finno-Ugric languages, for example Hungarian *almazöld* 'the colours of a green apple' (*alma* 'apple' and *zöld* 'green') (Gal'di 1987: 35) and Estonian *haabjas* 'greenish-grey (the colours of aspen bark)' (*haab* 'aspen') (Tamm 1977: 77). It is important to emphasise that the so-called subordinate stem-composition is often used to form the names of colours in Hungarian, for example *jéghideg* 'cold as ice', *tejfehér* 'white as milk' (Balashsha 1951: 168). In turn, the Estonian suffix *-jas-* is characteristic of adjectives denoting similarity with the object whose name is productive, for example *valkjás* 'whitish', *tuhkjás* 'ashen' (Kask 1966: 45). Therefore, these words are probably not the only names of colours derived from dendrological vocabulary.

Apart from Indo-European and Finno-Ugric languages, the same phenomenon is also observed in Turkic languages, for example Azerbaijani алмаянар 'red-cheeked' (*алма* 'apple', *янаг* 'cheek') (Gusejnov 1941: 14), Bashkir *алма сыбар* 'dappled grey' (*алма* 'apple', *сыбар* 'mottled') (Zajnullina 2002), Tatar

алмачуар ‘dappled grey’ (*алма* ‘apple’, *чуар* ‘mottled’) (Amirov 1966: 33), Turkmen *алмабаши* ‘rochard (*Aythya ferina*)’ (*алма* ‘apple’, *баши* ‘head’) (Baskakov 1968: 41), Chuvash *улма чӑнар* ‘dappled (about the colour of the horse)’ (*улма* ‘apple’, *чӑнар* ‘mottled’) (Andreev–Petrov 1971) and Yakut *сүһик хаан* ‘blood red’ (*сүһик* ‘alder’, *хаан* ‘bloody’) (Slepcev 1972: 327, 466). Thus, the presented Turkic coloratives are formed by the composition of pure stems, one of which is usually the name of an apple.

Conclusion

From the vocabulary presented here from Slavic languages, in quantitative terms the word that contains the components ‘birch’ and ‘apple’ stands out the most. It is formed by various methods of derivation (morphological, lexico-semantic, phraseologisation).

The component ‘birch’ appears in the colour designations of cattle coats (formed using the affixes *-ast-*, *-at-* (*-ovat-*), *-av-*, *-ul’-* and by lexico-semantic transition) based on comparison with the colour of birch bark, which is directly related to the folk traditions of the Slavs, specifically the colour symbols of the Slavs in general and especially with their cattle magic. Taking into account the fact that cattle fertility was directly related to their colour, it must be said that the importance of birch as a talisman against evil spirits was especially emphasised by the Slavs, especially the Poles.

The component ‘apple’ is mainly characteristic of the names of the horse coat (formed using the affixes *-ist-* (*-ovist-*), *-it-*, *-’ak-*, by word composition, by lexico-semantic transition and phraseologisation). So, dark spots on a lighter coat are mainly called apples in Slavic languages. However, the apple and apple tree are not used in the pastoral magic of the Slavs and therefore it should be assumed that apple served as a designation of the coat solely because of the spots. It should be noted that these names are present in many languages of the world.

It is important to note that the presence of such names in Azerbaijani, Bashkir, Tatar, Turkmen, and Chuvash languages, which are in interaction with Russian, may be explained by the influence of the latter: for example, Turkish *baklakırı* ‘roan-piebald, dappled grey (about the colour of the horse)’ (*bakla* ‘beans’, *kır* ‘light grey, dirty white, grey’) (Baskakov 1977: 92, 540).

The emergence of a few coloratives with other dendrological components in Slavic languages mainly through lexico-semantic derivation is explained by the similarity of the colour of certain objects with the colour of the bark, leaves or fruits of the corresponding trees (in particular, the presence of words with the 'oak' component should be explained by the use of oak bark in leather).

As for the partial affiliation of coloratives with a dendrological component among the majority of adjectives, there are a small number of nouns that are nicknames for cattle based on colour, as well as names of objects based on the similarity of colour with parts of the corresponding tree.

It is especially important to emphasise that in the Slavic language material, coloratives have been preserved which in the derivational sense belong to the ancient layer of vocabulary, including **berzъ(jb)*, the name of the colour, apparently inherent in the Proto-Slavic era since it was formed according to a non-prefix model.

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Alien Trees and Shrubs with the Complements *Saksamaa* (Germany) and *Saksa* (German) in Early Written Language and Folklore

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Abstract: The study of alien species has become more and more relevant today. In particular, the influence of alien species on the local nature is studied, but more and more studies have also begun to appear on how alien species affect the local language and culture. In this article, we took a look at non-native trees and shrubs that have been called “Saksamaa” and “Saksa” [German]. Germany was synonymous with foreign countries in early literature. We investigated the motives behind the names given to these species, how long they were in circulation and how these names were later replaced.

For this purpose, we studied lexicons, archival texts and historical literature. „German“ complemented plant names are most common in Estonian and Finnish – with fir, beech, larch, elder, Persian walnut tree, poplar, Swedish whitebeam and false spiraea coinciding. The prevalence of plant names can be divided into three: a) names found only in the early written word, which are absent in the oral tradition; b) vernacular plant names with the suffix “German” which were entered into dictionaries and supported by official terminology; c) individual folk names with the suffix “German” collected from the people. Alien species that were planted as fruit trees, ornamental trees, medicinal plants and forest trees were called by these names, but imported pharmaceutical drugs, fruits and wood were also called “German”. Mainly, non-native species were named after a local tree, to which “German” was added in front of the name. Later, those names were either replaced by adaptations of German plant names or new Estonian plant names were created. Several trees could be called by one name. For example, larches, firs and alien spruce species, which differed from the local spruce by the silvery colour of their needles, have been called the “German spruce”. In the 17th and 18th centuries, all foreign trees that were frost-resistant could be called “German trees.” Back in the 20th century, people spontaneously called foreign trees that were different from domestic trees by the names of “German”.

Keywords: plant names in dialect, plant names, foreign species, dictionaries, natural culture, cultural history

Introduction

Humans are the largest distributor of alien species. Alien species have become one of the biggest threats to the local ecosystem, and therefore, researching them is becoming more and more relevant today. It has been observed that floristic homogenisation is greatest between regions with the same administrative relationships, as trade and transport are the most intense between them (Yang et al. 2021). Homogenisation not only threatens local nature, but also local cultures and languages. For example, in Canada, foreign cultures have supplanted many of the indigenous plant foods, herbal medicines, and plant materials that had been fundamental elements of Indigenous peoples’ languages and cultures for millennia (Turner 2023). Examples can be found in Europe as well: the proportion of exotic trees and shrubs in the Baroque art of the Eastern Adriatic coast was very high, 71% of the 23 species identified in all paintings. It turned out that most of the exotic species originated from areas that were not

fully explored by Europeans at the time, such as the Palaearctic or the Americas. The native flora species were relegated to the background within art (Jasprica et al. 2023). An example from Slovenia describes how out of the 93 plant species mentioned in 19th century folk songs, only 42% were natural flora species, the rest being cultivated and exotic species. This indicates that alien species also had a great influence on the content of early folk songs (Fišer 2022).

In Estonia, alien plant species are considered to be those that have been introduced to our flora since the middle of the 18th century (Õöpik et al. 2008). We can say that the first cultivated species in our areas were crops with, for example, cereals domesticated in the Middle East being cultivated in Estonia for millennia. Most foreign species that have become invasive in our nature have arrived here from Europe, which as a region is culturally and climatically close to us (Õöpik et al. 2008). The first non-native trees were fruit trees and landscaping or ornamental trees imported in the Middle Ages, followed by forest trees in the second half of the 18th century. Moreover, fruit trees were used for landscaping and the fruit of ornamental trees for food. Trees and potted trees grown in greenhouses that are moved outside for the growing season (summer) are a wholly separate topic. Commercial trees, for example elder as a medicinal plant, willows for utilitarian purposes such as feeding bees¹, harvesting withes and bark, fixing shifting sands, were the least introduced (more on willow Kalle, Sander 2020).

With developing trade came production of exotic plant products that did not grow locally, such as citrus fruits (which were, however, grown in greenhouses here starting in the second half of the 19th century) and nuts, pharmacological drugs for medicines or hardwood for making furniture and household goods.

While the history of the introduction of alien tree species has been thoroughly studied by one of the authors of this article (Sander et al. 2008; Sander et al. 2006, Sander et al. 2008) as well as how fruit and ornamental trees began to be planted in farmyards (Viires 1974), and the history of fruit cultivation in general has been discussed (Jaama 1985), there have been fewer studies of how alien tree species have influenced our language and culture. One of the authors of this article has studied the use of alien species in early manuscript texts on medicinal herbs, collected until 1944 (Kalle 2010). Cultural geographer Vello Paatsi has observed the development of Estonian nature-related vocabulary until 1850 (Paatsi 1993). Botanist Gustav Vilbaste has compiled the manuscript “Võõrkeelsete taimenimedede register” (“Index of Foreign Language Plant Names”)

(Vilbaste 1953), which contains the chapter “Taimenimede register kultuur- ja välismaistest taimedest” (“Index of Cultivated and Foreign Plant Names”) (pp. 622–710), although it is only a list and does not include references to original sources. Unfortunately, Vilbaste modernised the names (for example *saksamaa* (Germany) pro *saxa mah* (Germany)). One of the authors of this article has studied the introduction of names with the complements *saksamaa* (Germany) and *saksa* (German) into Estonian natural vocabulary (Viikberg 2023).

The article seeks to answer three general research questions:

- which tree names complemented with *saksamaa* and *saksa* spread in literature and folklore and how long did they circulate for;
- how were alien tree species with the *saksamaa* and *saksa* complements (at the time of their introduction), as well as exotic fruits and pharmacological drugs, introduced to our language and how and why were such names later changed;
- what were the motifs for giving trees names with the *saksamaa* and *saksa* complements and were they also common in neighbouring nations and related languages?

We reviewed previous lexicons and botanical manuals and searched for more information from earlier periodicals and manuscript sources in order to answer these questions. For starters, we can say that the first foreign trees were fruit trees, written evidence of which can be found in Estonian from as early as the 17th century. As these species were new and unknown here, they were first introduced using native vocabulary. For example, in Heinrich Stahl’s German–Estonian dictionary of Estonian grammar, the Estonian equivalent of the German *Birn* (pear) is *Marri* (berry), and *Marja puh* (berry tree) is used for *Birnbaum* (pear tree) (Stahl 1637: 42).

Another way to name alien species was to associate them with their country of origin. A well-known example of this is *apelsin* (orange (fruit)), a word that appeared in European languages with the meaning ‘apple from China’ (cf. Dutch *sinaasappel* or French *pomme de Sine*). Heinrich Göseken, the pastor of Kullamaa, began using this option in Estonian. Since most of the new southern species arrived in Estonia through Germany², the dictionary section of his Grammar includes *Saxa marri Oun* or “Saksa marjaõun” (German berry-apple) for pear and *Saxa maria ouna puh* or “Saksa marjaõuna puu” (German berry apple tree) for the pear tree (Göseken 1660). The lemon is called the *Saxa mah oun* “Saksamaa õun” (German apple) as well as the *Hollandi mah Oun* “Hol-

landimaa õun” (Dutch apple) (Göseken 1660: 281, 153). In the 17th century, Göseken has the highest number of *Saksamaa* complemented animal and plant names, though he was followed by later authors. For clarification, it must be said that the first *Saksamaa* complement was given to the novelty creature *karpun* (turkey), with its original meaning being a bird from India (cf. Russian *индюк* (turkey)). Heinrich Stahl (1637: 69) called it *Saxamah kuck* (German rooster) (“Kalckunschhan”) and Johannes Gutsclaff (1648: 220) *Saxemah Kanna* (German chicken) (“Kalckaun”), for Göseken (1660: 224, 244, 251), however, *Saxa mah kuck* (German rooster) (“Kalekutischer Hahn”) meant the male bird and *Saxa mah kanna* (German chicken) (“Kalekutisch-Huhn”) meant the female.³ Since Heinrich Göseken, *saksa* or *saksamaa* complements were given to trees and shrubs as well, such as *Saxa Sahrne Puh* (German ash tree) (pöök (beech); büchen Holtz), *Saxa Mah Sara Puh* (German ash tree) (saar; Esche (ash) – probably intended as *Fraxinus ornus*, which does not grow in Estonia) or *saxamah wachter puh* (German maple tree) (valgepöök (hornbeam), Hayn Büche) (Göseken 1660: 150, 180, 231).⁴

A third possibility rose from the word creation of that era, i.e. borrowing from foreign languages, initially primarily from Low German. *Luun* “ploom”; “Pflaum” (plum) and *Luun puh* “ploomipuu”; “Pflaum” (Baum) (plum tree) (Göseken 1660: 322) found their way into Estonian, borrowed from Low German *plüme* ‘Pflaum’ (plum). Initially, *käspere* (borrowed from Low German *kersebere*) (cherry) was used for cherry: for example, Stahl (1637: 78) had *Karsberi marri* (cherry berry) (kirss; “kirsch” (cherry)), Göseken (1660: 257) *Karsbeer marri* (cherry berry) and Anton Thor Helle (1732: 104, 299) had *käspere-marri* (cherry berry) as well as *käspere pu* (cherry tree). Thus, not only were they acquainted with the fruits of the fruit trees but also the trees themselves.

In the case of loan words, it should be noted that several might have been borrowed over time. For example, the elderberry (which grows mainly as a bush, rarely as a tree) first appears in Hupel’s dictionary (1780: 40) as *wledri pu* (elder tree) (borrowed from the Low German *vlêder* (elder)), though the German *Hollunderbaum* received as many as three Estonian equivalents in the dictionary: *wledri pu*, *hollundri pu* (elder tree) and *wilder ois pu* (elder flower tree).⁵ The word in the form of leedripuu (elder tree) (*lêder* (elderberry), *lêd’ri-pû* (elder tree)) found its way into Wiedemann’s dictionary (1869: 542) and remained in use as such. One of the reasons for the multiple borrowings lies, among other things, in the division of language into Tallinn and Tartu dialects

(= North Estonian and South Estonian literary languages). For example, the pastor of Kadrina, Stahl (1637: 87), had the fruit of the cherry as *Karsberi Marri* (cherry berry) (< Low German *kersebere* (cherry)) while the pastor of Urvaste, Gutsclaff (1648: 221), had it as *Wissila Marri* (< Russian *вишня* (cherry)), until *Kirsimarri* (cherry berry) (< German *Kirsche* (cherry)) appeared in the dictionary of the pastor of Pärnu, Vestring (1720–30: 81). A little later, in 1780, Hupel's dictionary (1780: 409) featured both the North Estonian *käsperi pu* and *kirsi pu* (cherry tree) next to the South Estonian *wisna pu* (cherry tree) as the translation for the German *Kirschbaum* (cherry tree).

Early writing includes names that are not present in the oral tradition

Common plum (*Prunus domestica*) originally comes from East Asia, and as of today more than 2000 varieties have been bred. Plum trees are distinguished by a number of major cultivars, which can interbreed. We have been growing plums for centuries, but a cold winter significantly damages the harvest (Jänes, Õunmaa 1998). Historian Wilhelm Christian Friebe had written as early as the late 18th century that plum varieties are common in our gardens, but yellow and reddish plums are among the most esteemed (Friebe 1794: 197). Pastor August Wilhelm Hupel was the first to associate “Pflaumenbäume” (plum tree) with Latin (*Prunus domestica*⁶), adding that they are damaged by winters and specifying that “Zwetschgen” (prune plum) are not healthy here (Hupel 1777: 523). However, in the case of the German language space the difference between the round plum (*Pflaume*), which ripens in August, and the elongated plum (*Zwetsche*), which ripens in September, is not taken into account everywhere and sometimes the name *Zwetsche* is used for both varieties (Paul 1956: 780). Pastor Heinrich Göseken has noted in his German–Estonian grammar dictionary that this subspecies of plum (German *Zwetschen*, Latin *damascenū*) is known as *saxa mah marri* (German berry) in Estonian (Göseken 1660: 420). According to the botanist Johannes Christoph Klinge, this “Zwetschenbaum” (prune plum tree) variety could still be found in Estonia in the late 19th century, though he records its name as the *plumi puu* (plum tree) (Klinge 1883: 223–224). However, this variety was known here as the *Damaskuse ploom* (Damascus plum) and that its fruit was best suited for drying, as was described

in a newspaper (Anonymous 1898: 235). This name plum can be found in the database of Estonian plant names (ETA), its Latin name being *Prunus domestica* subspecies *insititia* variety *damasecna*. Thus, Göseken might not have had in mind the tree growing here but rather the imported dried fruit.

In Estonian, the names ploom (plum) and ploomipuu (plum tree) originated from Low German (*plūme* (plum), *plūm-bōm* (plum tree)), as is apparent from written sources. Heinrich Göseken's dictionary includes *luun* "Pflaume" (plum) and *luun puh* "Pflaum Baum" (plum tree) as well as *plumit* "zwetschena damascena" (Göseken 1660: 322, 494). The Latvian *plūme* (plum) and Livonian *plūm* (plum) were borrowed from Low German, but the Finnish word *luumu* (plum) was borrowed from Swedish (*plomon* (plum)) (Viikberg 2024, subsection ploom). In written Finnish (1637 *plumut*), plum is still known as *luumu*, *luumupuu* (plum, plum tree) (SSA 2: 115). However, in the 18th century, ploom appears next to pluum (Vestring 1720–1730: 182; Hupel 1780: 243), as the *au* diphthong (for example in the word Pflaume (plum)) of High German, which replaced Low German, sounded as an *oo* in the Baltic German pronunciation (Uibo 2010: 923). The *plaum* (plum), derived from German (*Pflaume* (plum)), indicates repeated borrowing as well (Wiedemann 1893: 837). Estonian dialect data shows that the *l*-initial German loanwords occur as *loom*, *loem* (in translation: animal) on the islands and in western Estonia, and as *lyym* in the Mulgi region (EMS VII: 596). Also notable in academician Wiedemann's dictionary (1869: 997) is the *mar'ja-pū* (berry tree) (D) "Pflaumenbaum" (plum tree) registered in Hiiumaa as several other fruit trees were also known by that name.

Common pear (*Pyrus communis* originates in Europe and has been bred in many varieties (PWO). The European wild pear (*Pyrus pyraster*) (ETLA) rarely found in western Estonia is no longer a separate species, but a subspecies (*Pyrus communis* subspecies *communis*) (PWO). In his book of plant names (1993: 517), Gustav Vilbaste has only provided the popular names for the common pear tree. People certainly distinguished natural trees in Estonia, although these names have not been collected or written down and so the literature-influenced *metspirnipuu* (wild pear tree) is most commonly known among the people today.

In his dictionary, Göseken provides *Saxa maria ouna puh* (German berry apple tree) as the Estonian equivalent to the German tree "birnbaum" (pear tree) and *Saxa marri Oun* (German berry apple) for the fruit "birn" (pear) (Göseken 1660: 140). As can be seen, Göseken, who worked in Kullamaa, derived these

names through the North Estonian name for *õunapu* (apple tree) (*Malus* species)⁷ *õun* (apple), as a familiar domestic fruit, while the “saksa” (German) *õun* (apple) denoted a foreign fruit. Anton Thor Helle, a pastor from Jüri and a developer of written Estonian, added “saksamaa” (Germany) in front of the fruit (“die Birne” (the pear)) as a clarification with *saksa-ma marri* (German berry) (1732: 173) and did not specify a separate “puu” (tree). The pastor of Põltsamaa, August Wilhelm Hupel (1780: 263; 1818: 215) followed the same naming form, using *saksa ma marri* (German berry) (“die Birne” (pear)). While the word was present only in the Tallinn (revalsche) dialect (r.) in the first edition of the grammar, by 1818 it had spread to the Tartu (dörptsche) dialect (d.), i.e. across the country.

Hupel, however, does not limit himself to “saksamaa mari” (German berry) or to the Tallinn dialect *marja pu*⁸ (berry tree) “Birnenbaum” (pear tree), he also presents in the Tallinn dialect (r.) *pirnid* (pears) “Birnen” borrowed from German (Hupel 1780: 214, 243) as well as in the Tartu dialect (d.) *pombre*⁹ *marja* (pear berry) borrowed from Baltic German “Birnen” (Hupel 1780: 246). George Gottfried Marpurge, a school writer, has an interesting example sentence in his school book: *Ubbina pu kannap ubbinid. Se pombre pu kannap pombre. See plumi pu kannap plumi marju. Se wisla pu kannap wisla pu marju.* (The apple tree bears apples. This pear tree bears pears. This plum tree carries bears’ berries. This cherry tree bears cherry berries.) (Marpurge 1805: 24–25). According to this categorisation of edible fruits, Marpurge only considered drupes as *marjad* (berries), although, as language data reveals, pomes were called *marjad* (berries) as well. Klinge (1883: 159) says of the *pumbri puu* (pear tree) that it is rarely seen growing in the wild in deciduous forests, in the shrubs or fields in the Baltic Sea provinces, although many varieties are grown in “pseudo-gardens” (“Gryten der Scheinfrucht wegen” (gardens for the sake of false fruit)). Could *pomber* (pear) denote a natural wild pear tree rather than the cultivated garden pear tree?

The botanist Johann Gottlieb Fleischer only mentions *Pirni pu* (pear tree) and *Marja pu* (berry tree) as the names for *Pyrus communis* on the list of Estonian names for plants in our region, noting that these names are common in both North and South Estonian (Fleischer 1830: 67). He did not separately emphasise “saksamaa” (Germany). Ivan Lunin’s Estonian–Russian dictionary, compiled on the basis of Hupel’s dictionaries, still has the old form of the name *saksa ma marri* (German berry) (“зруша (pear), дуля (small pear – grow natu-

rally, not cultivated)”) (Lunin 1853: 166). For clarification, today the “dulja” is the name for a variety of summer pears bred in southern Russia (perhaps also in Ukraine), which was not grown in our climate. Could this exoticism be the reason why Lunin emphasised “Saksamaa” (Germany) because he does not present it with other names: *pirn* (pear) (r, d.) “груша” (ibid.: 142); *pombre marri* (pear berry) (d.) and *pumberi pu* (pear tree) “грушевое дерево” (pear tree) (ibid.: 146).

All variants of the names that were in circulation at the time are listed in Wiedemann’s comprehensive Estonian–German dictionary. He mentions *pumbri-pū* (pear tree) “Birnbaum” (Wiedemann 1869: 998), *pombar* (pear), *pomber* (pear) and *pombre-mari* (pear berry) “Birne” (ibid.: 932), presents *saksa-mari-õun* (German berry apple) “Birne” (ibid.: 818) taken from Göseken’s dictionary, cites *saksa-mā-marjad* (German berries) (“Birnen”) (ibid.: 633) and the later loanword *pir´n* (pear) “Birne” (ibid.: 910). Although Wiedemann does use Latin for plants growing in Estonia in his dictionary, he does not highlight it in these cases.

As stated by the pomologist Jaan Spuhl-Rotalia (1912: 12), expensive pears with sophisticated flavours could not be grown in our climate at the time because of their aversion to cold. He specifies that southern varieties can only be grown as pot plants, while only low-value cooking pears could be grown outside. This might also explain why the dictionaries used “saksamaa” (Germany) specifically in relation to fruits that could have been imported for eating, and when “puu” (tree) was used, “saksamaa” was no longer mentioned, as this name could have denoted the natural wild pear tree. Moreover, in North Estonian, where the *saksamaa* name spread, the tree did not bear sweet fruit at the time, as suggested by the name of the southern variety “dulja” in the Estonian–Russian dictionary. Although the *saksamaa* name remained in dictionaries until the middle of the 19th century, it was more out of inertia after being transferred from earlier lexicons. By the time oral tradition collection began (from the end of the 19th century onwards), the pear was no longer known by its *saksamaa* name. It is possible that people never even called it that.

Developing from Low German, the Baltic German *Bumbeere* “Birnen” (pear) gave Estonian *pomber* ~ *pumber*, Latvian *bumbieris* and Livonian *bumbier* (Viikberg 2024, subspecies *pomber*) until *pirn*, from High German, became dominant by the end of the 19th century (although it was not borrowed into Latvian or Livonian).

Quince (*Cydonia oblonga*) comes from the Caucasus and from the area around the Persian Gulf. Only one mention is found – *saksa-õunapuu* (German apple tree) – in Gustav Vilbaste’s unpublished index of foreign plant names (Vilbaste 1953: 689). The authors have not found confirmation of this name in other written sources. It has been impossible subsequently to determine whether Vilbaste had collected it during fieldwork for his book of plant names in the first half of the 20th century (he completed the manuscript in 1944) or found it somewhere in a written source. Spuhl-Rotalia (1912: 184) points out that the quince can be propagated like currant (*Ribes* species) bushes, but does not mention its Estonian name.

Quince always freezes above the snow, so it must be carefully covered. Both species, common and Japanese, were bred (*Cydonia japonica*) (Klinge 1883: 158).

Citrus fruits (*Citrus* species). Göseken’s dictionary lists *Saxah mah oun* (German apple) first as the name for the lemon tree (*Citrus × limon*) and secondly as the name for the fruit of bitter orange (*Citrus × aurantium*) (Göseken 1660: 281 and 325). It seems that the name originated from Göseken himself, as did the *Hollandi mah Oun* (Dutch apple) “Citron” (Göseken 1660: 153) as they cannot be found in other sources. As is apparent, Göseken derived these names from the fruit of the *õunapuu* (apple tree) (*Malus* species) and in a form of a word known in North Estonian. The lemon and orange are both bred hybrids and grow in subtropical regions, here they can only grow in greenhouses. There are other examples of Göseken’s own creations where he paraphrases the foreign and new through something familiar, for example naming cotton “Baumwolle”¹⁰ with the help of sheep’s wool and adding “saksamaa” (Germany) to the front: *Saxa mah lamba willat* (German sheep’s wool) (ibid.: 125).

The Estonian *sidrun* (lemon) is a loan word from German (< de *Zitrone*) that first appears in the written word in Johann Lithander’s Estonian translation of a cookbook by the famous Swedish chef Christina (Cajsa) Warg (1781)¹¹. In it, they recommend adding *Sitroni wilud* (lemon slices) to poultry soups (Lithander 1781: 18), grate *Sitroni koort* (lemon peel), make *Sitroni Moos* (lemon jam) *munadest* (with eggs) (“Zitronmoos von Eyer” (lemon jam with eggs)), cook up a *Sitroni pudder* (lemon porridge) (Zitronbrey) (ibid.: 564, 579), etc. However, in the same cookbook, the German loanword *lemon* (< de *Lemon*) appears next to *sidrun* in the same sense: *lemoni wilokad ~ wilokessed* (lemon slices) are suitable for meat dishes (ibid.: 12, 75, 125, 207), desserts (ibid.: 500,

505), but you can also simply *Lemonid sisse tehha* (preserve lemons) (“*Lemonen einzumachen*”) (ibid.: 447). Other citrus fruit mentioned in the cookbook are *pomerants* (bitter orange) and *orans* “*apelsin*” (orange). The author recommends adding *katki leigatud Pomerantsi koort* (chopped bitter orange peel) to cream or beer soup (ibid.: 42) and gives instructions on how to distil *Oransi* (orange) water from *apelsini* (orange) tree flowers (“*Orangewasser zu distilliren*”) (ibid.: 683), in particular, this could be added to colostrum cake (ibid.: 531) and cream (ibid.: 561).

Lemons and oranges were imported from France at the end of the 18th century, but more progressive manors grew them in greenhouses here as well (Plath 2010). The cultivation of lemon trees was taught by the later Mayor of Riga Samuel Holst, the Estonian translation of whose writing¹² for gardeners details what needs to be done in January. *Mes Kaswamisse-hone sissen, kun Citroni nink muu saksa maa Puid nink Lomad ehk Lillid, mes talwitsel ajal Külma kätte ei woi jätta, hoietas ja üllespeetas, tullep tähhele pannema* (You need to pay attention to what happens inside the greenhouse where the lemon and other German trees, animals or flowers that cannot be left in the cold for the winter, are stored and maintained) (Lenz 1796: 6). The following is noted as March tasks: *Saksa ma-pu ehk Oransi honen nink lilli üllespidamisse Kambrin. Citroni nink Oransi puiele woip nüüd, kui se tarwis am, wastset mulda anda, nink neid ümberistutada* (A greenhouse is needed to grow and maintain the German tree or Oransi. If necessary lemon and orange trees can now be given fresh soil and then transplanted) (ibid.: 14–15). As can be seen Lenz categorises foreign trees that are sensitive to frost and can only be grown in a greenhouse as “*saksamaa puud*” (German trees).

Pomerants (bitter orange) (*Pomeranze*) “orange-like sour fruit of the bitter orange tree” is also a German loanword, registered in Estonian lexicons since Wiedemann’s Estonian–German dictionary (1869: 941): **põmerants* ‘Pommeranze’¹³. The posthumously published¹⁴ German–Estonian dictionary by Georg Tuksam, mainly known for his work in the theatre, translates the German *Pomeranze* as “*pomerants*”, “*apelsin*” (bitter orange, orange) (Tuksam 1939: 763), despite these being two different fruits. In Warg’s cookbook, they are called by the German loanword *Pomerants* and *Orans* (bitter orange, orange) (< *de Orange*), but by the 19th century, *orans* had been replaced by a newer German loan *apelsin* (< *Apfelsine*): *Sealt* (Sitsiiliast) *tullewad Sitronid, Appelsinid, wigid, mandlid, rosinaid ja kallid plumid* (Lemons, oranges, figs, almonds, raisins and

expensive plums come from Sicily) (Masing 1823: 228). Curiously, the earlier names of sidrun and apelsin (lemon, orange) did not disappear too quickly, as Wiedemann's second edition (1893: 500, 713) still contains **limõn* 'Limonè' and **oranji* ~ *orang* 'Orange', and Lauri Kettus' Estonian–Finnish dictionary (1917) still has *limon* 'sitruuna'.

Sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) is originally from the Bapans and the eastern Mediterranean area. It has been grown in Europe since antiquity as an ornamental tree and a food plant. The tree is sensitive to cold, which is why we still only have it in a few arboretums today. In his dictionary, Göseken provides *Sazamah pechklet* (German nut) as an equivalent to "Castanien"¹⁵ (Göseken 1660: 153), which probably originates from the author himself again. The name *Saxamah pechklet*¹⁶ (German nut) does not refer to trees, but to fruit that could have been brought for food from warmer areas. Warg's cookbook does say *Tuwitud pruunkapsta sisse sünnib Kastanid ehk sinnised Rossinad panna* (You can put chestnuts or blue raisins into stewed (brown) cabbage) (Lithander 1781: 375), but you can also *kastanid pradida* (fry chestnuts) ("Castanien zu braten") (ibid.: 398). Leaves of the *Folia Castanea* tree were sold in pharmacies as medicine as early as the 20th century under the name of *kastanilehed* (chestnut leaves) or as *Päris ehk Saksa kastanipuu lehed* (real or German chestnut tree leaves) (Vallner 1920: 22).

The German loanword *kastan* (chestnut) (< de *Kastanie*) is first mentioned in the *Marahwa Näddala-Leht* (Countryfop's Weekly Paper) (1823), where Masing introduces Europe's oldest and largest trees. One of them was a chestnut tree that could fit 30 horses in its cavity: "There is a *Kastani pu* [chestnut tree] (*Castagniaro di cento cavalli* – a tree of a hundred horses, as the people there call it) in Europe on the island of Sicily, which is considered the largest of them all: it stands on the fiery mountain of Etna, halfway up the hill" (Masing 1823: 255–256)¹⁷. However, the word *kastan* (chestnut) had been used in the much earlier unpublished Estonian Bible translation manuscripts (see Eesti piiblitõlge 2020): "And Jacob took sticks of *Pappellipuhst, Sarrapuhst, ninck Kastonnepuhst* [raw poplar wood, ash wood and chestnut wood]" (Gutslaff 1648–1656); "But Jacob took stick(s) of verdant *Popli-Puust, Sara-Puust, nink Kastania-Puust* [poplar wood, ash wood and chestnut wood]" (Virginius 1687–1690).

Common hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) is of European origin and was once widespread in our area in times of warmer climate (around 8000–6500 BP)

(Kukk et al 2000: 99). Currently sporadically cultivated, the closest natural sites are in southern Lithuania (Kukk 1999: 162). Our common hornbeam is considered to be at the northernmost boundary of its habitation; the tree, which is sensitive to cold, has also attracted attention in scientific literature. It can be found growing naturally and even in stands in Rucava (Rutzau) on the southern tip of Courland. It tolerates pruning well and in Germany is often used for hedges, arbours, etc. It is a suitable hedge plant especially because it preserves most of its dried foliage until spring (Klinge 1883: 131–132). This is why attempts were made to grow it here as well and why the common hornbeam has been found in rural parks and urban landscaping. According to forester Eduard Viirok, the trees could be found in many places around Estonia in the 1920s and 1930s. In Tallinn, they even grew in several groups and as hedges in two places similarly to elsewhere in Europe (Kanger, Sander 2004: 25). Even recently there were 49 trees in ten habitats in Tallinn, the oldest being at least 70 years old (Sander 1998: 36–37).

In Vilbaste's unpublished index of foreign plant names, it is called *saksamaa saar* (German ash) (Vilbaste 1953: 689)¹⁸, although it has been impossible to determine subsequently which sources he relied on. At the same time, Göseken's dictionary provides the Estonian equivalent to the German "Hayn büche" (common hornbeam) as *saxamah wachter puh* (German maple tree) (Göseken 1660: 231), which is also mentioned by Wiedemann's dictionary with a reference to Göseken: *saksa-mā-waher* ("Hainbuche") (Wiedemann 1869: 1424). These names with the *saksamaa* (Germany) complement have not been passed down in literature, and no such names for the common hornbeam have been recorded in oral tradition either.

Pine trees (*Pinus* species) is a large genus, although only the Baltic pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) is native to Estonia. Wiedemann's dictionary (1869: 648) names the German equivalents of *saksa-mā-mänd* (German pine) as both "Weymouthskiefer" (Weymouth pine) and "Lärche" (larch)¹⁹. In the German linguistic area, Weymouths-Kiefer is known as white pine (*Pinus strobus*), which hails from North America but is now grown in Europe as well. Vilbaste's manuscript calls the stone pine (*Pinus cembra*) the *saksamaa mänd* (German pine) (Vilbaste 1953: 670). We have not found any additional sources of the "German" complement for either of the pine species. Evidently, people did not distinguish between foreign pines, nor differentiate them by name.

Of all pines, both the white and stone pine received greater attention. It was said of the former that this majestic tree formed large forests in North America and is an ornamental tree common (“verbreiteter” (common, widespread, prevalent)) in our gardens, parks and churchyards that can withstand the harshest of winters. Stone pine was said to have often been planted in our parks and gardens (“häufig angepflanzt” (often planted)) (Klinge 1883: 15).

Fir (*Abies* species) has no species native to Estonia. Volume III of the *Eesti õigekeelsuse-sõnaraamat* (‘Estonian Spelling Dictionary’) provides the keyword *saksamaa kuusk* with the equivalent botanical species as fir²⁰, fir tree and the German definition of “Abies, Edel-, Weiss- oder Silbertanne” (fir, silver fir) (EÕS 1937: 1242). As can be seen, this was used to name the whole *Abies* genus, not individual species. The best known fir species in Estonia is the European silver fir (*Abies alba*), known as *Edeltanne*, *Weisstanne* ja *Silbertanne*²¹ in Germany, as its needles are silvery. Even if there were attempts made to grow the European silver fir in Estonia, it was sensitive to cold here and thus was often lost to frost. The first mention of this is late, from 1865 (Kukk 1999: 86), nevertheless the species should have been given an Estonian name by then. Yet, the German–Estonian dictionary published in the 1930s provides several translations for *Edeltanne*: “hõbekuusk, nulg, nulupuu, saksamaa kuusk” (silver fir, fir, fir tree, German spruce) (Tuksam 1939: 220). The confusion presumably stemmed from the fact that, for example, the part I of List of Estonian plants called the *Abies* as *kuused* (spruces) in Estonian (KT 1918: 59). In Finnish, the European silver fir was called *Saksan kuusi*, *Saksankuusi* (German spruce) (Suhonen 1936: 18) by as early as the end of the 19th century.

Saksamaa kuusk (German spruce) has been documented in spoken fop language, as shown in this linguistic example from Juuru (1948): *saksamaa kuusk on ja saksamaa määnd* (the German spruce is and the German pine) *on - - nad on nagu allikad* (are ... they are like greyish) (“hallikad” (greyish)), *ikke okkad külgis* (still with needles attached) (Viikberg 2023: 18). In addition to the fir genus, the *hõbekuusk* or *ilukuusk* (blue spruce) (*Picea pungens*) also has greyish needles. However, this decorative spruce was not grown here until the end of the 19th century. The following excerpt shows a use for its resin: “Spruce resin for wounds. It was boiled with onion and lard. It was made quite often, children were sent to gather it. They were called German spruces and had very soft branches. With shiny dark green needles, the bottom of which were

matte – this one’s resin we gathered.” EFA II 26, 107 (11) < Helme khk. – Mall Hiiemäe < Aita Vähi (1998).

Another foreign conifer, the Douglas fir²² (*Pseudotsuga menziesii* synonym *Abies menziesii*) was introduced to Estonia in the last quarter of the 19th century. One note on this tree comes from Tallinn, where city government official Ernst Gerhard Stauden experimented with acclimatising a large number of Douglas firs in 1880, although the attempt failed completely (Klinge 1883: 11). Today Douglas firs are common in Estonia and Estonian culture (Kukk 1999: 87). Following Germany’s example, they were first planted in manor parks and forests. Forester Harry Paal said at the end of the 19th century: “Therefore, it was natural that the boom of experimenting with and growing foreign trees quickly reached Estonia from Germany. Introduced larch, fir and Douglas fir became popularly known as ‘German spruce’ among people” (Paal 1989: 80). The authors have not found any indication that the species was known by this name and suspect that Harry Paal made it up.

Confusion with the common ash. This confusion was caused by Göseken, who presented *Saxa Mah Sara Puh* as the Estonian equivalent of the German Esche and the Latin *Fraxinus* (Göseken 1660: 180). It is questionable whether the common ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) was so rare here at the time that it would have been named by its originating country, as alien trees were. Presumably, though, he meant South European flowering ash (*Fraxinus ornus*)²³, which grows naturally in southern Europe and has seen attempts at cultivation here as well. No later dictionary or botanical literature confirms *saksamaa sarapuu* (German ash) as the name for the common ash. On the contrary, the name refers to beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), as can be seen from our early written texts: *Saxa Sahrne Puh* “büchen Holz” (German ash tree) (Göseken 1660: 150), *saksa ma saar* and *saksa sarra pu* “die Büche, Buche r. d.” (Hupel 1780: 263), *saksa ma saar* “Büche, Buche r. d.” ja *saksa sarra* od. *sarra pu* “Büche, Buche r. d.” (Hupel 1818: 215), *Saksasarra-pu* (Анненков 1878: 143).

Even in the early 20th century, this name was used to denote beech. This is also stated in the Spelling Dictionary of Estonian: *saksamaa saar* (German ash) = *pöökpui* (beech tree) (EÖS 1937: 1242). Several examples can be found in the press of the time. In the newspaper *Sakala*, someone called K. describes the German experience in their article “How to make commercial trees resilient”: “(they) had the big *saksamaa sarapuu* (Buche) [German ash tree (Buche)] chopped down when it had the most juice (moisture content)

and immediately cut down into rectangular logs” (K 1923: 4). An ad from the commercial section of a newspaper from 1906 reads: ”Updated German horse engine and threshing machines. 10 foot long, *Saksamaa sarapuu* [German ash] frames on ball bearings, which makes the machines much stronger, have made it here and are being sold at lowest possible prices by Chr. Sander’s machine shop, next to the big market in Viljandi” (Anonymous 1906: 6). A newspaper from the 1930s describes the work of model makers and mentions in addition to domestic tree species: “In model making, cedar, „*saksamaa sarapuu*” [“German ash”] and other extremely strong wood species are used to a lesser extent” (Anonymous 1938: 2). Some reports have been transcribed from oral tradition, for example Kiheponna parish records from 1942 show that: “suured laigud [laual] sees, nee on saksama sarabud” (big patches [on the table], these are German ash wood) (Viikberg 2023: 18).

The Estonian name for the beech tar drug *Oleum Fagi empyreumaticum*, sold in the pharmacies of the time, was *Saksamaa saare tõrv* (German ash tar) (Vallner 1920: 33; 1929: 124), which people and the pharmacists simply called *saaretõrv*²⁴ (ash tar) (Vallner 1929: 124). This might also have been the reason why in Estonia, people started to heat ash trees for (medicinal) tar in domestic conditions (more in Sõukand, Kalle 2008).

Common plant names with the *saksamaa* complement that were listed in dictionaries and supported by official terminology

Larch (*Larix* species) species have been introduced to Estonia from Europe and Asia, though mainly from the European part of Russia. It has been cultivated for a long time and is widespread here. We know of 230-year-old and even older larches. Because the European larch (*Larix decidua*) and the Siberian larch (*Larix sibirica*) are similar, they were for a long time, even in the 19th century, considered to be the same species *Pinus larix* according to Carl von Linné in 1753, which is why their common names coincide in both literature and among the people. Despite its early introduction, this genus was first mentioned only in Wiedemann’s dictionary: *saksa-mā-män’ d* (German pine) “Lärche, Weymouthskiefer” (larch, Weymouth pine) (Wiedemann 1869: 648) and *saksa-mā-kūs’ k* (German spruce) “Lärche” (*Larix*) (ibid.: 468). However,

Wiedemann, also known as a botanist, has caused confusion as the tree known as Weymouthskiefer is actually the white pine (*Pinus strobus*, Ger. Weymouths-Kiefer), which was introduced to Estonia almost at the same time as the larch. Teacher Juhan Kunder only presents the European larch: “Se jaost [kuuse ja männi] on ka weel saksamaa pedakas ehk lärjepuu soome keeles lehtikuusi (*Larix europaea*). See okaspuu ajab talweks omad „kübemed” ehk okad maha. Kaswab aias aga ka metsas” (Among [spruce and pine] is the German larch, lehtikuusi in Finnish. This conifer sheds its ‘particles’ or needles for the winter. Grows in both gardens and forests) (Kunder 1881: 83). The “lärjepuu” that Kunder mentions is borrowed from German (< de Lärche “larch”) and was in use in the 20th century as well: *lärjepuu* “lehtmänd” (leafy pine) (EÕS 1925: 443), *lärjepuu* (old for “lehis”) (ÕS 1980: 392) (Viikberg 2024, subsection lärjepuu). Larch has also been planted in forests in the last quarter of the 18th century in Livonia and in the early decades of the 19th century in Estonia. Only the European larch, referred to as *Lehtkuusk* (leafy spruce), *Saksamaa pädakas*, *Saksamaa mänd*, *Saksamaa kuusk* (German larch, pine, spruce) and *Lärjepuu* (larch tree) was referenced in part I of Local list of flowering plants (Niclasen, Aidas 1907: 4). Larch turpentine (“Terebinthina laricina”), known as *Saksamaa kuuse vaik* (German spruce resin) by the people, was sold in pharmacies in the 1920s (Vallner 1929: 124).

Lehtkuusk (leafy spruce) is probably borrowed from Finnish (see: *lehtikuusi* (*Larix*) Mägiste 1931: 256). Only isolated reports from the mid-19th century in the forms of *Saksannäre* (young German spruce) and *Saksankuusi* (German spruce) are known from Finland (Suhonen 1936: 194). Student Dmitri Tsvetkov has noted *saksā kūsi* (German spruce) in Votian in the 1920s (Vilbaste 1957: 177), cf. *saksaa kuusi* “lehis (larch) (Saksamaa kuusk (German spruce))” (VKS 2013: 1105). The Ingrian as well as Ingrian Finnish for larch is *saksankuusi* (German spruce) “lehtikuusi” (leafy spruce) (IMS 1971: 501), which was identified by Vilbaste as *Larix sibirica* (Vilbaste TN3: 580). *Saksäküzõ* (German spruce) “lehis; lapegle (*Larix*)” (larch) has been noted in Livonian (LELS 2012: 279). Latvian has also called larch the German spruce – *Vāczemes egle* “Lärche” (VLV 1944: 325), while today it is *lapegle: Eiropas lapegle* (European larch) and *Sibīrijas lapegle* (Siberian larch) (ELS 2015: 419).

Larch has been commonly known as the *saksamaa kuusk* in North Estonian and as the *saksamaa kuus* in South Estonian (Vilbaste 1993: 387), additionally in areas of western Estonia as *saksamaa-mänd* (German pine) and *saksamaa*

kuusk and in Setomaa as *säksakuus*²⁵, *säksamaa-kuus*, *säksamaa-petäi* (German spruce, spruce, pine) (ibid.). *Lehis* (larch) as a name was created by foresters in the 1920s and later supplanted *saksamaa kuusk* in use. This shows that the very commonly grown larch was often used to create boulevards (of mixed European and Siberian larch) did not keep their German loanword name *lärjepuu* (< Lärche (larch)), but rather an Estonian name was created to replace it (via the tree names of spruce and pine).

Shadbush (*Amelanchier* species) has far more than 20 species that hail from Europe, Asia and North America, but as they are quite similar in appearance and their systematisation is complicated and confusing, they are not commonly distinguished based on species. They are grown as a decorative and fruit tree (Arus 2022). Although Klinge mentions that they tried to grow shadbushes here as early as the 19th century (Klinge 1883: 186), botanical literature provides their first cultivation period as the 1930s (Kukk 1999: 214). The thicket shadbush (*Amelanchier spicata* (Lam.) K. Koch) was originally from America and is now on occasion widely naturalised, even in forests. The natural distribution area of the snowy mespilus (*A. ovalis* Medik.) is Central, Western and Southern Europe. It too naturalises easily here. The *saksamaa* complement was first used in the reprint of List of Estonian plants (KT 1918: 18) as *Saksamaa toompihlakas* (German shadbush). The name *toompihlakas* (shadbush) came from following the example of the Finnish *tuomipihlaja* (Vilbaste 1993: 149), previously it did not have an Estonian name. The name of the tree took different forms in the colloquial language, becoming *saksamaa toomingas*, *saksamaa tuum* (German hackberry) (Vilbaste 1953: 648, 699, 702); *saksa tüym* “toom” has been noted in Hargla in 1947 (Viikberg 2023: 18). Specialised literature has and still helps spread the name among people, as one of the parallel names for the shadbush is *Saksamaa toomingas* (German hackberry (see Arus 2022)).

Elder (*Sambucus* species) genus has two species we are more familiar with. Black elderberry²⁶ (*Sambucus nigra*) is a natural shrub that grows all over Europe, though it is sensitive to cold in Estonia and can only be found naturally in western Estonia. It has long been a well-known food and medicinal plant in Europe. Archaeological excavations show that elders were already cultivated near Pirita Monastery (1407–1577) (Reppo et al. 2021: 233). Red elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*)²⁷ originates from Eurasia and today is widely naturalised. Both species of elderwood have also been grown here as ornamental trees.

Botanist Otto Friedrich Pistohips was the first to present the Estonian names of elder in his index of trees and shrubs growing in Livonia, including the saksamaa complemented Saksama lodja pu (German guelder rose tree) (Pistohips 1797: 180) and Koera öispu (guelder rose tree) (ibid.) as a second name variant. Both names denote the native guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*), its common name koer(a)öispuu (guelder rose tree) being more common in North Estonian and lodjapuu (guelder rose tree) (~ lodjap, loidapu, loedapuu) in South Estonian (Vilbaste 1993: 657; EMS III: 391, 393; V: 319). Names provided by Pistohips are also passed on unchanged by Friebe, for example Koera öis pu (guelder rose tree) and Saksama lodja pu (German guelder rose tree) (Friebe 1805: 55). He says that this tree is natural on Saaremaa and other small islands, while it is sensitive to cold on the mainland and does not bear fruit. It is grown in gardens as a medicinal plant (ibid.)²⁸. Doctor Wilhelm Johann Engelbrecht Zoeckell forwards this information in his index of medicinal plants growing naturally and in gardens, except that he makes a mistake when copying names: Saksama ladja (pro lodja) pu (German guelder rose tree) (Zoeckell 1828: 389). Botanist Johann Gottlieb Fleischer then summarises the previously published Estonian names, presenting the typing error ladja pu next to Saksama lodja pu. While he notes that Saksama lodja pu is of the North Estonian (revalsche) dialect, he does not mark the Saksama ladja pu with its erroneous a (Fleischer 1830: 47). Klinge no longer provides the erroneous name, but just the saksama lodja puu (German guelder rose tree) (Klinge 1883: 31)²⁹. Eduard Philipp Körber, a clergyman in Võnnu, notes the saksa (German) in the name with an x: Saxa ma lodja pu (see Vilbaste 1993: 565). The importance of the black elderberry as a medicinal plant is demonstrated by it being mentioned in the first Estonian-language book on medicinal herbs³⁰:

Wleedri pu, ehk Saksa ma lodja pu (Elder tree or the German guelder rose tree). Shrub-like, most common in herb gardens. White flowers in loose wide bunches, strong stench, dried in the shade and given for sweating when someone has a cold, or bone aches, or neck aches or cough. Then take a spoonful of dried flowers, pour into a cup [1 kortel – here is roughly 300 ml] of boiling water, cover to prevent the medicine from evaporating and let sit for a long while. Then strain liquid and drink this water warm, lay down in bed and cover up warmly] (Jannau 1857: 50–51)

The name for the guelder rose common in North Estonian, *õispuu* (flower tree), is first associated with the *saksamaa* complement in Wiedemann's dictionary: *saksa-mā-õiz'-pū* (German flower tree) "Flieder (elder) (*Sambucus nigra*)" (Wiedemann 1869: 810), included as well is the *saksamā-lod'ja-pū* (German guelder rose tree) "schwarzer Flieder (black elderberry) (*Sambucus nigra*)" (ibid.: 569), which was mentioned in literature earlier. After that, Kunder presents the two names in his natural science textbook *Saksamaa õispuu* and *Saksamaa lodjapuu*, except he uses both of them for the entire genus of *Sambucus* (Kunder 1881: 49). Distinction was not previously made between elder species in Finland either, and the whole genus was called *Saksanheisipuu* (German guelder rose tree) and *Saksanheisi* (German guelder rose) (Suhonen 1936: 337). *Heisi* in Estonian is guelder rose.

Saksamaa õispuu (German flower tree) and *saksamaa lodjapuu* (German guelder rose tree) were last mentioned among the other common names for black elder in Jaan Spuhl-Rotalia's pomology book (1912: 392). He says that this tree mainly grows in cities, at manors and by churches because it has been imported here, and recommends that it should be grown more as a medicinal, ornamental as well as a food plant (ibid.). However, neither of the black elder names with the *saksamaa* complement appear in materials recorded at the time of the collection of oral tradition. This means that these names were no longer in use by the end of the 19th century. However, names for the *Flores sambuci* ("leeripuu õied" (elder tree flowers)) such as *Saksamaa lodjapuu õied* (German guelder rose tree flowers), *Saksamaa õispuu õied* (German flower tree flowers) and *Saksamaa õitsepuu* (German flowering tree) lived on in the vernacular of the pharmacists (Vallner 1929: 124).

The *leeder* (elder) in use today was borrowed from the Low German (< mlg *vlêder*) and was registered in the work translated by August Wilhelm Hupel for "Lühhike õppetus" (a short teaching) (Hupel 1766: 63): *Se pu mis saksad Holundri ehk Wlidri puuks nimmetawad, on keigeparrematte ja kallimatte pude seltsist* (This tree, which the masters call the Holunder or Wilder tree, is among the best and most expensive trees). Hupel's dictionary (1780: 400) lists the loan word as *wledri pu* (elder tree), listing it as spread in both Tallinn (r.) and Tartu (d.) dialects. The Baltic Germans called this tree *Flieder* (elder) "statt Holunder (*Sambucus nigra*)" (Hupel 1795: 66) (see also Pistohpors 1797: 180). In Germany, *Flieder* has primarily denoted the elder tree ("Holunder"),

but as of 16th century, the name *Flieder* also transferred to the lilac (“Syringe”; *syringa vulgaris*) (Kluge 2002).

Persian walnut (*Juglans regia*) is originally native to the eastern Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf areas, although today the trees are grown widely around Europe for their edible seeds. Here it is rarely grown as a fruit tree; there is a report from Viljandi in the 1930s that taps about using walnut trees for boulevards (Anonymous 1932a). A larger walnut tree, the seeds of which could germinate, grew in Mõntu, Saaremaa, until the end of World War II (Laas 1987: 656; Kukk 1999: 184).

Several large trees grow on Saaremaa today, for example in Kaali village: “two nearly six-metre-tall *Kreeka pähklipuud* [Persian walnut] trees, one of which yielded a good potato-basket-full of harvest this year” (Rand 2007).

The word *pähklipuu* (nut tree) appeared in Estonian in the 18th century, when Helle’s Estonian grammar (1732: 299) mentions *saksama pähkle pu*³¹ (German nut tree) (‘Wall-nussbaum’) among other tree names. The name *saksa ma pähkla pu* (German nut tree) (‘Wallnussbaum’) can also be found in Hupel’s dictionary (1780: 263) and is a word from Tallinn (revalsche), though in the second print of the book Hupel only mentions the name of the fruit *saksa ma pähklad* (German nuts) (Hupel 1818: 215). These nuts were recommended as an addition to different dishes, for example the *Uus Kögi- ja Kokka ramat* (‘New Kitchen and Cook Book’) suggests adding (if at hand) *sampinjongid* (button mushrooms), *saksama pähklaid* (German nuts) and *kapprid* (capers) to *lõhhe-* (salmon) *ja wärske leste-kalla soosti* (and fresh flounder cold sauce) (Henning 1825: 15).

Even later sources mention only the fruit (nuts) but not the tree, such as *saksa-mā-pähkel* (German nut), *sūr’-pähkel* (large nut) (‘Wallnuss’ (walnut)) in Wiedemann’s dictionary (1869: 862) or *saksa-maa-pähkel* (‘грецкий орѣхъ, волоский орѣхъ’) in Salem’s Estonian–Russian dictionary (1890: 266). Thus, they meant imported seeds, not the trees themselves, which is also confirmed by the name of the fruit spreading into fop tradition: *saksama pähken*, *saksama(a) pähknä*, *saksama pähkid* (German nut(s)) and the explanation of the Martna language guide (1945): *saksamaa pähklid* (German nuts) (are) *õuna suurdused, toodi võeralt maalt* (the size of an apple, brought from foreign lands) (Viikberg 2023: 18).

The tree is mentioned again in the first edition of List of Estonian plants when the species had to be named and became *Saksamaa pähklipuu* (German nut tree) (KT 1917: 56). However, a year later, the reprint read *Türgi pähklipuu*

(Turkish nut tree) (KT 1918: 45). Both names were used during the following transition period. For example, the official name of the drug *Folia Juglandis* sold in pharmacies was *Türgi pähkclipuu lehed* (Turkish nut tree leaves), though *Saksamaa pähkclipuu lehed* (German nut tree leaves) was still used as a parallel name (Vallner 1920: 22; 1929: 124). Although nature-related vocabulary started to favour the name *Türgi pähkclipuu* (Turkish nut tree), the use of both *türgi pähkclipuu* (Turkish nut tree) as well as *saksamaa pähkclipuu* (German nut tree) was considered correct in written language until the end of the 1930s (EÕS 1937: 1242). At the same time, the Finnish–Estonian dictionary does not mention Turkey at all and the Estonian equivalents are given: the fruit name *saksanpähkinä* is *saksamaa pähkel* (German nut) and *saksamaa pähkclipuu* is used for the species name *saksanpähkinäpuu* (German nut tree) (Mägiste 1931: 484). The third name – *kreeka pähkclipuu* (Greek nut tree) – spread among the people in the 1930s (Anonymous 1932), becoming the tree name to this day. The “*saksanpähkinä*”, still used in Finnish, was first mentioned in the 17th century: *Saxan pähkinnepuu* (German nut tree) ja *Saxan pähkinnä* (German nut). Later literature also included the dialectal forms *Saksanpähkinä-puu*, *Saksanpähkinäpuu*, *Saxan-pähkinä*, *Saxan pähkinä*, *varsinainen saksanpähkinä* (Suhonen 1936: 186).

Estonian journalist, linguist and writer Juhan Peegel has observed that in runic verse, the word “*neiu*” (maiden) has been used synonymously with *saksa õun* (German apple) on Kihnu island and in Kärdla, *saksa mari* (German berry) in Jõhvi and Paide, *Saksa pähkel* (German nut) in Kose (Peegel 1975: 99). It is likely that the name did not refer to specific species of fruit in these cases, but the *saksa* complement has been used to give the young woman an aristocratic, i.e. a fancier or more sophisticated dimension³².

Common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)³³ originates naturally in Europe. During the warmer climate period in the early Neolithic period (6500–5000 BP), broad-leaf forests were common throughout the Estonian area and beech was one of the most important trees (Kukk et al. 2000: 101). When the climate cooled, it disappeared. Beech was one of the earliest cultivated tree species here (Hupel 1777: 493) due to its fame and sparse spread in Europe. We know of large old trees, though they are somewhat sensitive to cold (Kukk 1999: 179).

Anton Thor Helle’s dictionary translates “*Buchbaum*” as *saksamaa saar* (German ash) (Helle 1732: 299). In his book describing the nature of Livonia, naturalist Jakob Benjamin Fisher also mentions the Estonian tree name *Sak-*

samaa Saar (German ash) (Fischer 1778: 299) and specifies that the attempt to grow them from seed failed as the cold killed them all at once in the first winter. However, he adds that beech could be found quite often on the banks of the river Daugava (de Düna) near the town of Lielvārde (de Lennewarden) in today's Latvia (ibid.: 138). Hupel's dictionary from the same period (1780: 263) lists two names, *saksa ma saar* (German ash) and *saksa sarra pu* (German ash tree), which are in use both in North and South Estonian; additionally, the second edition of the dictionary also lists *saksa sarre pu* (German ash tree) (Hupel 1818: 215).

Repeating Fischer's account of tree spread, Friebe mentions (1805: 18) that beech can supposedly be found in Courland in the so-called Oberland (highlands), sometimes naturalised, but specifies that if the Latvian and Estonian names really represent that tree, its presence could be assumed. However, he had not found them growing naturally anywhere inland (ibid.). Friebe repeats Fischer's Estonian name *Saksamaa saar* (German ash) ("saar" uncapitalised), praises its good wood and recommends growing it. Later, Wiedemann claims in a book describing the vegetation of our region (Wiedemann, Weber 1852: 578–579), that Fischer's data on the natural presence of Beech are erroneous as the climate is too cold for it. He specifies that even if a few old trees had once been found (in Livonia), they were most likely planted and not naturally occurring trees. He provides *saksa-mā-sār'* (German ash) as the Estonian equivalent for "Buche" (beech) in his Estonian–German dictionary (Wiedemann 1869: 1120). In an earlier Estonian–Russian dictionary, compiled according to Hupel, the same *saksa ma saar* (German ash) was translated as "буковое дерево" (beech tree) (Lunin 1853: 166). Hupel's dictionary provides *saksa ma saar* (German ash) and *saksa sarra pu* (German ash tree) as the translations for beech (Hupel 1780: 263). While the first name did transfer into other lexicons, the second appeared in only a few cases, for example Nikolai Annenkov's botanical dictionary: *Saksamaa saar*, *Saksamasaar*, *Saksasarra-pu* (German ash, ash, ash tree) (Анненков 1878: 143). Clearly, "sarra pu" is not sarapuu (hazelnut tree) (*Corylus avellana*) but "sarapuu" is rather derived from the erroneous transcription of "saarepuu" (ash tree).

Hupel provided *walge raag* (white branch) d(örptsch) as the Estonian translation for the German *Weissbüchen* (common hornbeam) (Hupel 1780: 466). And the 1818 edition he lists *raag* (branch) d. "weisser Weidenbaum"; "Buche" (white willow, beech) and *walge raag* (white branch) d. "Weissbüchen"

(common hornbeam) (Hupel 1818: 197). It can therefore be assumed that in the early written word the Estonian name did not so much mean a species of tree growing here, but rather beechwood imported for joinery. Thus Göseken only provides beechwood (“büchen Holtz”) in his dictionary and provides *Saxa Sahrne Puh* (German ash tree) as its equivalent (Göseken 1660: 231)³⁴. Kunder also emphasises the importance of wood: “*saksamaa saar*, (*fagus sylvatica*) [German ash (*fagus sylvatica*)] which grows in Southern Europe and is used to [make] cigar boxes and herring vats” (Kunder 1881: 70). Only the names *Saksan saarni*, *Saxan saarni*, *Saksantammi*, *Saxan tammi* (German ash, oak) have been registered from the Finnish dialects in the middle of the 19th century (Suhonen 1936: 152). As you can see, the hardwood beech was named after domestic trees ash and oak, with similar hardwood properties.

When in the early 20th century, for example in the 9th edition of Jannau’s German–Estonian dictionary (1906), the name *saksamaa saar* (German ash) was still present, but later began to disappear from written language. In the first edition of List of Estonian plants the tree was called *pukspuu* (*Saksamaa saar*) (boxwood (German ash)) as a parallel name to beech (KT 1917: 39), however, in the following edition, boxwood had become *pöökpuu* (*Saksamaa saar*) (beech tree (German ash)) (KT 1918: 44). It remained in circulation as a parallel name until the end of the 1930s, when the *Estonian Spelling Dictionary* gave *pöökpuu* (beech tree) as the equivalent to *saksamaa saar* (German ash) (EÖS 1937: 1242). *Saksamaa saar* is recorded in five parishes from the collection of oral dialect (Viikberg 2023: 18), which is not much.

The source for the Estonian word *pöök* (beech) is usually presented as the Low German *böke* and/or the Swedish *bök* (EEW 1882: 2335; Raun 1882: 136; EES 2012: 406), though it seems to correspond only on the phonetic side. The explanation is questionable due to its very late occurrence in written Estonian, as Low German loans present it early on and *pöök* (beech) is quite unknown in dialect. The word has also been considered a loan in Livonian (*bū̀g̃-bòum̃* “Buche, Buchenbaum” < nds *bōk* “Buchecker” Kettunen 1938: 33), presently *bukspū* “pöök” (LELS 2012: 50), which also shows the *pukspuu* (boxwood) name (< de *Buchsbaum* < lad *buxus*). Finnish *pyökki* (*fagus sylvatica*) is an ancient loan from Swedish³⁵. In the case of the Estonian *pöök*, preference should be given to the Swedish origin over the Low German, although borrowing from Finnish cannot be excluded either (Viikberg 2016, subsection *pöök*).

Filbert (*Corylus maxima* Mill.) is naturally found only in Greece, Turkey and the Caucasus region, elsewhere, including here, it is grown as a cultivated plant. Its seeds are called hazelnuts. The great poet Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald notes in the second issue of *Ma-ilm ja mõnda* ('The World and Then Some') (1848) when describing American nature:

“In the lands of Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Virginia, their (passenger pigeons’) travelling flock shocks people, and even so these travelling packs are small compared to the millions, that towards the evening, found in the American forests on the banks of the great Ohio river in the counties of Kentucky and Indiana, where their dearest food *Saksamaa-sarrapu pähklid* (German hazelnut nuts) grow in large quantities.” (Kreutzwald 1848: 45).

The fruit of what species of tree he meant by *Saksamaa-sarrapu pähklid* (German hazelnut nut) in this text is unknown, but it is doubtful whether filbert was grown at all in America at the time. However, it could not have spread in the woods, so it must have been a native American species. This name is only associated with this species by Wiedemann 20 years later, when he provides the German “Lambertsnußbaum” as the Estonian equivalent of *saksa-mā-sara-pū* (German ash tree) (Wiedeman 1869: 1111). A description of the tree found in Vändra can be found in Estonian dialect materials (1932): *saksama sarapu on põesa moodu puu, a tal kasvavad teist moodu pähkled* (German ash is a shrub-like tree, except it grows a different kind of nut) (Viikberg 2023: 18). As you can see, there are only solitary reports of this name in literature and tradition.

White willow (*Salix alba*) is one of our most popular ornamental trees, found naturally in South Estonian and as a cultivated tree elsewhere in Estonia. From Pistohepsors’ index of trees and shrubs growing in Livonia onwards the Estonian name for the tree is *saksa pao* (German willow) (Pistohepsors 1797: 179), which suggests either the foreign origin of the tree or that “saksad” (lords) first planted it as an ornamental tree at their residences. Earlier, the branches of the white willow were important in the tradition of Palm Sunday in Western Europe (Kalle, Sander 2020). Fischer adds “puu” (tree) to the name *Saksa pao – Saksa pao-pu* (German willow tree) (Fischer 1805: 29–30) and provides the tree with a long recommendation for its use and cultivation. Hupel’s dictionary provides *saksa pao, saksa paio* (German willow) as the Estonian equivalent to the Ger-

man “weisse weide” respectively “Satzweide” (Hupel 1818: 215). The following author, Luce, only presents the name *saksa paio* in his nature book (Luce 1823: 332). Wiedemann and Weber present the name *saksa paju pü* (German willow tree) with the emphasis on the “tree” (Wiedemann, Weber 1852: 593) and note the areas of Livonia where these trees grow or were planted. The only thing they can say about Saaremaa is that Luce mentioned the tree was present there.

Later dictionaries have used both the shorter *saksa* (German), as well as the longer *saksamaa* (Germany) complement: *saksa-mā-paju* “Silberweide” (Wiedemann 1869: 831) and *saksa-paju* “Silberweide” (*Salix alba*) (ibid.: 1103), “*saksa-maa-pahju* (верба бѣлая, ветла)” (pahju = obvious typing error, pro paju) (Salem 1890: 258) and “*saksa-paju* (верба бѣлая, ветла)” (ibid.: 344). A short description in Kunder’s schoolbook says that the tree is similar to *remmelgas* (i.e. it looks like a tree, not like a shrub): “*Saksamaa paju* (*salix alba*) [German willow (*salix alba*)] grows to 80 foot in height. Similarly to the [tree trunk] willow, underneath of leaves is covered in soft, siplike hairs” (Kunder 1881: 72). Newspapers at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th often used both names together: – *saksamaa paju ehk remmelgas* [German willow or [tree trunk] willow] (see chapter on willow below).. The *saksa-* (german-) complement has also been observed in this species in the Votic language as *saksā paju* (Vilbaste 1957: 177). In Votic dictionary also specifies the place of growth with the entry for *saksaa paju* (German willow): “*saksaa paju kasvop kuza ni-buit liivõzikkos*” (German willow grow in some sandy areas) (VKS 2013: 1105). In Estonian tradition there is also a weather prediction from Rõuge connected to this species: “If the leaves of the *saksamaa paio* [German willow] are very shiny in the afternoon in dry weather, it will rain the next day.” E 17093 (25) < Rõuge - Märt Siipen (1895).

Poplar (*Populus* species)³⁶ species are quite similar to each other, which is why people rarely distinguish between them and call them by the same name. We know that by the beginning of the 19th century (Germann 1807: 107), poplars were already grown quite commonly due to its rapid growth and good adaptation to our climate³⁷. There were even poplar boulevards on some roads. Poplar species are distinguished in literature and are accompanied by their common names. Previously, the name *saksamaa-haab* ~ *haav* (German aspen) was used for the widely known North American import balsam poplar (*Populus balsamifera*) (Vilbaste 1993: 491). *Saksa-aas* from Käina and *saksamaa-oab* from Kuusalu were registered as dialectal names (ibid.). Balsam poplar was

registered in Finland in the middle of the 19th century under the name *Saksan-haapa* (German aspen) (Suhonen 1936: 288).

Anton Thor Helle provides “Pappelbaum” as the equivalent for *kunnä päe pu* (European white elm) and *saksa ma aaw* (German aspen) (Helle 1732: 299), while Hupel uses *saksa ma aaw* for “Pappelbaum” (Hupel 1780: 263; 1818: 215). In the authors’ opinion, this might have been black poplar (*Populus nigra*), which Hupel also mentions in the list plant names from his region as a local species with the same names (Hupel 1777: 507). This was transposed into Estonian–Russian dictionaries, where *saksa ma aaw* (Lunini 1853: 166) and *saksa-maa-haab* (Salem 1890: 1) became the Estonian equivalents to “тополь”. However, both “Pappelbaum” and “тополь” refer to the genus *Populus*, not to a particular species. The first to describe the use of the tree was Hupel in the 17th chapter of the journal *Lühhike õppetus*³⁸: “*Kunnä päepu ehk saksama aaw* (German aspen) does not give any other medicine than ointment, that is made similarly to the birch one, tree growth and mip butter cream” (Hupel 1766: 63). “*Saksamaa haab*” (German aspen) has also moved to medical use in oral tradition: “*Saksamua huab (saksamaa haab), pappel [Populus candicans]* [German aspen, poplar]. Some use its young tarry leaves against heartache (heart disease) by chewing them and swallowing the saliva.” Vilbaste, TN 1, 424/6 (204) < Torma parish, Avinurme area – Mihkel Sild (1930); “*Saksama huab ~ paabõljoni puu ~ paplipao* [German aspen, Babel tree, poplar tree]. Buds as tea and in vodka for stomach ulcers, mayhap for bladder illnesses”. Vilbaste, TN 1, 969 (27) < Kihnu parish – Theodor Saar (1937).

Trees are presented precisely by species in early botanical writing. But since the authors were not native speakers, they made spelling mistakes in the names. For example, Fischer (1778) calls a tree occurring naturally in Livonia³⁹ the black poplar and uses the Estonian name *Künäpä* (fluttering elm) and *Saksama amo* (German?) (ibid.: 373), which in reprint have been corrected to *Küna päpu* (fluttering elm) and *Saksama aaw* (German aspen) (Fischer 1791: 642). Pistohpors (1797) also records *Künnäpäe pu* (fluttering elm) and *Saksamaa aaw* (German aspen) as naturally occurring here (ibid.: 177). Friebe gives the same names to these two species, adding recommendations for use and cultivation (Friebe 1805: 33). Wiedemann’s dictionary also mentions black poplar, using the name *saksa-maa-hāb* (German aspen) (1869: 65), while the balsam poplar is called *lehkaw saksamā-hāb* (reeking German aspen) or *palsami-saksamā-hāb* (balsam German aspen) (ibid.). In oral tradition, *saksamaa aab* (German aspen)

has only been found as a common name in Vigala parish (Vilbaste 1993: 492), though one of the authors of this article heard the common name *saksamaa haab* (German aspen) for this species even in this century in Saaremaa (Kalle 2015).

The Eurasian “saksamaa” (Germany) name for silver poplar (*Populus alba*) is first mentioned by Kunder in his book Natural science: “A relative to our aspen is the *saksamaa haab* (*populus alba*) [German aspen (*populus alba*)] with its whiteish grey leaves” (Kunder 1881: 71).

Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) is a natural species in Europe. It was noted in our region (at the beginning of the 19th century, Grindel 1803: 300) that the tree is used in gardens, parks, urban landscaping and cemeteries, although for some reason the author describes the tree species with a question mark. Culturally and cultivation-wise, this species is considered common (Kukk 1999: 88) as it can be found quite often and becomes naturalised frequently, in addition to which there are occasional large trees from various generations. The name *Saksamaa vaher* (German maple) was created for it in the reprint of List of Estonian plants (KT 1918: 11) and it remained in the written language until the end of the 1930s (EÕS 1937: 1242), after which it was changed to *mägivaher* (sycamore). The following text from Jämaja parish can be found in dialect compilations (1957): *mis teineteis(s)e külge koutu kasuvad, tee ääri koutu, (on) saksamaa vahtrid; saksamaa vahtrid on punaste lehtedega* (which grow onto one another along the road (are the) German maples, German maples have red leaves) (Viikberg 2023: 18). However, the species cannot be identified on the basis of this description, as there could be several maple cultivars and varieties with red leaves (for example the red-leaved Norwegian maple variety Swedler). It could even refer to the Amur maple from East Asia, which grows here as well and has been known since 1865.

Spontaneously created and randomly crowd-sourced plant names with the *saksamaa* complement

White currant (*Ribes rubrum* Album Group) is only mentioned by the name *saksamaa-marjapuu* (German berry tree) in one record from Paistu (Vilbaste 1993: 535). The name probably dates from the 1920s–1940s. The formation or origin of the name has not been explained. According to Spuhl-Rotalia (1912: 189), all varieties of white currant at the beginning of the 20th century came

from either Germany, the Netherlands or France. There were no native varieties, so it could have been a common name for a variety brought from Germany.

Red elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*) has been called *saksamaa pihlakas* (German rowan) only in Kuusalu parish in Kaberneeme, as collected by Vilbaste (1993: 566), with the naming possibly resulting from the fruit being similar to the ripe red berries of the (common) rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*). A similar case is known in Finland, where the trees are called *Saksanpihlaja* (German rowan) (Suhonen 1936: 337), as well as *Saksanheisi* (German guelder rose) (ibid.) after *heisi* or guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*) (see more in the black elderberry section).

The local history correspondent Marta Mäesalu sent a text to the Estonian Folklore Archives in 1971 that shows how natural vocabulary can be created. If a somewhat different tree grows in a particular culture, regardless of the fact that it is rowan (*Sorbus*) it can immediately be categorised as a “saksamaa” species:

”The black crow is a German crow, it cannot bear the cold and flies to Germany in the winter, thus the name. Additionally, the Germany name is added to trees and shrubs: poplar is the German aspen, larch is the German pine and the ornamental rowan bush is a German rowan. It was so only recently.” RKM II 333, 209 (12) < Häädemeeste – Marta Mäesalu (1971)

Horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) from the Eastern Mediterranean is an ornamental tree that has been cultivated here since the 17th century. In the 19th century, Klinge (1883: 99) presents the Estonian name *kastani puu* (chestnut tree) (*Rosskastanie* (chestnut) in German). Gustav Vilbaste writes that some older people on Kihnu island used the name *saksamaa sarabuu* (German ash) for the horse chestnut, though the general name on the whole island is *kastan* (chestnut) (Vilbaste 1993: 131). The text *saksa soar, see oo sur kastaani puu* (German ash, that is a big chestnut tree) was preserved on Muhu in 1986 (Viikberg 2023: 18), proving yet again how randomly and spontaneously plant names can be created. There are also many similar “German” plant names in fop songs. But in this case, we think they don’t mean specific plant species. These plant names are spontaneously created to make a better song rhyme (see e.g. “Saksamaa sine sarapuu” (H II 56, 162/3 (10)); “Saksamaa sirge sarapuu” (E 8677/80 (3)); Saksamaa sarapuu kirja” (ERA I 6, 42/3 (5)); “Saksamaa sarapuu

pääl” (H II 5, 108/9 (5)) – see more “German” tree names in this database <https://www.folklore.ee/regilaul/andmebaas>

Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*) mainly grows in parks and gardens as an imported ornamental tree, but can also become naturalised. It can be found naturally only on the Latvian border, and on the Sõrve peninsula from where, in Jämaja parish, the only relevant record comes, noted by dendrologist Eduard Viirok:

“...hough some circumstances still speak for naturalisation, specifically only younger shrubs can be found and the locals know not how to name it (even those do not, that are greatly interested in plants, shrubs and trees, that otherwise know plants and shrubs by name), calling it the „*saksamaa lepaks*“ (“German alder”), although we have many foreign trees that are known as German trees ((*saksamaa kuusk*, *saksamaa mänd*, *saksamaa pihlakas*) [German spruce, pine, rowan])” (Viirok 1932: 122)⁴⁰

Why *lepp* (alder)? Probably due to its red fruit, because *lepäne* (alder-like) in western Saaremaa and *lepäne* ~ *lepälene* (alder-like) in Martna mean bloody or bloodied (more in Sander, Kalle 2015; EMS V: 106, 114) and *lepp* (alder) means blood in the coastal dialects of Hiiumaa and Saaremaa (EMS V: 111).

Tatarian honeysuckle (*Lonicera tatarica*) comes from Central Asia and has been reported here in Vigala as *saksamaa kukepuu* (German honeysuckle) and in Halliste as *saksamaa kohlap* (German honeysuckle) (Vilbaste 1993: 406). Both *kukepuu* and *kohlap* are names for the local harilik kuslapuu (fly honeysuckle) (*Lonicera xylosteum*), thus the alien species has been named on the basis of similarity using a *saksamaa* compliment. The European common honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) has been recorded as *Saksan kuusama* (German honeysuckle) in Finland (Suhonen 1936: 208).

Redstem dogwood (*Cornus sericea*) comes from North America and the shrub grown as an ornamental tree has been recorded as *Saksamaa kukerpuu* (German honeysuckle) in Vigala and as *Saksamaa kõiv* (German birch) in Setomaa (Vilbaste 1993: 609). The name *kukerpuu* possibly stems from the local fly honeysuckle (*Lonicera xylosteum*); today the name *kukerpuu* denotes the common barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*). *Kõiv* (‘kask’) (birch) stems from the white berries of this dogwood species.

Willows (*Salix* species). Otto Wilhelm Masing's *Marahwa Näddala-Leht* ('Countryfop's Weekly Paper') sets Germany as an example of better preservation and use of forests and trees, and describes which commercial trees are grown there:

"Peasants in Germany harvest various trees, but most often *rämmelgat*, *ehk saksama-hawa puud* [(trunk tree) willow trees or the German aspen], or other similar trees that grows vigorously. People hold willow trees, which some on our lands call the German willow, in great esteem in the foreign lands and plant it a lot as it is quick to grow and great to burn" (Masing 1825: 236).

However, he does not mention the German willow or aspen when writing about not making good use of forests and trees in his homeland: *Lõhmust, paju ja rämmelgat ei tahha meie nimmetatagi, et neid kül ennam raisatakse, kui tarwis olleks tehha* (We do not even want to mention lindens, willows and willow trees, that they are wasted more than they should be) (Masing 1825: 231).

Which area did O. W. Masing have in mind when he wrote *mõnnes kõhhas* (in some area)? It could be the region of Avinurme and Torma, where the brittle willow (*Salix × fragilis*) has been called *saksamaa paju* (German willow) (Vilbaste 1993: 558). The name suggests that the tree was grown as an imported ornamental tree due to its durability:

"Among other trees, the tree-like trunk tree willows (*Saksamaa paju, remmelga, etc.*)⁴¹ (German willow, (trunk tree) willow tree, etc.) take priority. They grow on every type of ground, are satisfied with the worst positions, can take the roughest handling and all sorts of injuries: do not grow roots too long or too wide." (Kask 1903: 295)

Basket willow (*Salix viminalis*) is also known as the *saksamaa paju* (German willow) in the woodworking centre Avinurme (Vilbaste 1993: 563) and was used for withe weaving. The data from dialect compilation does not allow us to determine the species as the descriptions are too similar, for example as in this text from Karksi: *punatse pajose olli saksamaa pajose* (red willow was German willow); Martna: *sii taga parkis kasovad neoksed punased paiod, nee ütasse saksa paiod* (here in the back park grow such red willows, they are said to be German willows); Lüganuse: *punerdavad pajod onvad, lehed on ka tõist*

muodi, saksama pajod (blushing willows are, leaves are different too, German willows) (Viikberg 2023: 18).

We have several species of cultivated willows with red bark that have been grown both as an ornamental and commercial trees (Kalle, Sander 2020), so this description can be of either purple willow (*Salix purpurea*), Siberian violet-willow (*Salix acutifolia*) or European violet willow (*Salix daphnoides*).

Swedish whitebeam (*Scandosorbus intermedia*) as a Baltic endemic grows here on the eastern border of its area (Kukk 1999: 224), its natural area being in western Estonia and on the islands. *Saksamaa pihelgas* (German rowan) has been recorded in Mihkli and *saksamaa pihlakas* (German rowan) in Kuusalu and Tallinn (Vilbaste 1993: 599). As this is the border of the natural range of the tree species, it might have to do with ornamental trees from a tree nursery, not the naturally occurring ones. The tree has already had the name of *Saxan pihlawa* (German rowan) in Finland since the 17th century and *Saksan pihlaja* as well as *Saxan pihlaja* were recorded in the 19th century (Suhonen 1936: 356).

Previously, the whitebeam belonged to the rowan (*Sorbus*) genus (now it is synonymous with *Sorbus suecica*). Several species previously belonging to the rowan genus have “Saksamaa” (Germany) names in Finland: Finnish whitebeam (*Hedlundia hybrida* synonym with *Sorbus fennica*) *Saksan pihlaja*, *Saxan pihlava* (German rowan) (Suhonen 1936: 355, 356) and common whitebeam (*Aria edulis* synonym with *Sorbus aria*) *Saksanpihlaja*, *Saksan pihlaja*, *Saxanpihlava*, *Saxanpihkava* (German rowan) (ibid.: 355). Though, they have called the woodland hawthorn (*Crataegus laevigata*) *Saksanpihlaja* as well (ibid.: 122). It can be assumed that these Finnish names were given due to their similarity to rowan berries.

False spiraea (*Sorbaria sorbifolia*) originally comes from Asia and is a common ornamental shrub today; the plant naturalises easily. It was commonly known as *saksamaa pihlakas* (German rowan) in the first half of the 20th century. Including the dialect variants *saksamaa kanarik*, *saksamaa-pihlak*, *saksamaa-pihelgas*, *saksamaa-pihlakas*, *saksamaa-pihl* (Vilbaste 1993: 597). The names were given because its leaves are similar to those of the rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*). In Estonia it has been known as a cultivated shrub since the beginning of the 19th century (Friebe, 1805: 337; Kukk 1999: 223), although it only got its written name, which has stayed with it to this day, *pihlenelas*, in the second edition

of List of Estonian plants (KT 1918). There is a single record of the plant in Finland as *Saksanpihlaja* (German rowan) (Suhonen 1936: 355).

Siberian peashrub (*Caragana arborescens*) is also native to Asia and was grown here early as an ornamental shrub (Hupel 1777: 524; Kukk 1999: 171). The plant can rarely be found naturalised. Kreutzwald's unpublished manuscript mentions *Saksamaa ernepuu* (German pea tree), in Kuusalus however it was known as *saksamaa pihlakas* (German rowan) (Vilbaste 1993: 224). *Ernepuu* (pea tree) is a common name for this tree because the fruit pods resemble pea pods. It is also called *saksamaa pihlakas* (German rowan) because its leaves are reminiscent of those of the rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*).

(Wild) rose (*Rosa* species) is commonly known in Kuusalu as *lurdipuu* (rose hip tree) (Vilbaste 1993: 537; EMS V: 519), although Kuusalu dialect materials also contain *saksamaa lurdipuu* (German rose hip tree), which seems to imply a cultivated variety or species. This species could be the burnet rose (*Rosa pimpinellifolia*) (Viikberg 2023: 17), or more specifically it can be the variety "Plena" (Kukk 1999: 222), which was known here early on (Fischer 1778: 119; Kukk 1999: 222).

Conclusion

Saksamaa (Germany) and *saksa* (German) complemented plant names are most common in Estonian and Finnish, with fir, beech, larch, elder, Persian walnut tree, poplar, Swedish whitebeam and false spiraea present in both languages. Among other related languages Estonian has larch and silver willow tree in common with Vortian, and larch in common with Ingrian, Livonian and Ingrian Finnish

As has been shown above, names with *saksamaa* and *saksa* complements can be divided into three categories: a) names only found in early writings that are not present in oral tradition; b) common *saksamaa* complemented words that were listed in dictionaries and supported by official terminology; c) individual *saksamaa* complemented common names collected from the people.

Alien species using the *saksamaa* or *saksa* complements were found among fruit tree, ornamental trees, medicinal plants as well as forest trees. Older literature also has examples of these names being used not only for alien trees but also for their fruits (for example citrus, plums, chestnuts); for their wood

(for example beech) as used in joinery; or for medicines (for example beech tar) as used by pharmacies. In one case, due to the similar names, the name of an alien tree, beech, (*saksamaa saar* (German ash)) has transferred to a local tree species, saarepuu (common ash) through the drug (*saaretõrv* (ash tar)) produced from it. As can be seen, the hardwood beech was named after domestic trees ash and oak, which have similar hardwood properties. Obviously, the beech *saksamaa sarapuu* has nothing to do with the sarapuu (hazel), rather, “sarapuu” is probably the erroneous transcription of “saarepuu” and has been passed on through literature.

There are also cases where the *saksamaa* complement is used for several alien species. For example, larches, firs and alien spruce species – which differed from the local spruce by the silvery colour of their needles – have been called “German spruce”. Species of plants within the genus were not always distinguished, which is why all poplar species became “German aspen”. Names for alien trees had to be created in Estonian from an early time when the nature of Southern Europe and North America had to be described.

As it turns out, species sensitive to cold, which had to be grown in greenhouses during cold periods or as potted plants, were categorised as “German trees” in the 18th century (the first reports are from the 17th century). Thus these *saksamaa* names could have spread by Estonians taking care of plants in greenhouses. Alien species were named after their similarities to local species by adding “Saksamaa” in front of spruce, rowan, willow, etc. Later, these *Saksamaa* names were often replaced by calques of German plant names. In individual cases, the name of an alien tree species could have been borrowed from another Finno-Ugric language (for example *nulg* (fir) from Mari, *toompihlakas* (shadbush) from Finnish), or an original name was created (for example *lehis* (larch)). People could spontaneously add “saksamaa” to a tree that resembled a local one (for example rowan *Sorbus*) to create new tree names even in the 20th century.

We can observe when at the latest alien species arrived in Estonia based on language data, as well as the form in which new linguistic forms reached North and South Estonian. There were differences in many tree and shrub names in North and South Estonian dialects due to the two written forms that had arisen from the two former provinces. This is very noticeable, for example, in the case of pear, elder and willows.

However in fop songs, a *saksa* complement could denote something lordly, i.e. flamboyant, better or nobler (for example *saksa õun* (German apple) or *saksa mari* (German berry) for a young girl), but not for alien species literally.

Notes

¹ However, it has been suggested that other foreign “German” tree species such as *saksamaa vahert* (German maple) (Anonymous 1930: 4) and the *Saksamaa haab* (German aspen) (Bergmann 1903: 284) should be planted to enrich bee collection areas.

² The place name *Saksamaa* (Deutschland, Germany) appears in Estonian at the latest from Stahl’s grammar (1637: 48) onwards as *Saxamah* and meant both Germany and abroad in general; see for example Wiedemann’s dictionary *saksa-mā* (German land) ‘Deutschland; Ausland’ (Germany; foreign land) (1869: 1103). In general, Germany was the synonym for a foreign land (especially Europe).

³ Among the archived documents of Jüri Kivimäe, there is a report stating that the residents of Tartu saw camels and turkeys in their city as early as 1534 (Kivimäe 1985: 53–55). The turkey (*Capunysch thier* (animal from Calicut)) had been brought by a good friend of the bishop of Tartu from Germany along with a “murjan” (Moor) (*Moriann*) (ibid.: 53).

⁴ Göseken did not base his dictionary on biological interests but on vocabulary. When foreign plants, animals and fruits did not yet have an Estonian name, he formed them as paraphrases. Thus, for example, *Saxa mah keggi* (Saksamaa kägu (German cuckoo)) “turteltuvi” (turtle dove) or *Saxa mah tango* (Saksamaa tangud (German groats)) “riis”, “hirss” (rice, millet) were born. As pointed out in Kai Tafenau’s study (2011: 425–439), Göseken did not work on his own, but used as an example for vocabulary John Amos Comenius’ *Janua linguarum reserata* (“The Door of Languages Unlocked”) (1631), and in German *Die Neue Sprachenthür* (“The New Language Door”) (1633). Among the names relating to the country of origin, we can highlight the turkey, *die Indianische* (the Indian) (*die calekutische*) (the Calicutian) *hüner* (chicken), presented in Chapter 14 of animals and birds, while chapter 11 of trees and fruits does not contain any names relating to country of origin (Comenius 1633).

⁵ The *wilder* complement refers to the naturalisation of the elderberry in Estonia, although whether it referred to the black or red elder is unclear.

⁶ Toomas Kukk mentions *Prunus domestica* subspecies *domestica* in his book (Kukk 1999: 220).

⁷ In south Estonia, the previous general name for the *Malus* species was *uipuu*, *uibu*, *uibupu* or simply *ubinapu* (apple tree) (Vilbaste 1993: 418).

⁸ See the final sentence of the plum tree section.

⁹ Pomber is, in literal translation, puumari (tree berry) (cf. nds Boom-Bier, Baltic German Bumbleere).

¹⁰ Cotton is the product of the cotton shrub (*Gossypium* species) obtained by drying the cellulose-containing fibres that covers its seeds. Cotton bushes are grown in the tropics and subtropics. Until the 19th century, cotton was a luxury commodity in Europe, brought from India <http://entsyklopeedia.ee/artikkel/puuvillap%C3%B5%C3%B5sas>.

¹¹ Obviously, the primary purpose of the translation was to teach Estonian chefs working in German households, but through this many foods and food terms that were later well known began to spread (see Viies 1985).

¹² Samuel von Holst's German manuscript was first published as the Latvian translation "Dahrsa-Kallenders" (Garden Calendar) (1796) and was then translated from Latvian into Tartu dialect by Friedrich David Lenz, the first lecturer of Estonian at the University of Tartu.

¹³ The asterisk in front of the keyword indicates that this is still a new word.

¹⁴ Georg Alexander Tuksam's (1883–1936) manuscript of the dictionary was completed and edited by linguist Elmar Muuk. The dictionary was published in a total of five editions, both in shorter and complete formats, with the latest version published in Geislingen, Germany (1947).

¹⁵ Old German spelling, the tree is now known as *Edepastanie*, *Esskastanie*, *Echte Kastanie*.

¹⁶ In English, the fruit is called a nut: sweet chestnut, Spanish chestnut, chestnut. In German, the edible seed is called a nut ("Nuss"). It is likely that Göseken translated this name from German.

¹⁷ See also https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Castagno_dei_Cento_Cavalli.

¹⁸ See the section of the common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*).

¹⁹ See the section on the larch (*Larix* species) family.

²⁰ The word 'nulg' (fir) originates from the Mari language (< *nulyo*) (EES 2012: 321) and was borrowed into Estonian in the 1920s. The old explanation went like this: "The word nulg was taken from the Cheremish language where it can be found with the same meaning. The same stem, though modified, exists in other Finnic people living by the Volga River as well" (Kiiivsek 1926: 266).

²¹ The red fir (*Abies procera*) from America is also known by the same names in Germany and is a valued Christmas tree, although it was relatively rare here at the beginning of the 20th century.

²² This species was introduced to Europe from America only in the first half of the 19th century (Paal 1989: 79). The Fraser River Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii* variety *caesia*) has been cultivated here as a forest tree since the beginning of the 20th century.

²³ See chapter for common beech.

²⁴ Pharmacist Rudol Vallner specifies: *öieti peaks saaretõrva nime all Saksamaa saare ehk pöökpuu tõrv tarvitusel olema, selle nime all on aga teised ülesloetud ained tarvitusel, eriti kadakatõrv (Oleum Juniperi empyreumaticum) ja põdrasarve õli (Oleum Cornu Cervi) (German ash or beech tar should be used by the name of ash tar, but other substances listed are in use instead, especially juniper tar and ep horn oil); (üalpool loetletust) kadakatõrva ja tõkatit (Oleum Rusci) tarvitatakse ka sissevõtmiseks, põdrasarve õli ainult pealt määrimiseks (juniper tar and tar are used internally as well, ep horn oil only externally) (Vallner 1929: 123).*

²⁵ It was once noted that *säksa* (German) is currently written as *s'aksa* (ä being the signal that the *s* is refined).

²⁶ Vilbaste considered that the earlier names of this species belongs to the red elderberry, which is more widespread in Estonia (Vilbaste 1993: 565).

²⁷ See more in the red elderberry section below.

²⁸ Hupel already has exactly the same info, but he provided Latvian names instead of Estonian ones (Hupel 1777: 496).

²⁹ Klinge mentions that 15 varieties are grown in gardens and also notes the Estonian names: *leedri puu*, *koera öis puu*, *lodja öis puu*, *hollandri puu* (elder tree, guelder rose tree) (Klinge 1883: 31/2).

³⁰ The same use and the same common names are also provided in the most popular medicinal herb book of the 1980s (see Tammeorg et al. 1985: 73).

³¹ This species has been called *saksan pähkinä* (German nut) in Finland since the 17th century (Suhonen 1936: 186).

³² See also Estonian phrases: *Kena nagu saksa õun* (Lovely like a German apple); *Tüdruk nagu saksa õun* (Girl like a German apple). <https://www.folklore.ee/justkui/sonastik/>.

³³ See also the sections on the common ash and the common hornbeam, above.

³⁴ Vilbaste mistakenly marked it as the common ash (*Fraxinus excelsior* L.) in his book (Vilbaste 1993: 324).

³⁵ In Finland, the name *böki* has been mentioned as early as in 1580 (SSA 2: 454), but *Saksan saarni* (German ash) and *Saksan tammi* (German oak) only in the year 1826 (Suhonen 1936: 152).

³⁶ The equivalent for the German *Pappel* has been registered in Latvian as *Vācijas apse* (“saksamaa haab” (German aspen)) (VLV 1944: 388), which was later replaced by the loan word *papele* “pappel” (poplar) (ELS 2015: 607).

³⁷ A few of these trees planted in the 18th century managed to become landmarks in the 20th century due to their impressive appearance, while “Saksamaa haab” (German aspen) remained as the name for the species in, for example, the Rāpina “Kõstrimäe uhkus” (‘pride of Churchwarden’s Hill’), a 150-year-old tree (Anonymous 1934: 6), and in the Mustjala “Mustjala puudekuningas” (‘Mustjala tree king’), a 150–180-year-old example (Anonymous 1932b: 3). Poplar saplings were taken to Saaremaa island across the sea from Sweden (*ibid.*). These trees later became navigation marks on Saaremaa (Kalle 2015).

³⁸ Peter Ernst Wilde’s journal *Landarzt* (1865), published in the then Mitau, was translated into Estonian by the Põltsamaa pastor August Wilhelm Hupel. The common name for the tree comes from the translator.

³⁹ In early Livonian descriptive botanical literature, the misinformation that black poplar is natural in the region is repeatedly mentioned. However, this tree is not considered natural in Estonia or Latvia today. The first natural sites are as far away as southern Lithuania.

⁴⁰ Vilbaste also put it in his book (Vilbaste 1993: 310).

⁴¹ They might have had the reddish hybrid brittle willow (*Salix × rubens* Schrank) in mind here, which became known relatively late (Klinge 1883: 68), but is often found in our cultures (Kukk 1999: 229). Or the brittle willow (*Salix rubens*), which can be found naturally more in southern Estonia.

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II

Folklore, Religion, History

Sacred Footwear: Latvian Perceptions in the 19th Century and Today

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Abstract: This article sheds light on previously overlooked perceptions of Latvian traditional footwear and demonstrates how both the material of the footwear and the way of obtaining it determined whether shoes were considered sacred and pure or sinful and unlucky. An analysis of folklore texts and the results of a contemporary survey show that wooden shoes made of bast were looked upon as sacred and pure, as opposed to leather which was considered impure. Bast shoes are the cheapest to make, yet historical records from central Latvia show that they were worn for weddings. Peasants did this to ensure success for the couple, suggesting that the choice of footwear was determined by some mythological meaning and not only by practical or financial considerations. Though some new developments can be observed, many modern Latvians tend to sympathize with the perceptions documented a century ago. This allows for estimates of the significance of these perceptions in previous centuries.

Key words: bast shoes, wooden shoes, leather footwear, modern perceptions, sacred as clean and pure, traditional dress

Introduction

Dress consists of garments, accessories, and footwear, and it has been a close human companion for thousands of years. Thus, features of society are reflected and incorporated by clothing: economics, technology, skills and crafts, trade, societal and behavioral norms, as well as mythological perceptions, among others. It seems that there may be as many intangible aspects to dress as there are practical. The aim of the article is to illuminate an unnoticed set of perceptions regarding Latvian traditional footwear to demonstrate how the material of footwear and the way of obtaining it determined whether the shoes would have been considered sacred or sinful. This has been accomplished by thorough analysis of written sources (content, wording, meaning, context), combined with contemporary survey results and based on previous studies of material sources and their chronological development.

Historical written sources

This article is based on analysis of historical written sources which mention wooden bast shoes. The focus is on eleven texts that have been collected over more than ten years of research on folklore and ethnographic material. This material is stored in the archives of three memory institutions: the Latvian Folklore Archives (LFK) at the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art, specifically their collection of traditions and database of proverbs (LTT); the National History Museum of Latvia (LNVM) and its Monument Board archive (PV); and the Institute of Latvian History at the University of Latvia and their Repository of Ethnographic Material (E). Of these, only the database of the proverbs is both published and available online. The other archive materials have not yet been digitised or published. These materials were acquired during ethnographic expeditions that took place in Latvia between 1925 and 1949; it should be noted that respondents were asked to talk about the 'old times' and ways of life. We therefore assume that the traditions reflected in the material were widespread in the 19th and early 20th centuries. However, they are also likely to involve older traditions and knowledge that were passed down from generation to generation.

Previous research

Until now, traditional Latvian bast shoes have been outside the scope of research in all disciplines. Neither dress historians nor folklore researchers have paid much attention to bast shoes, aside from mentioning them among other types of traditional footwear, often placing them lowest in the hierarchy of prestige (Šmits 1929: 418–421; Slava 1966: 91; Jansone 2021: 32, 83, 98) until a recent more thorough analysis (Pigozne 2023: 158–161).

This article is the first to explore the aspect of mythological meanings of bast shoes. The phenomenon of perceptions and ritual practices connected with traditional footwear had been previously recognized by folklore researcher Kārlis Straubergs (Straubergs 1944: 347–352). The mythological meaning of garments and footwear is depicted in a chapter in Ieva Pigozne's monograph devoted to the colours of Baltic dress (Pigozne 2020: 127–140). Wedding attire was analysed in two articles by Pigozne; however, only one of them mentions bast shoes and the peculiar perception that these shoes were the best footwear for weddings (Pigozne 2018: 146–147). No other authors have paid particular attention to bast shoes or the traditions of peasant wedding attire. Several researchers have devoted their studies to the sacrality of trees (Švābe 1920; Straubergs 1944: 53–84; Reidzāne 2015: 89–137) in Latvian folklore, less often to domestic animals and pets (Straubergs 1944: 165–206).

Types of traditional peasant footwear

The nineteenth century was a century of major transformation not only in the development of production and infrastructure, but also in clothing. The traditional dress of Latvian peasants underwent multiple extensive shifts. In the 1850s and 60s, starting in the Riga area and other parts of Vidzeme (in the governorate of Livonia) and Zemgale (in the governorate of Courland), traditional peasant clothing gradually disappeared from festive wear, and by the end of the century also from daily wear (Karlsone 2013: 20–22). Footwear was the least varied part of peasant clothing. For centuries, traditional peasant footwear could be made of wooden bast or leather. Leather shoes were of three kinds: one-piece leather shoes tied with laces or *pastalas*, shoes, and boots. *Pastalas* were the most common footwear of Latvian peasants as documented

by Johann Christoff Brotze (1742–1823) in the last quarter of the 18th century (Pigozne 2016). Shoes and boots were the most expensive footwear, and they became commonly widespread only in the second half of the 19th century (Jansone 2021: 32).



Figure 1. A pair of worn one-piece leather shoes tied with laces or *pastalas*. Private collection. Photo Ieva Pigozne.

Bast shoes were of two types: either made of bast together with bark and woven loosely, or made of plain bast and woven tightly according to the form of the foot. The first type was easier to make and less durable, the second was light, more elaborate and prestigious. Both were called *vīzes*. Another type of *vīzes* or *petērnes* was made of linen or skein cord and was mostly worn in winter.



Figure 2. A pair of bast shoes – *vīzes* – made of bast and bark. Private collection. Photo Ieva Pigozne.



Figure 3. A pair of light bast shoes – *vīzes* – made of plain bast. Private collection. Photo Ieva Pigozne.

Archaeological expeditions discovered the first bast shoes in the 9th century settlement of Āraiši (Zariņa 1999: 83) and the first *pastalas* were found in the layers of an 11th century Koknese settlement (Bebre 1997: 114). The last examples of Latvians making and wearing *vīzes* and *pastalas* were documented in the middle of the 20th century. This shows that wearing the simplest bast and leather shoes is a tradition that spanned over a thousand years. Accordingly, perceptions connected with making and wearing these shoes are likely very old and were passed on from generation to generation, although dating these perceptions is a very challenging task.

An analysis of historical texts and their context

Historical texts containing information on bast footwear are scarce, as most records do not refer to any kind of footwear. Because bast shoes have been thought of as the least prestigious footwear, it is surprising to learn that they are sometimes mentioned in descriptions of Latvian wedding traditions. These 19th century descriptions occasionally mention the attire of the bride and the groom, but rarely is there a focus on footwear. The texts analysed here are exceptions as they not only talk about bast shoes being worn at weddings, but also explain why. Commentaries on why certain traditions were practiced are

rarely added to the descriptions at the time of interviews because it is either common knowledge or simply not asked for. In this case, the explanations are rather extraordinary, and, therefore, these five texts served as inspiration for the writing of this article. Four of the texts are stored at the Archives of Latvian Folklore and one at the National History Museum of Latvia. All five were documented during interviews conducted in the Madona district in the Vidzeme region in 1928.

People did not wear leather shoes or boots for weddings in the old days. They wore bast shoes. Footwear that was made of leather was considered un-sacred, but *linden bast was viewed as especially sacred* (my italics). (LFK 893, 279 Madona district, Bērzaune parish, Kaileņu 6kl pmsk.)

Wedding traditions. People wore bast shoes or leather shoes. Bast shoes were considered to be *more sacred* than those made of leather, because leather was taken from animals, and thus *they were a sin*. (LFK 891, 3298 Madona district, Lazdona parish)

Old wedding traditions. People did not wear shoes or *pastalas* – they could happen to be made of a hide from fallen stock. In that case the couple would have bad luck with their cattle in the future. (LFK 891, 3162 Madona district, Ļaudona parish)

People wore yellow leather *pastalas*, later – shoes. In the earlier times people wore bast shoes. That was done to avoid entering the marriage wearing the hide of fallen stock as that could happen if *pastalas* were worn. (LFK 891, 3170 Madona district, Sāviena in Ļaudona parish)

People did not wear leather footwear for weddings. They could be made of the hide of fallen stock and that would lead to bad luck. People instead peeled *clean bast* and wore bast shoes. (LNVM PV: Madona district, Mētriena parish, informant Ede Bērziņš 76 years old, Āres farmstead)

Currently, only three other texts have been found where bast shoes are mentioned as the footwear of the bride and/or groom. Two of them are stored at the Archives of Latvian Folklore (e.g., LFK 891, 3200 Madona district, Cesvaine parish; LFK 891, 3188 Madona district, Kalsnava parish) and one at the Repository of Ethnographic Material at the Institute of Latvian History (E20, 2959 Balvi district, Latgale region, documented in 1949).

Footwear: people wore bast shoes. And they wore them for weddings, too. Wedding shoes were made of bast from elm trees; such shoes belonged to the festive attire. Linden bast shoes were used for work and everyday use. (E20, 2959 Silmala, Balvi district)

Again, it must be noted that if any footwear is mentioned in the descriptions of wedding traditions, it most often refers to bast shoes. The last three texts, however, do not explain why bast shoes were worn to weddings. Though they further indicate that the assumption that bast shoes were the least prestigious might be wrong, or that there are other values besides the scale of expensive/modern/prestigious versus cheap/old-fashioned/humble.

The meaning of the word *svēts*

The Latvian-English dictionary provides a translation of the word *svēts* as sacred or holy. The etymology shows that *svēts* originates from the Indo-European root meaning 'sacred' or 'light', which resulted in the earliest meaning of *svēts* being 'bright', 'light', and 'white' (Karulis 2001: 970–972). The Thesaurus of the Latvian language (Tezauris) provides several meanings for *svēts* including divine, very intense and important, and certain and real. The National History Museum of Latvia holds one text devoted to bast shoes where adding an extra level of cord woven to the soles made them 'more sacred'. This is a very unusual use of the word 'sacred', although it resonates with some of the meanings of the word provided in the Thesaurus.

Linden bast shoes were worn for all farm work when the weather was dry. In winter they were fortified with a linen string *to become more sacred*. This footwear was also used for festive occasions. (LNVM PV: Rudzāti parish, Daugavpils district, Latgale region, documented in 1927)

The first five cited texts, however, bring up another definition of the word 'sacred' in Latvian meaning 'clean', 'pure', 'innocent'. Altogether in the texts included in this study the word 'sacred' is used in three different meanings that can be arranged in pairs of opposites:

- sacred as sacred and good versus sinful;

- sacred as clean (also white), pure, undamaged, innocent versus dirty, damaged, unclean, and impure;
- sacred as strong or fortified versus weak and unsustainable.

However, in the analysed texts it is not possible to identify a clear pair of opposites in the 'sacred vs. profane' category (Eliade 1996: 19–24), as it could be argued that the antonyms 'clean vs. dirty' might fit better into the category of 'sacred/pure' vs. 'damaged/sinful'.

The mythological meaning of bast shoes

In this study, the term 'mythological' refers to sacred (as opposed to profane) ideas or activities the meaning of which embodies a manifestation of the spiritual world based in mythology and often explained through symbols.

The five texts that are our focus reveal that in the 19th century people wore bast shoes for weddings because shoes made of linden or other trees were considered sacred, pure, and clean, whereas shoes made of cattle leather were to be avoided because they were seen as unclean and damaged, even 'sinful'. The explanations provided in the texts clarify that leather shoes were to be avoided as they might be made from the hide of fallen stock and thus be unclean. We should also clarify that fallen stock refers to a farm animal that has died of a natural cause or disease. Thus, the natural death of an animal is considered dirty as opposed to slaughtering, which is an interesting point of view, as it applies the same category of 'clean' versus 'dirty' to the skin of the animal as to whether the animal's meat can be used for human consumption. Footwear is never eaten, so this aspect should not affect the practical side of wearing leather shoes, thus demonstrating that the material of the footwear is looked upon not only practically but also as having a mythological meaning. The words and explanations provided allow us to conclude that the concept of sacred is viewed in the 'clean/pure/innocent' vs. 'dirty/damaged/corrupt' category and somehow less in the category of 'sacred' vs. 'profane'.

Regarding the mythological meaning of bast shoes, two more texts should be mentioned. They are two folk beliefs recorded in two different villages in the north-eastern corner of the Madona district. They both talk about throwing bast shoes in the direction of a hunter or fisherman leaving for work if one wishes

them to have a successful take that day (LTT 19559 Lubāna parish, Madona district; LTT 19560 Meirāni parish, Madona district). No further explanation is given, however, again we can conclude that bast shoes were viewed as something good and capable of bringing good luck.

Those who stay at home should throw bast shoes in the direction of a hunter or fisherman when they leave for work. This will ensure them success. (LTT 19560 Meirāni parish, Madona district)

Before comparing the materials of wood and leather, we should also mention that in many parts of Latvia, folk beliefs about footwear have been recorded where any kind of footwear seems to signal how lucky or unlucky the wearer's journey or even life ahead will be. In addition, throwing footwear in the direction of the door and interpreting the position of them when landing was also a popular method of traditional divination of the future during Christmas or New Year celebrations. Both traditions are mentioned in publications by Kārlis Straubergs (Straubergs 1944: 347–351) and Ieva Pigozne (Pigozne 2020: 136–138).

Digging into people's opinions today

To explore further the depth of the mythological meanings behind bast and leather shoes, the decision was made to conduct an 'ethnographic excavation' of Latvian perceptions. The author of this study had a successful experience in a similar ethnographic excavation in 2012 while interviewing 52 women about mythological perceptions and practices connected to clothing and footwear (Pigozne 2013: 83–91). This previous case proved to be useful in understanding more about the archival records, as well as finding out that much of the lore and many of the skills had survived into the 21st century. It turned out that many people possessed knowledge passed down from previous generations, accompanied by an exchange of information among interest groups as well as via published literature and social media.

An online survey containing three questions was carried out in the summer of 2022 with 321 participants. The average age of the participants was 48.6 years. There were approximately 10 times more women than men, however, despite the call to participate being advertised to everyone. Only one question had multiple-choice answers, whereas the other two were free-form and produced

a wide variety of answers. The answers to the open questions are not provided in percentage or absolute numbers because the varieties in their form and word uses meant only the main tendencies could be identified. The answers provided are discussed in detail only as far as they refer directly to the question of sacred footwear analysed earlier.

To find out whether modern people also consider wooden bast shoes more sacred than those of leather, the first question was: “Are some natural objects more sacred than others? Please answer according to your opinion and how you feel about them.” It was a multiple-choice question and had several possible answers. The results (the number of responses indicated in the parentheses) confirmed that natural objects from which bast is made were considered sacred much more often than domestic animals, i.e. – the source of cowhide (leather) for shoes and boots. A natural spring (source of water) was the most common answer (149), followed by a tree (146) and a forest (120). A domestic animal was the least popular answer (9), thus placing it lowest on the scale of most sacred natural objects included in the survey.

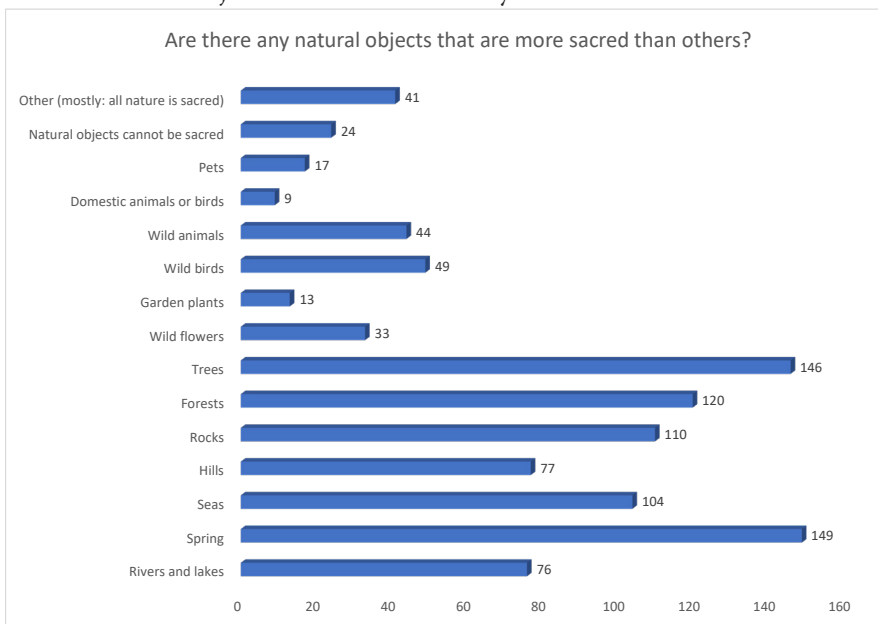


Figure 4. Results of the survey conducted in 2022 by Ieva Pigozne.

The results of the survey clearly correspond to the analysed texts on sacred footwear and reveal that similar perceptions of sacred natural objects persist in the 21st century. At the same time, there were people who thought that natural objects cannot be sacred (24) and those who replied in the open answer section (41), most of whom emphasized that all nature is sacred. Therefore, it appears that strong Christian or scientific world views were underrepresented, considering that nature as sacred was viewed as an acceptable idea by the majority of respondents.

The second question was aimed at formulating the material of potential imagined sacred footwear: “If you had to make sacred clothing or footwear, what material would you choose? Don’t think about how easy or hard it is to do, but about the ideal option.” The most frequent answers included natural textile fibres, of which linen, silk and wool were mentioned most often, while nettle, hemp and cotton appeared less frequently. Among repeatedly mentioned answers were other natural materials, including leather, fur, wood, and bast. Much less often other natural materials such as stone, crystals, silver, gold, bronze, and metal were mentioned, and these seem to nod in the direction of mythological beliefs, probably inspired by fairytales or fantasy fiction. Among such answers were light, the sun, sunlight, peace, fog, amber, moonlight, spiderwebs, shells, feathers, flowers, and water, and most were mentioned only once.

One group of answers was quite practical, reflecting modern eco-friendly thinking. This group included natural materials, local materials, and unspecified materials that do not pollute the environment. Some people paid more attention to the emotional value of their sacred attire mentioning that it had to be handmade, self-made, or given as a gift with good thoughts. Others emphasised that the sacred attire had to be made of something light or white. These answers align well with the previously described notion of clean and white. A few answers specified that sacred attire could only be made of natural materials of both plant and animal origin, provided that the animal was not killed specifically for the purpose. This seems to contradict the old perceptions according to which slaughtered animals were acceptable but fallen stock was not. A small group of respondents, however, replied by saying that sacred attire does not exist. A common monotheistic religious-based answer was: “How can clothing or footwear be sacred? That is absurd. Only God is sacred.”

As expected, the responses were diverse, and natural materials – especially those historically used to make traditional clothing and footwear – were among

the most popular. At the same time, the number of respondents who could not imagine sacred clothing or footwear was surprisingly small for a 21st century European society. Another noteworthy observation is that typical Christian values were noted less frequently than those of a modern eco-friendly approach.

The third question was targeted at finding respondents' attitude to the ideas expressed in the analysed texts: "From your point of view today, how would you comment on the documented idea that in the 19th century bast shoes were considered sacred because they were made of wood (linden bast), but leather shoes were made of cowhide and therefore could not be sacred?" There were no dominant answers to this question, although the variety was not great. The largest group of answers expressed agreement and understanding, while admitting that they had never thought about the issue, and that this seemed to be "a good point" and even an acknowledgement that "I will look at bast shoes differently now." Along with people who did not answer this question, there were also comments that tried to explain the situation, for example, "That is what people thought back then" and "These people must have been weird." Another set of answers asserted that "There is no difference whether you kill an animal, or a tree" and others made comments on and calls for vegan or vegetarian lifestyles. These answers were those that could be recognised as most reflective of a modern eco-friendly lifestyle and/or esotericism. The overall conclusion, however, is that most of the answers either contained sympathy for the idea of sacred footwear or a willingness to understand and treasure it as ancient knowledge. There were very few who expressed outright rejection or condemnation.

It is possible to conclude that according to the results of the survey, when asked about sacred shoes and clothing today, Latvians tend to have three different opinions. Many agree with the opinions from the 19th century, while some do not see a difference between killing an animal or tree, and others cannot fathom how footwear or clothing could be considered sacred. It appears that the first two groups look at sacred footwear and clothing in the category of 'clean'/'pure' vs. 'unclean'/'impure', while the third group – 'sacred' vs. 'profane'. However, when asked about the sacred objects of nature, all respondents think in the category of 'sacred' vs. 'profane'. The results of the survey reveal that trees are overwhelmingly more often considered sacred than household animals and this result backs the idea expressed in the analysed texts containing traditions from the 19th and early 20th centuries. Moreover, the comparison of 19th

and 21st century argumentation demonstrates how people's worldviews have developed, as well as how durable some of the old ideas can be. The persistence of these ideas well into the 21st century suggest that they must have been very important in the past.

Conclusions

Traditions of making and wearing wooden bast shoes had been documented in the territory of contemporary Latvia, lasting for more than a thousand years until their disappearance in the 20th century. There is, however, little information on either the practical aspects of the tradition or the mythological perceptions of bast shoes. This article is the first to be devoted to Latvian traditional bast and leather shoes and aspects of mythological perceptions connected with them.

From analysing texts stored in three different memory institutions we can conclude that bast shoes are the only footwear about which there are additional specific mythological perceptions in addition to those connected with footwear in general. Texts from the Madona district in the Vidzeme region carry evidence that bast shoes were considered sacred. 'Sacred' in this context means that bast shoes were looked upon as clean, pure, and undamaged, as opposed to leather shoes, *pastalas*, and boots that were viewed as unclean, damaged, and even sinful because they could be made of the hide of fallen stock and thus bring bad luck. The concept of sacred in this regard comes within the category of clean/pure/innocent vs. unclean/damaged rather than the sacred vs. profane category. Thus, bast shoes, despite having been the simplest and cheapest footwear, were still considered suitable for wedding attire and for bringing good luck in the future. The importance of wedding attire as representative of assets accompanying the couple as they move into a significant new phase of their lives seems to be a near universal tradition across times and cultures (Welters 1999).

We can also conclude that using interviews or surveys to conduct the 'ethnographic excavation' to gather modern people's opinions can be a useful approach when investigating old perceptions that were vaguely recorded in the past. Many members of modern Latvian society still carry old perceptions and beliefs (varying from passive knowledge or simple appreciation to active promotion of them). This allows us to estimate how important these perceptions must have been in previous centuries. And with caution and proper

methodology, this could allow us to continue using modern respondents in these 'ethnographic excavations' when researching cultural phenomena with seemingly historical origins.

Results of the study carried out in 2012 confirm that antiquated mythological perceptions still influence decisions and actions of modern society. Results of the survey carried out in the summer of 2022 show that contemporary Latvians are much more likely to consider trees and forests (sources of bast) to be more sacred than domestic animals (sources of leather). This suggests that old beliefs about sacred trees and natural products (including bast) made from them may have persisted to the 21st century and still be present in modern people's motivations, opinions, and actions in daily life. The study showed that more than half of the respondents express similar views, agree with the old beliefs, or sympathise with them. It can be observed that some new tendencies have appeared since 1928 as modern concepts of doing 'no harm' and vegan lifestyles have modified the understanding of nature itself, as well as the relationship between people and nature.

Finally, we can conclude that the vast collections of folklore texts and descriptions of traditions that have been collected over the last 150 years, stored in several memory institutions, contain a valuable source of information on the archaic peasant lifestyle and inherent mythological perceptions. Some of these perceptions have already been noted and included in academic studies. There are, however, many other treasures that have not been studied properly or may not even have been discovered yet. The potential of studying the mythological perceptions of clothing and footwear alone promises new epiphanies in the future.

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Patron Saints of Cities and Their Relics: From Medieval Times to Modernity

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Abstract: Feasts associated with relics have occurred since antiquity. They play a major role in the life of both the Catholic and Orthodox churches. In contemporary practice, relic feasts often include both religious and secular events, which are especially significant in small cities that possess relics of a patron saint. This paper analyses the feasts associated with St Nicholas of Myra, St Euthemia of Chalcedon, and St Alexander Schmorell; two of these traditions go back to the medieval era, the third has more recent origins.

Keywords: St Mark, St Maurus, St Nicholas of Myra, St Servulus

The cult of relics is historically very typical in Italo-Byzantine and Venetian towns. The patron saint of Venice, for example, is St Mark, and his veneration is strongly connected with the presence of relics. The translation (transfer) of St Mark's relics to Venice initiated a strong symbolic identification between the city and its patron saint (Bralić 2019: 11). Venice also possessed several relics of Istrian saints, such as St Maurus, bishop and martyr of Poreč (Cornaro 1758: 210–211, 605), and St Servulus, the main patron saint of Buje and copatron of Trieste (Cornaro 1758: 488).

The cult of relics was also very important for Istrian towns. According to Bralić:

achieving political power by strengthening relic cults was an established medieval practice in 15th-century Venice. The symbolic confirmation of authority through association with cults of local saints is attested in Istrian cities as well, where the main goal was to participate in the (co) creation of local memory and identity. We can follow these developments through the Venetian officials' and bishops' commissions of holy shrines, reliquaries and liturgical books for the celebration of patron saints in Koper, Poreč, Pula and Rovinj, from the second half of the 14th to the 18th century, but particularly in the 15th century. (Bralić 2019: 11)

This paper will explore these layers of historical and symbolic significance by analysing three patron saints originating from the medieval period and from recent history: St Nicholas of Myra, St Euthemia of Chalcedon, and St Alexander Schmorell.

St Nicholas of Myra

St Nicholas of Myra was born around 280 CE in the Lycian city of Patara. His veneration goes back to at least the sixth century, as illustrated by a basilica built over his grave (martyrium) dating to this period (Peschlow, 1990: 207–258). In addition, texts dedicated to him emerge in the ninth century, suggesting that his veneration had spread throughout the Christian world. Icons depicting scenes from his life appeared in Byzantine art in the 11th century, and in the 13th and 14th centuries these icons were dispersed throughout the Balkans and southern Italy (Mircović 1961: 81).

After the death of St Nicholas in 343, his relics were placed in the church in Myra, where he had served as bishop. However, on the 9th May 1087, they were transferred to the southern Italian city of Bari. According to Cioffari, this relocation was first proposed in 1077 (Cioffari 2005a and 2005b). In the Byzantine period from 876 to 1071, Bari was the capital of Byzantine Italy, but after the Normans captured the city on the 16th April 1071, it lost its status. As a result, the transfer of the relics must have been a significant event in the revival of the city's status (Cioffari 2005: 5).

About 70 sailors participated in this transfer (Cioffari 2005b: 5). In 1087 they landed at Cape Andriake and with 47 citizens from Bari acting as pilgrims went to the church of St Nicholas. At the tomb of the saint they announced a

prophetic dream in which St. Nicholas commanded them to transfer his relics. They carried the relics to the ship, singing prayers to the saint, and on the 9th May 1087 the ship landed in Bari. The relics were initially given to Elias, the Benedictine abbot, but two days later archbishop Urson ordered the relocation of the relics to the cathedral. However, the locals refused to follow this order and so the decision was made to build a new church. The construction of the Basilica of St Nicholas began in July 1087 and finished in 1197. In 1198 “the second transfer of the relics” took place, as described by Nicephorus and John Archdeacon, two Barian chroniclers (Cioffari 2005: 5). Since that time, Bari has been the city of St Nicholas. Pilgrims of different confessions continue to travel there to this day, and in the crypt with the relics both Catholic and Orthodox services are held every week.

The feast of the Translation of the Relics was established in 1089 by Pope Urban II, spreading throughout Italy and then Western Europe (Meisen 1931; Otranto 2015; Musin 2015). Greeks in Sicily and southern Italy were certainly familiar with the feast (Bux 1986: 8–9; Strunk 1977: 277–285) because it is mentioned in a 13th century Menologion from the Grottaferrata monastery (Toscani 1864: 98–99), and a service in Greek was created (MSS Sinai gr. 14–71, more in Strunk 1977: 277–285; Troelsgard 2007: 425–442). Nevertheless, the Byzantine Orthodox Church never officially accepted the feast.

According to another tradition, a further collection St Nicholas’ relics hidden by emperor Basil I the Macedonian (867–886) arrived in Venice nine years after the main transfer.¹ This event is recorded in an anonymous Venetian manuscript written in around 1101, “Historical News about Churches and Monasteries in Venice and Torcello”, which was published in 1758 by Flaminio Cornaro (Cornaro 1763: 52). Only Bari is considered the city of St Nicholas, however.

In general, we can observe that the establishment of the feast of the translation of these relics occurred at a turning point for both the Latin and the Eastern Orthodox world (Legkikh 2020). The Byzantine Empire was in danger of being conquered by the Turks after its 1071 defeat at the battle of Manzikert, and after the East–West Schism in 1054, Bari, which had belonged to Byzantine Italy for nearly three centuries, represented both Eastern and Western rites. St Nicholas, archbishop of the Byzantine city of Myra, became known in the Western world, and especially in Italy, as Nicola di Bari (cf Cornaro 1758: 488–492). In the service of Italian Greeks, St Nicholas is the patron saint of two

cities, Myra and Bari: “Τὴν Μυέρων μη λιπών πρὸς Ἰταλίαν παραγέγονας πάτερ [Without leaving the city of the Myreans you have arrived in Italy]” (quoted from Troelsgard 2007: 429). Instead of provoking a protest among Orthodox Christians, the placement of the saint’s relics in a Catholic city made Bari a sacred place for both confessions.

In the contemporary world the Feast of the Translation of the Relics is one of the most important and beloved events in Bari. Even if the Dormition of St Nicholas on the 6th December is traditionally considered more important, the main feast in Bari is the commemoration of the relics; Barians call it “the true and real one”:

Ma la vera e propria festa di San Nicola è quella che va dal 7 al 9 Maggio in ricordo dell'arrivo a Bari delle reliquie del Santo trasportate da Myra da 62 coraggiosi marinai (correva l'anno 1087). La traslazione delle reliquie del Santo viene ricordata e festeggiata ogni anno in maniera importante dedicando appunto le tre giornate di Maggio che coincidono con il corteo storico, la processione a mare e la festa dei baresi.

But the real feast of San Nicola is the one that runs from the 7th to the 9th May in commemoration of the arrival in Bari of the relics of the Saint transported from Myra by 62 brave sailors (it was the year 1087). The translation of the relics of the Saint is remembered and celebrated every year in an important way by dedicating precisely the three days of May which coincide with the historical parade, the procession to the sea and the feast of the people of Bari².

Every 7th, 8th and 9th May, Bari hosts thousands of pilgrims, especially from Eastern Europe. Because the festival combines both religious and folk elements, the pilgrims are mixed with tourists. The celebration usually begins on the afternoon of the 7th at San Giorgio Bay with Holy Mass; this ritualised opening is important because Bari is considered a sacred place. In the evening a performance recounting the story of the transfer is presented (Corteo Storico); a procession of people dressed in eleventh-century costumes begins in Piazza Federico II of Swabia and arrives in Piazza St Nicholas.

The 8th March is dedicated to religious rites. In the Basilica, eucharistic celebrations follow one another starting from 4:30 in the morning and continuing until sunset. In the morning, the statue of St Nicholas begins a procession to

the sea; it is transported through the streets of the historic city centre, and, as one participant noted, its “fabric garments sway with the movement, making it look as if San Nicola is walking above the people”³ After a brief firework display and blessing of the sea, the statue is placed aboard a boat at about 10 am at the Molo of St Nicholas and then sails escorted by a fleet of pilgrims, until it returns to land in the evening. The saint returns to the Basilica via the alleys of Bari Vecchia, which are flooded with lights and colours. The day ends with another firework display on the Molo di Sant’Antonio.

The 9th May begins in the early morning with a fireworks display, and the celebrations come to an end at about 6 pm with the Solemn Eucharistic Concelebration at the Basilica of St Nicholas and the distribution of Holy Manna, a liquid emitted from the relics. As the Eucharist concludes, the altar party, choir, and invited guests go down to the crypt that contains St Nicholas’ tomb. Meanwhile, the manna is poured into bottles in order to be distributed throughout the rest of the year.⁴ In 1925 the manna was analysed by the chemistry laboratory at the University of Bari and found to be a water of particular purity, a chemical phenomenon similar to that of a vaporous condensation.⁵

As this account indicates, the feast starts and finishes with important religious rites. For example, the relics, shut away all year, are visible on the 9th May, and the manna collected and distributed to believers. The saint’s bones are not even made available on the Dormition; the only day when the marble enclosure is opened is on the evening of the 9th May. This seemingly goes against the main tradition of the church, which prioritises the Dormition over the transfer of the relics. But because the Translation not only gave Bari the status of a sacred capital but also connected Catholic and Orthodox worlds, this feast became more important for the city and also for the many pilgrims who come to honour their most venerated saint.

Even if the basilica is Catholic, there is a possibility in cripta for all Christian confessions to have a service. For example, Thursday is a day of the Orthodox Russian church when the Orthodox can have a service in cripta instead of at the Russian church, which has an important function as a place for Russian pilgrims.

The relics of St Nicholas were the most beloved among Russian pilgrims in the 19th century (Cioffari 2005). In the second half of the 20th, and thus far in the 21st, century the attraction of this feast also increased among non-pilgrim tourists. “When we decided to go to Italy I hoped to go to Bari”, is a phrase that one can hear from almost all tourists. Normally pilgrims talk about miracles

“When my condition improved I decided to go to Bari” (women, 51). “We were completely lost. Then I saw a man who came to us and showed the way. Only afterwards did I understand that it was St Nicholas. Afterwards I decided to go to Bari” (woman, 62). Almost all informants said “St Nicholas helps everybody, you just have to ask properly”. The attraction of the city, especially for Russians, is often combined with a visit to the basilica. As an example I can mention a description of a visit to one tourist site:

Thousands of pilgrims are longing to visit the town in order to bow to the most venerated saint in Russia. You will visit the 11th century Catholic basilica, which was specially constructed in order to hold the relics of St Nicholas. I will tell you how the basilica was built and draw your attention to its interior decoration, and also tell you how, where and what it is good to ask St Nicholas the Wonderworker⁶.

Some people mentioned that after visiting Bari their life changed positively (marriage, a new pilgrimage, healing). There are even miracles, known as humerus stories, for example, one woman who asked about marriage married a man who helped her out after she got stuck between a wall and a column.⁷

Many informants talk about special feeling in the basilica We find it also in travel blogs:

Bari is an amazing and spiritually very reverent place. St Nicholas is generally quick to help: requests addressed to him are usually fulfilled quite quickly. We experienced this first hand.⁸

We entered the cathedral and went down to the relics of the Wonderworker. These are unforgettable moments... There was no service, almost no one was in the cathedral. We lit candles in the upper church, bought an icon of St Nicholas and several bottles of chrism in a shop near the church...⁹

However, the Translation of relics of St Nicholas is not only a religious feast. Many tourists visit Bari in this period in order to participate in the events. Since Bari is situated on the coast, many tourists try to combine a holiday with a pilgrimage, (or “the beach and the pilgrimage”¹⁰), with the feast of relics seen as a perfect moment to achieve both. One can hear this from the majority

of travellers and pilgrims and can also find the same sentiment expressed in travel blogs:

The city of Bari was a must-visit place in our excursion tour of southern Italy. So, on the 22nd May, we went there. It turned out that 90% of our group purposefully went there, since that day was a major religious feast called the Spring Transfer of Relics. Thus, we saw the festive liturgy, and the service was even conducted in Russian.¹¹

It should be noted that secular events are also part of the celebration of the saint. Every second year, for example, features a special show called the Feast of the Tricolour. This is an air show presented in honour of San Nicola and the city of Bari by the National Aerobatic Team of the Italian Air Force; planes paint the sky with trails of smoke in the three colours of the Italian flag. On these days the city is closed to traffic, although every pilgrim is still welcome. As the Baresi say, Bari is a cosmopolitan city, and St Nicholas loves foreigners: “*San Nicola è amante dei forestieri*”. One traveller even called him a kind of “touristic brand”. Since during the feast there are different types of procession it is possible for both tourists and pilgrims to participate. Mainly pilgrims are Italians or Russians, Ukrainians and Georgians. When Apulians come to venerate their patron saint the scene is especially interesting and picturesque. One Russian traveller describes it as follows:

Each group of pilgrims entered the Basilica singing. These were folk songs dedicated to St Nicholas. The songs were simple, melodic, and the choir followed the leader. The pilgrims began their journey from the square. Their passage into the Basilica was supervised by a planner, there was a queue. In front of each group the most respected person (perhaps the headman of the village) walked... He was also a leading singer.¹²

St Euthemia of Chalcedon

The second case examined in this paper is St Euthemia of Chalcedon. St Euthemia was born at the beginning of the 4th century in Chalcedon. She was the child of the senator Philophron and his wife Theodorisiana. She refused to

participate at the feast of Ares and proconsul Priscus tied her to a torture wheel, but the wheel did not hurt her; she was also impervious to fire and wild animals in the arena refused to attack her, except for one that only scratched her, but the wound led to her immediate death. Christians from Chalcedon preserved the body of the martyr until 620 CE when the Persians captured the town. The sarcophagus was then transferred to Constantinople and placed in a magnificent church erected in her honour. The saint's most well-known miracle took place during the Fourth Ecumenical Council. According to tradition, participants in the council wrote the dogmas of the Orthodox church and their opponents the Monophysites down and placed them in St Euthemia's tomb. They reopened the tomb four days later and the list of Orthodox doctrines were in her hand, that of the Monophysites was under her feet.

St Euthemia is a pan-Christian saint, with many churches in Italy dedicated to her, the most famous being in Rome, Milan, Brescia, Verona, and Bologna. She is prominent in the work of Church writers such as Prudentius († after 405), St Peacock the Merciful, Paulinus of Nolan († 431), and St Venantia Fortunata († before 610). Ennodius, bishop of Pavia († 521), also dedicated a lengthy poem to St Euthemia with a detailed description of the torments referred to in the Martyrdom (BHG 619), indicating this text was compiled and translated into Latin no later than the first quarter of the sixth century.

There is an anonymous legend about St Euthemia (BHL, N 2715) according to which fishermen in the city of Rovinj (on the Istrian peninsula, now in Croatia) found a sarcophagus with the imperishable relics of the saint washed up on the shore. Since then she has been the patroness of the city, where the main cathedral is dedicated to her. Texts connected with St Euthemia and her relics are in the Rovinj illuminated codex, a hagiographical manuscript from the fifteenth century also known as *Translatio corporis beate Euthemia*. The legend of receiving the relics is described in f. 24 in *Translatio corporis Alme martiris (et) virginis Euphemie ab inclita urbe Veneta Rubinum et inpropria archa depositi* (Translation of the Body of the Holy Virgin and Martyr Euphemia from the Famous City of Venice to Rovinj and Laying in Her Sarcophagus).¹³ According to this legend, the marble sarcophagus drifted to the coast of Rovinj after a big storm at dawn on 13th July, 800 CE. It is said that many of the city's citizens tried to haul the sarcophagus to the Church of St George, but no one succeeded. Finally, answering St Euthemia's call, a small boy with two little cows managed

to haul the sarcophagus up the hill. The people of Rovinj considered it a miracle and they proclaimed St Euthemia patron saint of the town.

Restitution of the saint's relics was decreed by the Senate on the 6th May 1401, as confirmed by archival research by Visnja Bralić. According to Bralić, this is a rare, documented, case in Venetian political and religious practice: "As in the case of St. Nazarius in Koper, the revival of the cult of Euphemia was realised in interaction between the local community and the Venetian authorities. Both restitutions prompted a series of events and artistic commissions" (Bralić 2019: 17).

The day of commemoration of St Euthemia is the main annual festival in the town, held on the 16th September. The grand celebration has an extensive program that takes place in the main square and draws many visitors to Rovinj. On St Euthemia's Day people traditionally eat mutton with sauerkraut (*ovca z kapuzom*) and *fritule*, an Istrian delicacy.

As was the case for the St Nicholas celebration in Bari, the festival spreads over several days, starting on the 14th September. The majority of events are secular and connected with the community, including music, a performance by majorettes, dancing, a regatta, and sporting events (for example a basketball tournament and a swimming marathon). The main feast on the 16th September begins with Holy Mass in Croatian and Italian and continues with other events, culminating in another mass at 6:00 pm. During this day the relics of St Euthemia are open for viewing all day. Events take place in all the squares and there is music for all tastes: Croatian, Italian, folk, pop, classical. Visitors can also try traditional food and hear songs devoted to St Euthemia everywhere.

This is the event schedule for 2013¹⁴

Saturday, September 14th

MONVI-CUVI

11 am – Basketball tournament

VILLAS RUBIN

11 am – 15th Swimming marathon

Victoria Legkikh

SPORTS HALL

11 am–6 pm – Volleyball tournament

ROVINJ WATERS

11 am – Sailing regatta

SUMMER TERRACE OF THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY – MULTIMEDIA CENTRE (MMC) IN CASE OF RAIN

7 pm – Rovinj guidebook presentation – Rovigno d'Istria, Guida storica artistica e culturale, written by Gabriele Bosazzi
Organised by the Pino Budicin Rovinj Italian community

M. TITO SQUARE

5 pm – Santa Eufemia brass festival

Organised by the Rovinj brass band

8 pm – Concert: various Rovinj artists

Shock Treatment, Feedback, No Limits, Big Wave

Sunday, September 15th

ŠTANGA

9 am – 10 pm – the St Euphemia Cup, traditional Bocce tournament

M. TITO SQUARE

10:30 am – A Fisherman and the Sea dance performance by GC Roxanne

11 am – Dance performance: Zumba “Leiras”

ROVINJ MULTIMEDIA CENTRE (MMC)

12:00 – From One Point to Another by Sea and Land marathon – arrival at approximately 4:30 pm at the MMC

4:15 pm – Brass band and Rovinj majorette parade

4:30 pm – Welcome to the finish line for marathon runner Sandy Mužina (Pula–Rovinj)

4:45 pm – Rovinj majorette performance
5 pm – Formal session of the town council

M. TITO SQUARE

2 pm – 11th bicycle tour on town day
7:30 pm – Concert: various Rovinj artists
Folk Band Batana, Sergio Preden Gato and Ricky Bosazzi Quintet, Biba, Vlado, Ligio Trio, Midi pjevači and Solisti di Biba from the Rovinj Italian community, Pino Budicin, Duo On Line, Party Band

SMALL PIER

6 pm – midnight
Rovinj wine festival traditional grape processing demonstration, bare-foot grape treading competition, tasting of best Istrian wines from 8 pm, tasting of original Istrian prosciutto fish stands with fresh sardines for citizens on

Monday, September 16th

MALA VALDIBORA CAR PARK

8 am – Fair

BRODOGRADILIŠTE SQUARE

Small antiques fair

ST EUPHEMIA CHURCH

8 am – Holy Mass with Milan Zgrablić
9 am – Holy Mass in Italian with don Lino Ninchele

M. TITO SQUARE

10 am – Dance performance: Rovinj majorettes
11:30 am – Children's tennis tournament
11:30 am – Mini basketball tournament for women
12:00 – Aikido demonstration

12:30 pm – Mini Handball Town Cup

ST EUPHEMIA CHURCH

11 am – Holy Mass with Dražen Kutleša

ST EUPHEMIA CHURCH

6 pm – Holy Mass with Ivan Milovan

M. TITO SQUARE

7 pm – Concert: masterband

9:30 pm – Concert: opća opasnos

The feast of St Euthemia is more secular than the feast of St Nicholas in Bari: there are several masses, but on the streets St Euthemia is celebrated with music and dance. Nevertheless, St Euthemia is very important for the city's inhabitants as the church is situated at the top of the hill and is the main centre of the town. The statue of the saint at the top of the church has even become a barometer for many citizens who "ask St Euthemia about the weather". There is also a song called "Santa Euthemia" written by M. Di Capua, D. Načipović, and A. Baša that is devoted to her. Famous Croatian singer Tony Cetinski also recorded this local song, making it known not only to locals but also to the general public. It is clear that St Euthemia is the main patron of the town and is thought to help all of its inhabitants. In contrast to the previous case, the feast of St Euthemia is more oriented towards inhabitants than tourists. Even if during the feast one can see a lot of small stands with souvenirs, visitors mainly come from neighbouring villages. Since during the feast the relics are open all day pilgrims also come to venerate the saint. Many Rovignesi, even those who are not particularly religious, see the saint as a helper and the patron of the town. "We are under the patronage of St Euthemia", as inhabitants often say. Since the statue of St Euthemia at the top of the church is also a barometer, inhabitants often answer questions about the weather by saying "look at St Euthemia". This feast is not as well-known and popular as the feast of St Nicholas, although the Rovignesi and visitors celebrate her commemoration as the main day of the year. This day is also considered the end of the season. One hears many fewer

stories about modern miracles or recommendations to visit the feast, although it is still seen as a 'homey' festival devoted to a beloved saint who is part of the town and always participates in the life of inhabitants with her patronage.

St Alexander Schmorell

The last example surveyed in this paper is that of Alexander Schmorell. Schmorell was a student of medicine who belonged to the White Rose resistance circle (Die Weiße Rose) during the Nazi period in Germany. At its head there were six people from Munich, students Hans Scholl (1918–1943) and his sister Sophie Scholl (1921–1943), Christoph Probst (1919–1943), Alexander Schmorell (1917–1943), Willi Graf (1918–1943), and Professor Kurt Huber (1893–1943). The movement wrote six pamphlets against Nazism in 1942–1943. On 18th February 1943 Hans and Sophie Scholl distributed copies of the sixth pamphlet in the atrium at the entrance to the University of Munich. On 22nd February the Nazis arrested the Scholls and Christoph Probst and executed them by guillotine just hours after the conclusion of their trial. Alexander Schmorell, Kurt Huber, and Willi Graf were subsequently arrested, tried, and sentenced to death on 19th April. Schmorell and Huber were executed three months later, on 13th July, and Graf on 12th October, 1943. Today Germany honours all the members of the White Rose. The University is situated in Geschwister-Scholl Platz, and at the University there is a White Rose Foundation. In Kassel there is also the Schule Alexander Schmorell.¹⁵

The veneration of this new saint began before official canonisation. The Church of the New Martyr in Munich makes a procession to his tomb every year, with ensuing *panikhida* (memorial prayers) on the 12th July, which is also the day of Peter and Paul in the Russian Orthodox calendar. Schmorell was executed on the 13th July; the day of apostles Peter and Paul was an ideal fit. As was often the case, the Orthodox Church of Russia eventually accepted this local veneration and on the 4th February 2012 officially canonised Alexander Schmorell as a locally venerated saint for the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia's Diocese of Berlin and Germany. St Alexander became the first New Martyr glorified since the reestablishment of canonical communion between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. Mark, the Metropolitan of Berlin and Germany, wrote the canonisation service.

The canonisation took place in 2012 at the Cathedral of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia¹⁶ in Munich, beginning on the afternoon of Saturday 3rd February, with the icon of Alexander Schmorell brought in advance. The icon shows a young brown haired man with a cross, a red cross armband and a white rose. The armband indicates that he was a student of medicine, and the white rose symbolises his membership in the anti-Nazi organisation. The procession started at 4:00 pm. Along with Archbishop Mark,¹⁷ five other bishops participated in the ceremony: Metropolitan Valentin of Orenburg (the Russian city where Schmorell was born), Metropolitan Onufriy of Czernowitz in Ukraine, Archbishop Feofan of Berlin, Bishop Michael of Geneva, and Bishop Agapit of Stuttgart. The procession arrived at the grave of Alexander Schmorell and a bunch of white roses was placed there. The procession was followed by a final *panikhida* because Alexander would henceforth be recognised as a saint. At 5:00 pm a vigil service began that culminated in the official canonisation.

A journalist described this event:

The high point of the day came during the Saturday evening Vigil, which began at 5 PM and lasted three-and-a-half hours, by which time an almost full moon was shining through the windows. In the middle of the service, several icon stands were placed in the center of the church with candle stands behind. At least a hundred candles were lit, forming a curtain of light. Finally, a procession of bishops, clergy and altar servers poured out of the sanctuary carrying an icon of Saint Alexander Schmorell followed by another icon crowded with images of New Martyrs of the twentieth century. Next came a huge silver-bound Gospel book, a copy that had been a gift from Russia's last czar, Nicholas II, to Russian Orthodox Christians in Germany. The two icons and the Gospel book were solemnly placed side by side on the stands, then incensed. Finally, everyone in the church, beginning with the six bishops, venerated the icon of the newly recognized saint.¹⁸

After the canonisation Alexander Schmorell immediately became a patron saint of the Russian Orthodox Church in Munich: in the service he is called Alexander of Munich. Since he was a student of medicine he also spontaneously became a patron of doctors.

“He was a doctor, so he is our patron”, a woman of 50 said. Many members of the parish of Munich talk about the importance of his veneration, giving comments like, “he is our saint, he died for us, so now we venerate him even if his relics are still in the cemetery”. Since he was half German and half Russian many people also see him as a bridge between the Eastern and the Western world, which somehow connects him with St Nicholas, who also became a patron of the Catholic city. But if St Nicholas became a patron of one Orthodox and one Catholic city, with St Alexander Schmorell we can talk about a patron of Orthodox people in the Catholic world. His veneration is not widespread, although since he is known in the German world as a hero of protest during the Second World War we can say of his importance for both worlds that for Germans he is an important historical personage while for Russians he is a saint.

St Alexander’s commemoration on the 13th July became a patronal feast of the church. Since he was half German the relics were not taken from the grave, rather the grave itself became a place of veneration. The service on the 13th July always closes with a procession to the cemetery. Children of the church school also come to his grave every Saturday.¹⁹ This is a church feast and does not include secular events, although Russian believers have already participated in it and its traditions, which started only recently, are still to be formed.

Conclusion

We can observe that relic feast days still play an important role in the life of both Catholic and Orthodox Christians. These celebrations are particularly important when a saint becomes the patron of a town or city. The three cases that this paper analysed highlight three different forms of celebration. The feast devoted to St Nicholas is universal to all Christians. It combines religious and secular events with a strong emphasis on religious–historical events and, in particular, the transfer of relics. Despite the importance of the Holy Mass and the opening of relics, the festival of St Euthemia is more secular as it consists of music, dancing, competitions, and street food. The modern event does not reconstruct the historical legend, nor does it even seemingly focus on St Euthemia, although we might say that her importance is so evident for citizens that there is no need to show it during the feast. The city of Rovinj itself is less religious than Bari. The town is not considered a sacred place so there are no

pilgrims. Many tourists come to enjoy the seaside, but the feast is in September, after the high season, and so it is more oriented towards local people and as a result we see a celebration of a patron saint who is always present in the life of the town, instead of a reconstruction of historical events. The third case is special for two reasons: first, because St Alexander Schmorell is a patron saint of Munich only for the Russian Orthodox community, and second, because there are no relics: his grave remains untouched at the cemetery. The veneration of St Alexander is strictly religious and does not include any secular events. This tradition is the youngest and is still in formation, although we can already see its beginnings in the form of a procession on the day of his death and the visit to his tomb by all classes in the church school.

These three examples illustrate the continuity and importance of the celebration of relics, even in a case where they are not placed in a church. In all of the cases, the relics bestow power on a particular place, even if that place is not native to the saint or even the saint's relics. And this power leads to both religious and secular events that only increase the place's status.

Notes

¹ According to this version they are now in the church devoted to St. Nicholas in the Benedictian monastery on the island of Lido.

² <https://www.bariexperience.com/fare-esperienza-bari/giorno-festa-patronale-san-nicola-basilica-bari-puglia-tradizioni-corteo/>

³ <https://www.stnicholascenter.org/around-the-world/festivals/bari-festival>

⁴ <https://www.ninatrulliresort.it/en/blog/events/bari-celebrates-saint-nicholas-of-myra.html>

⁵ <https://www.italyheritage.com/traditions/calendar/december/san-nicola-di-bari.htm>

⁶ <https://experience.tripster.ru/experience/8335/>

⁷ https://www.tourister.ru/responses/id_23357

⁸ http://www.pravklin.ru/publ/poezdka_k_moshham_svjatitelja_nikolaja_22_maja_prazdnovanie_perenesenija_moshhej_svjatitelja_nikolaja_iz_mir_likijskikh_v_bari/8-1-0-1442

⁹ <https://dzen.ru/a/XBd8IZJlJewCqPhoF>

¹⁰ <https://forum.awd.ru/viewtopic.php?f=1538&t=359262>

¹¹ <https://www.tury.ru/otzyv/id/195384-italiya-bari-moya-progulka-po-gorodu-bari>

¹² https://www.tourister.ru/responses/id_23648

¹³ See more in Križnan, 2000b: 94-103, n. 32, 104-112; Križnan, 2000a.

¹⁴ <https://www.rovinj-tourism.com/en/calendar-of-events/events-archive/2040>

¹⁵ See Alexander-Schmorell-Schule, <https://www.bs-schmorell.de/>

¹⁶ In German – Kathedrale der Hll. Neumärtyrer und Bekenner Russlands/Russian – Kafedral'nyi sobor Sviatykh Novomuchennikov i Ispovednikov Rosiiskikh.

¹⁷ Now metropolitan of Berlin and all Germany.

¹⁸ https://sobor.de/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=142:a-canonization-in-m

¹⁹ There are 13 classes in the Church school, and normally, every class goes once a month.

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Evading Military Service and Tales of Hidden Artillery: Military Legends in Estonian Folklore

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Abstract: The article explores Estonian military lore, focusing on the legends and rumours that circulated mainly among men conscripted into the Soviet army, but also among those who served in the Estonian Defence Forces. Many of these legends played an important role in fostering a sense of camaraderie among the troops and continue to circulate as part of men's oral tradition. Although, unfortunately, the legends were not collected during their active spread, we can get some idea of this cultural phenomenon from discussion threads posted on online military forums (e.g., www.militaar.net) and from comparative material sent to the Estonian Folklore Archives in the 1990s. The legends and rumours in the memories of servicemen and veteran soldiers tell us about hidden weapons, army discipline, strategies to evade military service, sexuality, fate, and serendipity, as well as exploring particular natural objects in local landscapes (bridges, secret passages, etc.)

Keywords: military mindset, military service, rumours, Soviet army, soldier lore, urban legends

Introduction

Men in my home village on the shore of Lake Kriimani in Tartu County recount stories about a piece of military equipment that was allegedly sunk in the lake during Second World War. Younger men who have moved to the village and its surroundings in recent decades seem particularly eager to spread these tales. Depending on the version of the legend, the sunken object is either a tank, a plane, or an artillery piece. The context lends some plausibility to the story since Lake Kriimani is six metres deep, and during the war, the village was the site of at least one major battle, during which several houses were burnt down and the villagers had to hide themselves and their cattle deep in the Kriimani meltwater valley. The legend may very well have been a true story if only several other artillery pieces and tanks were not known to be hidden in the area. For example, during the Soviet period, boys at the local primary school often talked about a tank that had sunk in a bog a few kilometres outside the village (see Kalmre 2022: 183, 257). While discovering such a ‘treasure’ is of course not entirely beyond the realm of possibility, a closer examination of the plausibility of the legends often reveals that there are many who believe a story and agree with it despite no real identifiable witnesses having come forward. The legend about Kriimani village is unique in that it was not very popular in the post-war decades but attracted more attention with the arrival of newcomers in the 21st century.

Indeed, these stories can be viewed as a rather typical part of men’s military narrative tradition. Reflecting men’s expectations, values, and ideologies, these legends recount recent history through seemingly true events. The narratives share strong, possibly gender-based, features and belief content, and are typically repetitive or reiterative.

Legends and Gender

In folklore research, stories of this kind are regarded as contemporary elaborations of the old legend genre, i.e. contemporary legends, or, according to the definition of international folklore studies, urban legends or urban tales. All the definitions serve as descriptive concepts rather than analytical terms. It is, perhaps, worth emphasising from the very start that the following article is a

folkloristic study that follows the idiosyncrasies and principles of these narrative genres (legends, urban legends, rumours) and motifs. Stories like this were simply regarded as part of daily life as they reflected accounts of real events and were not collected as folklore in Estonia or elsewhere in the world until the 1980s, when the first monographs on the subject appeared (see, e.g., Brunvand 1981, Virtanen 1987, and many others). Indeed, the legends are based on the daily life and problems that people encounter, and, as mentioned above, it is plausible that many of these events actually took place. The only exception is that people do not narrate a single event, and since there appear to be many similar events, it could be referred to as a tradition. A characteristic feature of these urban legends, at least of the tales explored here, is their traditionality, including recurring topics, plots and motifs. In some cases, as will be shown below, similar narrative motifs and plotlines can be found throughout history.

Gillian Bennet has characterised contemporary legends based on a sliding 'told as truth' scale, which has also been referred to as the rhetorical weight of legends. Essentially this means that depending on the accent/tonality used in narration, a legend can be told as truthful (the event or incident really took place), as questionable, or as a joke. The same plot can be conveyed as a brief account or rumour or a longer elaborate tale (legend). There are some plots in which, depending on the performance, the narrative can be part of a personal experience in the form of a legend, memorate, anecdote, or rumour (Bennett 1988, 32–33; see also Kalmre 1996; Kalmre 2008, 28–35, etc.). A notable feature of legend is its seeming specificity, suggesting that the events have happened to someone somewhere. At the same time, telling these legends required that its sources were not fully detailed and verifiable, which the narrators might subconsciously avoid.

This was very likely the case also with the alleged piece of military technology lying in the bottom of Lake Kriimani. Men living in the farms surrounding the lake were well-informed about the events that happened in the area during the war, and talking about these may have elicited numerous counterarguments from the listeners. As time passed and the audience changed, the stories gained more plausibility and popularity. The fact that the tale had been heard from a friend, who had heard it from a friend of a friend who had once lived in the village, served as a guarantee for the narrator and audience that it was a true story.

Contemporary legends have scarcely been studied through the lens of gender stereotypes and specifics. Some studies have discussed typical gender-specific

behaviours in narrative plots, noting, for example, how storytellers of different gender sometimes modify the contents of the narrative based on their intent. Gender is also an important factor in the dissemination of these tales, in terms of who tells the story to whom and who is perceived as the protagonist or hero (see Henken 2004). While themes like war, the army, weapons, and battles have traditionally been associated with men, women soldiers are common these days as well. In Western folklore studies, this aspect of men's folklore, including legends, has been studied mainly in the context of specific conflicts, such as the Vietnam, Korean, or Gulf wars (Brunvand 2000, 149). The rather distinct context makes it difficult to compare the material with relevant Estonian sources, which is why the studies referred to above are mainly tentatively categorising and descriptive reviews. Comparative material could potentially be found among Russian sources, if it were not for the fact that, in Russian folklore studies, research into contemporary narrative lore, including urban legends, was started only recently and there are no studies on legends that circulated in Russian or Soviet armies, or they are not accessible. In any case, the author has not had access to such comparative material on the subject nor to related comparative reviews or studies from Latvia or Lithuania. Yet, we could pre-emptively argue that even the review here introduces several legends that circulated not only among Estonian men but also in the Soviet army in general.

Military narrative lore by no means constitutes a homogeneous corpus, as part of it is universal material about military service, weapons and the like, and part of it emerges and spreads in specific contexts, such as during wars and military conflicts. Several legends and rumour cycles, based on these legends, which initially circulated in the traditional repertoire of men or soldiers, later achieved a wider spread due to some extraordinary circumstance. One of such examples is the miraculous legend *The Boy(s) Saved by the Snake*, known in regions of the former Soviet Union and associated with the Afghanistan war¹ (Kalmre 2018). Rumours about female snipers of primarily Baltic ethnicities, colloquially known as *White Tights*, biathletes who shot soldiers in more sensitive parts of the body, have circulated among Russian soldiers probably since the early 1990s. These rumours have resurfaced during various conflicts and military operations started by imperial Russia recently, for example, in Ukraine. The legend has been distributed through various channels, including in feature films and books. Born from the battlefield fears of Russian soldiers, the narratives have been successfully exploited in official Russian propaganda

(Regamey 2017). A highly unique and later widely popular military legend began to circulate in Ukraine in the early days of Russia's invasion. This was the tale of the Ghost of Kyiv, a mythical Ukrainian pilot who purportedly downed a number of Russian planes. Ukraine used the legend to encourage the population's resistance and motivation to fight. Allegedly, the legend went viral due to an associated online game.²

Sources

The sources at my disposal for the study of men's military legends were modest rather than adequate. The causes of this scarcity are the limited collecting of men's lore, including soldier's lore, and the lack of studies on men's belief stories. Before the 1990s, research into this specific area of men's folklore was out of the question, partly due to the ideology of the totalitarian Soviet regime and partly because of the retrospective rather than progressive, future-oriented approach used in folklore studies at the time. As late as in 1989–1990, during the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the reinstatement of the Republic of Estonia, folklorist Mall Hiimäe initiated the collecting of folklore from Estonian men who were at the time serving or had served in the Soviet army. An appeal titled *Teeme sõduripoistele teenistusaja sisustamiseks ühe ahvatleva ettepaneku* ('An Intriguing Proposal Regarding the Leisure Activities of Soldiers') was published in the popular Estonian youth magazine *Noorus* ('Youth', see issue 8, p. 23) in 1989. Among the nearly seventy respondents to the appeal were young men who served in the army at the time as well as those who had already completed their service. The collected material did not include belief accounts but rather responses to what had been requested in the appeal: soldier's jokes, slang, song parodies, and albums (Hiimäe 1996). Around the same time, the last groups of Estonians were doing their compulsory military service in the Soviet army, which was evoking heightened public interest and criticism in the opening Estonian society.³ In the 1990s, public attention increasingly focused on soldiers' humour. A small collection of international military jokes was published titled *Vahva punasõduri ustaav* ('The Brave Red Soldier's Code', see Hiimäe 1992), followed by *Armeehuumor...* ('Army Humour', 1996). In this collection, Russian military humour was presented through the jokes about Stirlitz and Petka, and Chapaev (Chapai), highly popular generally in Soviet folklore.

Between 2003 and 2005, Merlin Lõiv, a student at the University of Tartu's Department of Folklore collected folklore (mainly jargon, jokes, and songs) from men serving in the Estonian Defence Forces.⁴ The material collected between 1989 and 1990, and 2003 and 2005, presented here, does not contain anything that would qualify as urban legends. However, there are several written memoirs that provide context and supplementary detail on this topic. Among these, the book *Nõukogude armee ja Eesti mees* ('The Soviet Army and the Estonian Man') is perhaps more comprehensive and systematic (Tammer 2010). Together, these studies and publications review a range of topics relating to military folklore and background knowledge on serving in the Soviet army.

In the latter half of the 1990s, I started several campaigns to collect urban legends among correspondents of the Estonian Folklore Archives and the general public. Among the material submitted in response to the campaign were stories, collected by Tiit Birkan, a long-term correspondent of the folklore archives, which I initially categorised as local tales. Having become more knowledgeable about the material, I dare to say that it represents a rather universal men's narrative tradition that could be classified as contemporary or urban legends, from a folkloristic perspective.

The core of the material presented below, however, originates from an online Estonian military forum (www.militaar.net).⁵ The forum has more than 11,000 male users who post on and discuss various military topics from the past and present. The anonymous users represent men of different ages, some of whom have served in the Estonian Defence Forces; some more elderly men share their recollections about serving in the Soviet army. As the posts contain predominantly recollections, the truthfulness of the tales is questionable, even though the forum users agree that while people used to believe the stories, this is often no longer the case. Many contributors to the forum now view these tales as urban legends. Considering the specifics of collecting legends and related rumours – collecting them is far more complex than collecting, say, jokes, songs, or vocabulary – the online forum provides a unique environment for collecting folklore, serving as a comprehensive archival file of a given legend and its variations, presenting the legend's context and the narrators' and the community's opinions all in the same place. While the material sent by Tiit Birkan was well-structured written narratives/legends, the military forum represents a rather natural narrative space where users can discuss a tale and men who served around the same time in different units share their experiences and talk

about legend plots and related topics, bridging the memories and experiences of younger and older narrators.

As far as I am aware, what follows is the first attempt to give at least a preliminary overview of urban legends and rumours in Estonian men's military folklore. Due to the specific nature of the material, the article leans more towards the past, specifically the Soviet period, rather than contemporary times. Below, I will attempt to review the main themes, recurrent motifs, and plots of military legends, as well as the contexts in which the tales emerge, aspiring to shed light on their versatile semantic dimensions as much as possible, and point out some military legends that have resonated across generations.

The Military World of Men and the Legends Reflecting It

We are used to thinking about war as a monstrous, inhumane tragedy, which no doubt it is. Yet, amidst all the atrocities, for very young men, war can also be a source of excitement and adventure. The author of the present article had not considered this particular aspect until interviewing a local man during fieldwork in Sõrve years ago. At the outset of the Second World War, this very young man from a remote village found himself on the frontline. Despite having witnessed terrible events, the man also said that it was the greatest adventure of his life, for it allowed him to travel to many European countries and see different cities and people. He had been fascinated by weapons and deeply valued the selfless camaraderie among soldiers fighting on the frontline. Almost eighty years have passed since the Second World War, and those who fought in the war are no longer with us. Ammunition and military equipment occupied an important part in the recollections of those whose childhood fell in the post-war period, as these were lying around everywhere, and the games were thrilling. While it was mainly boys who played war games, in the post-war period, girls participated in these activities as well (see Tuisk 2018). Then again, legends about hidden and abandoned military technology captivated boys and men alike, who were eager to share and spread these rumours.

During the nearly half-century when Estonia was involuntarily incorporated into the Soviet Union, compulsory service in the army of a totalitarian country was profoundly unpopular. Service in the Soviet army was seen as an imposition and a punishment, a frightening challenge that people remembered for the

rest of their lives. The author recounts many instances from the 1960s to the 1980s, when the evening before conscription resembled more a funeral wake, with plenty of food and alcohol, from where the still intoxicated young men would leave to the military commissariat, or “slave market”, as it was called, the following morning, clad in their oldest clothes (see also Tammer 2010, 48). Service in the Soviet army required men to adapt to a foreign language, environment and cultural space, as well as to strict discipline and unfamiliar ideology, hundreds, sometimes thousands, of kilometres from home. It was a common practice in the Soviet army that young men of different ethnicities, upbringing, education and cultural background were assigned to serve together in a military unit as far away from home as possible. The conscripts were men between the ages of 18 and 21, and service lasted for two years, three for marines; in the 1950s this was three and four years, respectively. The recollections of many men reveal that friendships between the soldiers could last a lifetime, as they bonded over shared concerns and joys, adversities and fears, but also stories, jokes, pranks and mishaps.

Men also tried to evade military service because of the pervasive fear of the harsh and violent *dedovshchina*, the hazing and abuse of younger soldiers by their seniors. The system was perpetuated with former victims of the abuse later inflicting the same abuse on new recruits.⁶ Another intimidating factor was the deployment of conscripts to conflict zones like Afghanistan, from where one might not return alive.

Considering the existing material, the men’s legend tradition could be divided into six major thematic areas:

1. Ways to evade military service, lucky escapes from being conscripted
2. So-called military mysteries: hidden weapons, hideouts, cellars, etc.
3. Cautionary tales regarding discipline
4. Relationships with women and sex during military service
5. Legends and rumours ridiculing Soviet propaganda
6. Stories about the ‘Cultural Other’ in the Soviet army

1. Ways to evade military service, lucky escapes from being conscripted

Draft evasion used to be a prevalent theme in the recollections of men who had served in the Soviet army. The topic surfaced in the discussions on the militaar.

net forum in December 2005,⁷ where evading military service in the Estonian Defence Forces was directly and strongly condemned. Such condemnation was probably the reason why more traditional urban legends about evading being drafted into the Estonian Defence Forces never became established in the tradition. At the same time, recent statistics indicate that, while it is not a popular subject of discussion, people still find ways (mainly citing health issues) to avoid being conscripted (see Oidsalu 2023).

Several transmitted stories about evading the Soviet army, given here as examples, may qualify as traditional legends. One of the most common tactics for draft evasion was pretending to have mental issues, another reason for one's inadmissibility for service was enuresis (see Tammer 2010, 35–36). However, these tactics were not always effective, as people still tell stories about being caught as draft evaders and deceiving the authorities. Another way to avoid conscription, which often proved successful in real life, was marrying and having children at a very young age. University studies or, for example, being employed at the Dvigatel military factory also helped to get out of or postpone military service, sometimes also reducing its duration.

This topic was indeed highly relevant, with legends about evading Russian military service not only circulating in the Soviet period. Such tales had been told during tsarist rule when military service lasted for 25 years. Folklore contains legends about cunning conscripts who successfully outwitted the authorities, often at the expense of their own health, such as damaging lungs by smoking random substances, or by physically harming oneself.

Since the early days of Estonian-language journalism, quite harrowing stories on this subject emerged. For example, in an 1823 issue of the weekly newspaper *Maarahva Näddala-Leht* by Otto Wilhelm Masing, there is some news about court decisions from that time. One of these news pieces reports on five young men from a rural area who, fearing conscription, had all their teeth pulled out so that they would be deemed inadmissible for 25 years of service. Another newspaper, *Uudisleht* (1938), also mentions this curious incident. Unfortunately, this attempt did not have a happy outcome, since the word got out and the men were conscripted and, in addition, received ten pairs of lashings as corporal punishment. Being diagnosed as having a clubfoot remains another popular way of avoiding military service even today, although other alternatives are also used (see Saare 1999, Vare 2000).

A country boy was terribly scared of being drafted into the Russian army. Didn't know what to do to escape military service. An acquaintance gave him the address of a town physician who was said to be able to help, for a contribution. The boy even sold his cow to get the money he needed. Then he travelled to the town to see the doctor. The doctor took his money and conducted a physical examination. Couldn't find anything wrong with him, the boy was fit as a fiddle. But since he had accepted the money, the doctor offered the boy a solution: I could castrate you, then you'd be unfit for the service!

The boy agreed – rather have the nuts gone, but at least he would survive! The doctor castrated the boy. Later the army recruitment committee indeed found the boy unfit for service, ironically it was due to clubfoot not because of his missing private part!

Heard that in Harju building cooperative.

EFA II 24, 301/2 < Tallinn, Keila - Tiit Birkan (1997)

The following story about self-mutilation was posted in the discussion thread of *militaar.net* by a user who goes by the name *propatria*.

Once a young man, who tried to avoid being conscripted into the Soviet army at all costs, realised that there was nothing to be done and he would soon be on his way... so he took an axe and severed his thumb and, by accident, another finger.

As he had already passed the medical committee and the decision to conscript him had been made, this incident greatly angered the doctors.

The outcome: the man served for two years far away from home, feeding guard dogs at the border.

(*propatria*, *militaar.net*, 2005)

A similar motif is found in early Estonian literary fiction. Lydia Koidula employed it in her 1872 play *Säärane mulk ehk sada vakka tangusoola* ('What a *Mulk*, or a Hundred Bushels of Grouts'). In the play, Enn Erastu deliberately severed his finger to avoid conscription.

In fact, the narratives mentioned above represent two related yet conflicting sides of this folklore. On the one hand, in folklore draft evaders are generally condemned, as avoiding responsibility and accountability has never been considered brave, even during times of occupation. In folktales, poetic legend justice typically prevails: while the evaders do manage to get out of military service, they are punished in some other way. In Koidula's play, Enn Erastu, an evader and self-mutilator, is a reprehensible character partly for this very reason. On the other hand, the motif of the trickster, a hero who cunningly outwits authority, also operates in many of these legends.

Another story about evading Soviet army, recorded by Tiit Birkan, describes an incident where the conscript is simply forgotten and not summoned due to some bureaucratic mix-up. While the situation sounds plausible, waiting for a conscription notice for seven (!) years points to the folkloric nature of the narrative.

In 1960, a major merging of districts (raions) took place in Estonia. During this process, quite a few things happened. The Mustvee and Põltsamaa districts were merged with the Jõgeva district. Army commissariats were consolidated as well. One guy had been summoned to the Mustvee commissariat just before the districts were merged, had his passport confiscated, was instructed to return to the collective farm which he was part of, and was told to wait for his conscription notice. When I met the tractor driver, he had been waiting for the conscription notice for seven years already.

I'm in no hurry; after a year I'll be 27 and above the conscription age. Well, when I'm about to get married, I'll go and ask for my passport back! This is how the guy himself talked about it.

EFA II 24, 302/3 < Keila – Tiit Birkan (1997)

2. So-called military mysteries: hidden weapons, hideouts, cellars, passages

As mentioned above, tales about artillery, planes, and tanks hidden in bogs, lakes, rivers and forests during the Second World War are frequently mentioned in Estonian local folklore. My experience has been that these legends about lo-

cal natural objects (lakes and forests) tend to circulate among men but remain largely unknown to the broader local community. I became aware of the stories of military equipment hidden in the lake and surroundings, told by men in my home village, only once I started conducting interviews for a local history book. According to the local men, there could be some military technology hidden in off-the-beaten-track forest farmsteads, and people usually tell stories about these to ward off unsuspecting robbers. One such legend was sent to the archives by Tiit Birkan in 1997.

There was this man from Ida-Viru County who renovated his old farmhouse and moved to live there. The household was doing well. One day, the man found a rusty light machine gun with cartridges. From back in the wartime. The man cleaned the rust off of the machine gun and repaired it. He tested the gun to make sure it worked and hung it on the wall inside the house. The next evening, he suddenly hears a rumble – several cars are driving into his yard. The man went to the doorstep to look – oh, damn, masked men are getting out of the cars! The man rushed back inside, took the machine gun from the wall and went to face the men. The men were shouting: “Gives us your money!”

The man fired warning shots in the air and shouted back: “If you’re not gone in five minutes, I’ll shoot holes in all of your cars!” The warning worked, and the robbers were gone like a flash. But the man still has that machine gun, he did not take it to the police.

EFA II 24, 399/400 < Keila – Tiit Birkan

Weapons hidden from the enemy present a risk but also provide self-protection and resistance. Tales like this are shared by both younger men and men who used to serve in the Soviet army. On militaar.net forum, two men discuss this as follows:

I just heard an interesting urban (or perhaps rural) legend from someone I know. The time of the incident: the 1970s (probably early 1970s). The place of the incident: somewhere in Tartu district. The story tells about a quarrel between two village men, who knows what the cause was. And their quarrel became serious. It all escalated to the point when an especially deeply aggravated man went to his barn, started the engine

of the Tiger [tank] hidden under the hay, and fired a shell at the other man's house. He missed, of course, but it was a real scandal, and the "brave boys" made such a fuss. The man's tank was confiscated, of course. Allegedly there was a small news piece about it in the daily newspaper *Edasi* ('Forward'), the person who told the story was dead certain about that. So, whoever bothers to dig in the library archives could look into that. Whether this tank really was a Tiger is slightly dubious (it must have been some vehicle with a heavy artillery gun), but the person who told the story was not some old boozier who had drunk seven beers behind a village store, but someone I knew very well. He was around 20 years old when this incident took place. I'm curious if anyone else has heard about the story?

(Manurhin, *militaar.net*, 2009)

It happened in Belarus, involving the chairman of the local executive council and a villager, whom the former had told to go fuck himself. And it was no Tiger, but a 76-mm anti-tank gun. But it was said that the village council building got hit.

(polzunov, *militaar.net*, 2009)

In the response posted by the second user, there is a reference to a rather commonplace character in Soviet urban legends. In the material I have collected over several decades, the antagonist or thief is always a Soviet functionary, such as the chairman of a collective farm or a party organiser.⁸

In a way, these tales are largely reminiscent of the semantic field of ancient treasure lore, where the narrative is often interrelated with practice. In Estonia, detectorism is a popular hobby activity among men, with some detectorists particularly interested in searching for military technology on former Second World War battlegrounds. An illustrative example of how a rumour or tale, heard decades ago, has evolved into a masculine dream about a hidden military treasure, motivating men to take action, was mediated to the public media by journalist Sander Punamäe. An 11-minute video clip from the programme *Postimehe täistund* ('*Postimees* [newspaper]: 60 minutes') depicts Kalle Grünthal, then a member of the Estonian Parliament, and a journalist, searching on the Pärnu River for a Russian howitzer. Kalle Grünthal had learned about it forty

years earlier from his uncle Aadu, who claimed to have seen a (howitzer) gun and its wheel in that location. The howitzer had allegedly been lost in the river during the battle of Türi in 1941, as Russians attempted to cross the Pärnu River. Grünthal had later heard about it from other sources. This section of the river, known only to Grünthal, and not accessible by land, was explored by boat with a scuba diver, an acquaintance of his. Instead of finding the howitzer, they unearthed a 200-litre metal barrel at that place. The clip ends with Kalle Grünthal's comment: "Well, in principle, we didn't find the howitzer. It turned out to be a metal barrel; however, this means that the legend persists and we must continue the search, for I refuse to believe that Aadu, my uncle, lied!" (Punamäe 2022). This remark, in fact, reveals the deeper significance and nature of these legends: we believe the tales because we want to and because we need them.

The video shows that Kalle Grünthal is an avid detectorist who, despite the risks associated with the activity, specifically focuses on searching for military technology and ammunition. In fact, the journalist frames his views on rumours and on Grünthal before the search begins, claiming that Grünthal is known to believe rumours and is sceptical about scientific advances.

It is fascinating to observe the truthfulness, context, and recent history of the tales shared among the community with military interests in the "Exploding pens and other gadgets" sub-thread (Militaar.net 2005). In addition to the exploding pens and mined dolls that were left scattered on the ground in Estonia after the war, the discussions address the war and the post-war periods, the abundance of weapons and ammunition after the war, recollections of how children handled these and the real dangers they presented. Forum members recount legends that someone had heard somewhere, eliciting replies from some users who expressed doubt (dismissing these as mere folklore) and some who believe the tales and agreed that, during the Afghanistan war (1979–1989), the Soviet Union reportedly used these deadly weapons against the civilian population.

I believe that, first (as was said here before regarding sausage factories and so on) because a folktale tends to expand in scale, and second because children often mistook these stick-shaped, shiny copper and aluminium detonators for pencils or similar things, and you didn't have to wait too long for them to explode upon tampering.

(hillart, militaar.net, 2005)

About these exploding toys, I recently read in *The Black Book of Communism* that they were quite widely used by Soviet forces even in Afghanistan. So that quite a few things that we might currently regard as urban legends, could not really be so.

(gnadenlose, militaar.net, 2005)

The third opinion provided on this subject, however, sounds rather plausible, suggesting that these legends might be regarded as cautionary tales. Indeed, the moralising and cautionary function is highly characteristic of contemporary legends. A user participating in the discussion, who writes under the username Frundsberg, said the following:

Still, the question remains as to how realistic the idea was that someone (probably Russians) would spread such stories in the rear in Estonia. Or should we categorise the majority of these stories into two groups?

1. Stories that were read in newspapers during the German occupation, which then reached us in the form of folktales;

2. Real-life events, where someone touched ammunition and, either inadvertently or intentionally (to prevent young boys from getting caught), and the incident was presented as an 'accident' involving a booby trap.

I recall from the newspaper *Eesti Sõna* that these items were probably dropped from Russian planes into the rear areas.

Wouldn't it be reasonable to think that these stories were generally published to warn kids at the time against touching the ammunition that was lying around everywhere then? In this sense, it would serve the intended purpose – except that 60 years later, we can hardly get to the bottom of the truth here.

(Frundsberg, militaar.net, 2005)

This category also covers legends about Kaliningrad, widely discussed on the militaar.net forum. For reasons unclear, in the Soviet period, many Estonians were sent to serve in Kaliningrad, or Königsberg. In the discussion thread

dedicated to urban legends (militaar.net 2009–2010), men also shared, among other tales, the legends and rumours about Kaliningrad that they had heard while serving there, or from others who had served there. Here emerged a whole array of stories featuring secret cellars, an underground city, constructed by Germans, and German soldiers who are allegedly still hiding there, the Lost Amber Room, and many others. Other more widely known legends told about a mysterious bridge there that no one was ever allowed to demolish, as it would bring doom to the entire city. These were intriguing legends that added spice to their former military service in Kaliningrad, as the men recalled comical incidents involving fellow soldiers who earnestly believed these stories and still harboured fears of the fascist enemy.

The discussion threads on militaar.net reveal that these tales about Stalingrad and Königsberg also circulated in other military units during the Soviet period, and the tales of their fathers about the wartime and the German and Soviet past of Königsberg and Stalingrad are now passed on by their sons.

3. Among the **cautionary legends emphasising discipline**, the most popular one involves an obedient and patient sentinel. A discussion on the militaar.net forum reveals that a similar cautionary legend was widespread among men both in the Soviet army and the Estonian Defence Forces. Depending on the version of the story, not leaving one's post could earn a sentinel either corporal's epaulettes or a release from the service.

Urban legends are also spread in the army. In the Estonian Defence Forces, one of the most frequently told stories was the one about promotion to corporal:

A private, while on sentinel duty, felt a strong urge to relieve himself. For some reason the communications were down and so he heroically endured it until he eventually soiled his pants. But since he wouldn't leave his post, regardless of the severe distress, he was promoted to corporal.

During the early days you wouldn't even think about the fact that probably every man who had been in the army had heard the story... And it is always told as if it happened last year...

Another popular tale: A sentinel was banging some woman, a kitchen worker, according to the most popular version, in a checkpoint. He got

caught, but since he had his rifle on his back during the entire act, it was overlooked, or he got away with a more lenient punishment.

This story was very likely told already in the Russian army?

If anyone can recall any other urban legends that circulated in the army, please let me know.

(LeBon, militaar.net, 2009)

In addition to the above legend about the unwavering sentinel, users recounted several other stories about discipline which follow a simple moral – whatever you do, sleeping at your post or leaving it can have unwelcome consequences. The contents of these legends vary only in minor details: a sentinel or an orderly⁹ falls asleep on watch and the enemy (criminals, darker-skinned people from mountainous regions, Finns) cut the throats of the entire unit or battalion in their sleep. The posts reveal that these tales are known among veterans of the Afghanistan war, but also among men who served in the Soviet army and were stationed in Crimea, the Kola Peninsula, and around Leningrad (present-day St. Petersburg) in the 1970s and 1980s. The following post, however, suggests that the same stories that once circulated in the Soviet army, were also told among conscripts of the Estonian Defence Forces (EDF), whereas the narrator himself classifies the tale as a legend.

Well, in the EDF we were told the following legend, especially when we started out as orderlies, that on the Russian side in Afghanistan an orderly once dozed off in a tent or barracks, and militants from the Taliban happened to come, stabbed everyone to death through their ear with a rifle cleaning rod, except the orderly. When he finally woke up and saw what had happened, he at once activated his self-destruct button.

And the story's underlying moral is that one must never fall asleep while on watch.

(dude, militaar.net, 2009)

Several forum users in this thread noticed a typical pattern in such narratives: the sentinel or orderly survives, while everyone else is killed. The protagonist

is aptly likened to the famous Russian fairytale character Ivan the Fool, who is always lucky and comes out a winner in adverse situations. This motif of a serendipitous escape or survival appears to be rather characteristic of soldier lore and finds parallels in the tale *The Boy(s) Saved by the Snake*, where the unit's only survivor is the cook who is currently on his way to feed the snakes (Kalmre 2018). In fact, it is probably true about most cautionary tales regarding discipline shared on the *militaar.net* forum that the tale repertoire is not only limited to what was told among soldiers of the Estonian army but also includes legends that circulated in military service in general. After all, Estonian soldiers would probably not be scared of Finnish soldiers coming over ice and snow to cut their throats in their sleep while the orderly has dozed off. However, they were familiar with this legend, which most likely stems from the fear rooted in the Winter War or the Continuation War among Russians.

In an army base in Krasnaya Gorka, Leningrad District, young marines were intimidated with a story that one winter Finnish soldiers crossed the (frozen) sea in a snowstorm to cut the throats of an entire company, because the orderly who was supposed to keep watch had fallen asleep. Well, some dudes bought this as well.

(donnervetter, *militaar.net*, 2009)

4. Relationships with women and sex during military service

Stories about women and sex tend to be quite common among men isolated from regular living environments and members of the opposite sex. The thread on urban legends on the *militaar.net* forum highlights some plots of stories that circulate in the army. One of these, for example, was the already mentioned story about a sentinel having sex with a female army cook. Soldiers tend to be quite inventive in these sensitive situations but are sometimes punished for indecent behaviour. Among these tales is a rumour, which was widespread even in the Soviet army, about a substance secretly added to soldiers' drinks to lower the young men's libido.

I think there was also this odd claim about a drug mixed into tea and kissel that was supposed to lower your libido. However, no cook or

medic seemed to know anything about this. At first, I believed the story, but later I no longer did.

(fireman, *militaar.net*, 2009)

Suppressing and stimulating sexual libido are probably prevalent topics that emerge mainly in military settings and during wars. In the early days of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, there were rumours of soldiers being given drugs to enhance their sexual urges. In addition, violence against women has been utilised as a weapon to dominate Ukraine.

5. Tales ridiculing Soviet propaganda

Estonian conscripts were generally highly sceptical about the Soviet authorities and about propaganda. Back in the Soviet period, propaganda entailed idealising the Soviet regime over Western countries, and Russian propaganda continues to operate on the opposition of *Russkiy Mir* and the West to this day. The following tale, told on *militaar.net*, is possibly the most outlandish rumour that circulated in the Soviet army:

An elderly man once told me that when they were stationed on submarines, they were at one point prohibited from using newspaper in the toilet – it would all be released into the water and the imperialists could pick up the paper and uncover all their secrets. As a boy, I quite believed this.

(LeBon, *militaar.net*, 2009)

Compared to the material that could be categorised as urban legends in the first three thematic groups, there are not many examples of the tales of the fourth and fifth themes. We can only assume that the topic of sexuality was perhaps too intimate (obscene stories were generally avoided in a publicly accessible forum). Regarding one text, I was not entirely certain whether it could be categorised as an urban legend, as it might have been a mediated account of a real-life event. The propaganda topic is also rarely discussed, probably owing to the complexity and general lack of interest in the subject. It is fair to conclude that Soviet propaganda is more effectively ridiculed through soldiers' humour.

6. Legends about ‘Cultural Others’ in the Soviet army

The above discussion revealed that Soviet army bases were melting pots for different nationalities and cultures, based on ideology and planning. The ‘Cultural Others’ depicted in these tales were typically darker-skinned, uneducated, ignorant people with odd food and sexual preferences. A stereotypical motif of these tales was that the men were usually conscripted when they came down from their mountain regions to the village to buy salt. These ‘Cultural Others’ were often described using derogatory names such as blacks, *uryuks* (dried apricots), *churkas*, mountain sons, etc. At the same time, in the Soviet army, Estonians were called by names like *nemets* (Rus. German), Fritz, *kuratik*, fascist, etc. (see Tammer 2020, 44–47).

Here’s another legend about *churkas*: a brother was serving his second year in the army when he received a letter from home announcing the birth of his son and rejoiced. When others tried to explain to him the duration and process of having a child, he would shrug it off, saying there’s no problem, his father probably intervened because he had to do military service.

But in our group, it happened for real, the *churka*’s entire family arrived at the army base fence, they bribed the commando chief and celebrated back at the encampment for several nights. The guy brought us party food – smoked veal in sheep casing, some horse meat jelly, ham, etc. Everything was made from horse meat or mutton. In any case, all this food was really delicious. In addition, of course, there were some kinds of green sticky balls, some of which stuff was taken and mixed with tobacco, then small green grains that you were supposed to put under your tongue, and raw leaves of dried blossoms that were used to prepare goat foot. Well, this guy got so much of this stuff that half the army base had ample supplies for months.

(AddressUnknown, militaar.net, 2009)

Conclusion

Many of the legends explored here and rumours related to them have spread outside soldiers' group lore and represent men's perceptions more broadly (tanks sunk in bogs or weapons hidden in haybarns, war planes at the bottoms of lakes). The overarching keyword for this kind of men's lore is military sentiment.

In general, one can notice that these tales of different origins, circulating in different times and contexts and narrated across generations, were told as real-life stories (personal experience narratives) portraying military service, wartime experiences or other topics associated with weapons and ammunition. In these tales resonates the excitement of discussing war as an event of a distant past.

The tales describe and reinforce gender stereotypes, defining masculinity in a manner preferred by men. They suggest models of behaviour and express dreams of masculinity in the most general sense. At the same time, these tales, which could be considered urban legends, both prohibit and endorse specific gender behaviours and describe conduct culturally preferred among men: a rush for adventure and adrenaline, power, manly strength and resilience, cunning, intelligence, and standing up against evil.

The protagonists of the stories about conscripts are generally soldiers at the lowest level of military hierarchy who navigate their circumstances successfully and are often even rewarded. The recollections of men who served in the Soviet army, and legends in general, represent the mentality and mindset of a soldier enlisted in the army of a foreign country and ideology: military service is viewed as a waste of time, it has to be endured/survived, but at the same time everything that this kind of life has to offer has to be exploited for one's own good. Quite unchanging in time have been the stories about evading military service, reflecting a reluctance to serve the army of a foreign power. This was true during the period under imperial Russian occupation, and also in the Soviet army. However, several tales reflect legendary justice wherein cowards and self-harmers get their punishment.

Intriguingly, and perhaps somewhat surprisingly, several legends characteristic of men's and military lore are universal and known even among the conscripts of the Estonian Defence Forces today. The stereotypical perceptions of soldiers of southern ethnicities and the primary motifs of these tales are not exclusive to Estonians but reflect more broadly Grand Russian colonialist

attitudes. The plots and motifs of the second, third, and fourth thematic categories potentially also overlap with Soviet soldier legends. To what degree, and specifically how, is yet to be analysed once a study of Russian soldier lore is published in the future.

This rather sparse material that the author has so far had access to reflects the more important experiences, dreams, beliefs, ideas, and practices channelled in men's stories. However, for future perspectives, it is probably worth elaborating on the subject and exploring some specific topic of military legends in more detail, possibly entailing an analysis of memories and soldiers' humour, should additional material become available.

Notes

¹ The Afghanistan war was a civil conflict in which Soviet forces fought on the side of the Afghanistan People's Democratic Party between 1979 and 1989. The US, Great Britain, and others fought on the side of mujahideen against the Soviet Union. See https://et.wikipedia.org/wiki/N%C3%B5ukogude-Afganistani_s%C3%B5da. According to unconfirmed information, 36 conscripts from the Estonian defence forces were killed in this conflict (Sildam 1999).

² See the lecture titled "Ghost of Kyiv, White Tights and spring man. Eastern European Wartime rumours in comparative perspective" by Petr Janeček at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zgJ-pG6QV-0>. See also *Wikipedia*, "Ghost of Kyiv", https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ghost_of_Kyiv.

³ The material is held in the Estonian Folklore Archives, collection RKM I 22. For a feel of the period, see also the small 24-page publication *Vahva punasõduri ustaav* ('The Brave Red Soldier's Code'), published by Tungal Publishers in 1992.

⁴ Material held in the manuscript collections of the Estonian Folklore Archives EFA I 90 and audio-recordings in ERA MD 493–509, see also ERA KK 352 "On Military Folklore in the Estonian Defence Forces".

⁵ Material taken from threads or chatrooms such as Urban Legends; see <https://www.militaar.net/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?p=169251&hilit=linnalegendid#p169251> and "Exploding pens and other gadgets" <https://www.militaar.net/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?p=10189&hilit=1%C3%B5hkevad+sulepead#p10189>, also "Ways to avoid military service" <https://www.militaar.net/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=3142&sid=6b58d6630702e86bab67e93ca7b08e8f>, etc.

⁶ See Tammer 2010: 20–22, 51–55, and especially the Special Issue on *dedovshchina* of *The Journal of Power Institutions in Post-Soviet Societies (Dedovshchina: From Military to Society)*, 2004, no. 1. <https://journals.openedition.org/pipss/190>.

⁷ ‘Ways to avoid military service’, see <https://www.militaar.net/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=3142&sid=6b58d6630702e86bab67e93ca7b08e8f>.

⁸ Other cases and more detailed comments on this legend can be found in my soon-to-be published manuscript *Küüned süldis. Populaarsemad 20. ja 21. sajandi kuulujutud ja legendid* (Nails in Meat Jelly: Popular Rumours and Legends of the 20th and 21st Centuries). The manuscript is in the author’s possession.

⁹ Est. *päevnik*, (Rus. *Дневальный*) was a soldier who kept order and stood sentinel at the barracks. He usually did not carry a rifle or any other firearm but only a cold weapon (a knife or a dagger). A sentinel, on the other hand, guarded objects of military importance and carried a firearm. (Information by Vahur Kalmre, who served in the Soviet army in 1975–1976.)

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The Moscow–Tartu Semiotic School and Soviet Art History

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Abstract: Although the problems of art history did not form the core of the Moscow–Tartu semiotic school's interests, its members often turned to the material of visual art within the framework of general and specific studies of sign systems. In turn, Soviet art history in general did not show interest in semiotics. Meanwhile, the selection of problems and the approach to them in art history (mainly of the Moscow school) indicated that the reflections of art historians and philologists starting from a certain time (in the late 1960s and into the 1970s) began to develop in parallel veins. The present article provides an overview of the main problems of visual art in the works of representatives of the Moscow–Tartu school (Lotman, Uspenskij, Ivanov, Toporov and others), as well as of the adepts of semiotics from the side of art history (Paperny, Daniel, Zlydneva). In addition, the article shows how despite not accepting the semiotic mode of thinking, in their texts art historians approached the semiotic problematics of art raised by philologists (in particular, interest in the problem of the border-zone and marginalia, correlation between a word and an image in visual art, and the poetics of the historical avant-garde, etc.). This antinomic (non-)meeting of semiotics and art history in the realm of Soviet humanities in the 1970s can serve as the manifestation of the power of the unified scientific episteme of the era.

Keywords: Moscow–Tartu semiotic school, art history, border-zone, visual semiotics.

Although issues of art history were not at the centre of attention of the Moscow–Tartu semiotic school, the phenomenon of visibility was multifacetedly and considered within the framework of the study of the various sign systems (including natural language). As the field of interest of the school's participants expanded towards the end of the 1970s, the problematics of visual art increasingly penetrated research on semiotics. Briefly summarising the general outlook, we can identify two main strategies in the treatment of art by philologists and semioticians: firstly, the study of art by means of direct or indirect projection of the laws of natural language onto the universal foundations of the construction of artistic representation, and secondly structural-typological analysis of art in the context of culture as a whole. Both directions of research, often interrelated, were dominated by an approach to visibility that was in accordance with the principles of discrete systems, in connection with which the problems of syntactics – boundary (regular field, frame/framing, etc.), semantic-syntactic invariant, archaic stereotypes in the image – came to the fore. The linguistic 'pole' was represented by Yury Lekomtsev, who explored the possibilities of applying glossematics to the analysis of the structure of the visual sign, and to a certain extent by the works of Vyacheslav Ivanov, who was particularly interested in the neurophysiological aspect of the functioning of the visual image, a sub-species of the work of the hemispheres of the human brain and a related principle to the binary structure of the text (including visual text). Vladimir Toporov put forward the definition of the boundary as the main sign of the formation of the symbolic field of the image, seeing proto-art as a trigger for culture. General and specific problems of the boundary of art (mainly referring to icons) – internal and external frames of composition, the viewpoint of the viewer and the artist as narrator, etc. – were the main subject of Boris Uspenskij's studies, and they largely influenced the formation of the Canadian and Italian schools of visual semiotics. Finally, the interspecies, cross-genre mechanisms of the visual text as a sign system and the conditions of its existence in the *semiosphere* were the subject of scientific comprehension by Juri Lotman. He touched upon various art-related subjects with a wide interdisciplinary approach, for example on issues of the portrait, still life, and folk pictures in the context of culture. Thus, the philologists' view of works of fine art was headed by the issue of the boundary, which was defined by the approach to the image as a sign system of discrete type and was mainly regarded in the aspect of synchrony.

It is easy to trace the influence of the legacy of the Russian Formal School of the 1920s and the phenomenology of the State Academy of Artistic Sciences (GAKHN) (1921–1929) in philologists' interest in representationalism: for example, the outstanding linguist Roman Jakobson came out of the milieu of futurist poets, just as semiotics grew out of the artistic experimentation of the avant-garde. It is not by chance that already in the 1980s Viktor Grigoriev, who was one of the founders of the Moscow school of linguopoetics, actively participated in art history conferences and liked to begin a talk with an exhortation from Velimir Khlebnikov: "I want a word to boldly follow a painting".

The Soviet art history of the late 1960s and early 1980s, i.e. the time when the most fruitful stage of scientific activity took place in the semiotic school, did not generally demand the research studies of the latter and did not show any interest in semiotics. However, there were still significant overlaps between semioticians and art historians (especially Moscow art historians) that were important both in terms of general epistemological problems and in relation to the evolution of Soviet art history as a humanitarian discipline in the 1970s. Among the few direct adherents of the art history school who were largely influenced by Moscow–Tartu semiotics were (and still are) Sergei Daniel, Vladimir Paperny, and the author of these lines (Natalia Zlydneva).

The theses formulated by Vyacheslav Ivanov and Vladimir Toporov in 1977 concerning the possibility of studying fine art using the methods of the structural-typological approach to the semantics of the artistic image can be considered a programmatic attitude for this group of scholars (institutionally and biographically very disparate, however). These scholars saw the advantage of this approach "in the fact that ... elements of the semantic network of relations are mapped to elements of the syntactic (formal) structure. This gives sufficient rigor to the semantic description, since its results are controlled by the data of the syntactic description" (Ivanov, Toporov 1977: 105). This "rigor" was based on the modelling advantages of natural language over other sign systems, which inevitably entailed limitations of interpretative possibilities and recognition of the incomplete 'translatability' of the so-called continuous texts, i.e. images, by methods of structural analysis. As a leading principle this circumstance determined a binary description of the semantics of the Stalinist Empire in architecture, which was proposed in Vladimir Paperny's book *Culture-2*, which is still relevant today (Paperny 1979). Pairs of oppositions are considered in this work as a reflection of the ideologemes of the totalitarian epoch.

A more flexible system of semantic-syntactic correspondences was pushed forward by Sergei Daniel. In his fundamental work on composition in painting, which was based on the classical tradition (painting of the 17th century), he showed the dynamics of the correlation between the visual organisation of the canvas and the deep meanings of the artwork in various epochs (Daniel 1986). Daniel's research implements the principles of semiotic analysis of a pictorial work taking into account the dichotomy of universal laws of art as a language with corresponding categories and the particular features of visuality as a system of continuous type. According to Daniel, scrutinising paintings means to reply to the series of questions “who, what, how, for whom”, that is, to summarise the data of semantics, syntactics and pragmatics of the image. Daniel considered the regular field of the image to be the basis of the universality of pictorial composition, thus emphasising the category of boundary in visual ‘text’. Paying tribute to structural analytics, which revealed the ‘physiology’ of a composition, Daniel pointed out the significance of comprehending an image as a complex system of “higher mental activity”. This entailed the need to complement synchronic analysis with diachronic, that is, to regard a piece of art as a living being in its evolution.

I in my studies focused on the issue of the applicability of language categories to the artistic image (mainly referring to 20th-century Russian art) and receives additional substantiation: in the aspect of text structure analysis, the problems of the ‘language’ and ‘speech’ of painting, visual narrative, the referential system (as applied to portraits), border visual-verbal complexes in the poetics of the historical avant-garde are considered. Regarding the painting as a communication system, I examine the bordering visual-verbal complexes in context of Russian avant-garde poetics (Zlydneva 2013). My studies, which focused mainly on the problems of semantic-syntactic image complexes in the context of culture, and in particular archaic stereotypes of iconography, also went into the field of image pragmatics.

The circle of adherents of semiotics among art historians cannot be fully outlined in this short list, but it is representative enough to characterise the main directions in which the ideas of the Moscow–Tartu school were introduced into art history.¹

Although the main bulk of art historians did not accept semiotics and were even unaware of its existence, the air of the times in the 1960s demanded renewal. This came on the wave of the Khrushchev thaw, the outraged dis-

putes between ‘physicists’ and ‘lyricists’, but at the same time was caused by the immanent evolution of Russian art history. It is important to get a closer look at the latter. The fact is that since the mid-1960s a wave of revalorisation of the Viennese and German schools of formal art history had emerged. The phenomenon of cyclical replacement of visual forms (the so-called ‘close’ and ‘distant’ vision) as a manifestation of self-development of the Kunstwollen of the epoch according to Alois Riegl, the formal method of Heinrich Wölfflin with his discrete description of binary oppositions in relation to the dynamics of pictorial form, the concepts of ‘negative’ and ‘positive’ space in Adolf Hildebrandt’s architectural theory, formed the basis of the introductory university course for art historians titled *Description and Analysis of Works of Art*, developed in the 1960s at the Moscow State University. The interest of art historians in formalism should to some extent be considered the result of the post-war generation’s assimilation of the experience of the immanent science of art of the 1920s, which was close to the attitudes in the philological milieu of the Society for the Study of Poetic Language and the Moscow Linguistic Circle.

A significant impact on the development of the post-war art criticism can also be seen in the heritage of the State Academy of Artistic Sciences, the phenomenology and early semiotics of Gustav Shpet, as well as the works by Alexandre Gabrichevsky and Nikolay Tarabukin, whose intellectual heirs in the 1960s and 1970s happened to become the leading professors at the Moscow State University: Alexey Fedorov-Davydov, Viktor Lazarev, Mikhail Ilyin. The background of Boris Vipper also provides interest for the prehistory of the (non)meeting of semiotics and art historians. In his book, written on the basis of a course of lectures and titled *Introduction to the Historical Study of Art*, Vipper, considering the specifics of various types of art in their historical evolution, and when describing style, operates with binary oppositions close to the spirit of German formalism, recalling in many respects the heritage of the GAKHN – space/mass, modulus/proportion, as well as rhythm/meter, etc. – that opposes him (Wipper 1970).

If there was no direct encounter between art historians and linguists of structural-semiotic orientation, there was sympathetic interest on the part of the former. This is how, for example, Mikhail Alpatov treated the early semiotics of art. A contemporary researcher even calls Alpatov a Russian Roland Barthes (Rykov 2021: 142) and points out that Alpatov used the method of “close reading”, which was “directly associated with the subjectivisation of the

process of art perception and problematisation in the spirit of the phenomenological tradition and structuralism” (my translation – N.Z.) (Rykov 2017: 170). Always an opponent of Alpatov, Viktor Lazarev, who strongly denied the usefulness of the structuralist approach to art, in his *History of Byzantine Painting*, published as early as in the 1940s, adhered to principles that were essentially close to those of the structuralists. In the representation of art work he followed strict factography and formal analysis, avoiding psychologism and subjective valorisation (although this did not prevent him from qualitatively distinguishing between the metropolitan and provincial schools of painting, according to him, the main opposition typical of the Byzantine tradition).

In the bulk of the capital’s middle and younger generation of art historians in the 1970s, points of contact with the circle of Russian semiotics that emerged sporadically and manifested themselves in the tendency to investigate cultural marginalia and frontier art forms in genre, stylistic, structural and poetic terms. Interest in the poetics of the borderland was expressed in studies of historical and typological primitivism, i.e. art that lies apart from the ‘school’ tradition (monographs by Larisa Tatanaeva on Sarmatian portraiture, Kseniya Bohemskaya on modern primitivism, as well as a seminal collection of works by various authors (Primitiv 1983)). The poetics of self-taught artists corresponds to the pattern of a discrete text, that is, the ‘carpet’ composition of pieces by “naive” artists is decentred and flat, the plot is invariant and mythological. These features make the sort of visual poetics transparent to the quantitative description. Its position on the margins of the artistic process actualises the centre/periphery problematic, which is essential for comprehension of the semiosphere structure (to use Lotman’s term).

We should also mention the emerging interest in transitional types of stylistic formation such as Mannerism, Baroque and Romanticism in European art (see studies by Andrey K. Zolotov on the painting of French Mannerism, Valeriy Prokofiev and Valeriy Turchin on Romanticism, etc.). These styles have one feature in common: they emphasise dynamism of form and shape a counter-phase to the normative tradition (be it Renaissance, classicism or academism); that is, they stress a borderline of their position on the historical axis. Finally, the late 1960s and early 1970s saw the first steps in the ‘discovery’ of the Russian avant-garde, which had been ostracised since the official legitimisation of socialist realism. In Russian art experimentation of the 1910s the image met the word. The problems of the structure of language, the dualism of

the relationship between the signified and the signifier determined experiments in the field of objectless form, which developed in parallel with the experiment in 'zaum' poetry, often outstripping the latter. It was in close interaction with literature that avant-garde painting found its researchers in the person of Dmitry Sarabianov, Gleb Pospelov and Mikhail Allenov, later joined by the next generation of scholars including Ekaterina Bobrinskaya and Nina Guryanova. Russian art history broadened its horizons, putting art in the context of cultural perception. Here we should mention the contribution by Grigory Sternin, who proposed and developed a new problematics of studying Russian art in the shape of the "artistic life", which coincides with the pragmatic turn of semiotics in the 1970s (Sternin 1970). Among those who energetically push the boundaries of traditional art history we should also name Alexey Lidov, a representative of the 1980s generation. In his series of works on hierotopics, i.e., the problem of the existence of the image within the pragmatics of Byzantine painting, Lidov essentially converges with the semiotic school, considering the sacred space (of a temple) a kind of text, that is, a single organism generating meanings in its dynamic ('organic') development.

Overall, art studies of the 1970s revealed an obvious tendency towards a structural-semantic study of the forms and meanings of an image, with interest in the issues of the borderline vivid proof of this. In the absence or sometimes conscious rejection of semiotics by Soviet art historians, the main path of art science developed in the same direction as the Moscow-Tartu school of semiotics, although the latter reached incomparably higher levels of reflection. The approach of art historians to domestic semiotics was indirect, very cautious, and veiled. The traditional hermetic nature of Soviet art history, which to some extent deliberately placed itself in the niche of professional connoisseurship, allowing it to be relatively free from the ideology imposed by the authorities, had an impact. Another reason for pushing away from semiotics at the time of the school's highest achievements was the art historians' rejection of positivism of any kind: extra-artistic intrusions fraught with vulgar sociology – from which they managed to distance themselves during the Khrushchev thaw – were still fresh in the minds of the Soviet intelligentsia of the 1970s, and distrust of new research methods rationalised the relative independence of the scholars' position. What brought them together, however, was the common rejection by both structuralists and art historians of official Soviet ideology and propaganda, as well as the suffocating climate of stagnation. But no less importantly, there

were obvious coincidences in the orientation of interests and in the general principles of analytical thinking: to all appearances, the epistemic mechanisms of the epoch came into play, dictating a unified direction for any scientific strategy relating to disciplines and schools that on the surface were far apart.²

Notes

¹ In this article we deliberately omit consideration of the contribution to the semiotics of the Tartu circle, such as professor Yuri Tsivian (currently Chicago University) and Jan Levchenko (formerly Higher School of Economy, Moscow), since their studies concern cinema rather than visual art, as well as professor Virve Sarapik (Estonian Art Academy) and docent Elena Grigorieva (Tartu University), two remarkable semioticians in the field of art history whose work should be considered within the Estonian scientific tradition proper.

² On the relations between the the Moscow–Tartu semiotic school and Soviet art history see also Zlydneva 2019.

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The Relationship between Faith and Knowledge in the Works of Mykhailo Maksymovych

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Abstract: The paper deals with images of faith and knowledge in the works of Mykhailo Maksymovych, a famous botanist, folklorist, and historian of the 19th century and the first rector of the University of Saint Volodimir in Kyiv. Mykhailo Maksymovych's way of solving the problem of the relationship between religion and science is analysed in the general context of the intellectual processes in Eastern Europe of the 19th century. The study is based on Mykhailo Maksymovych's published works, memoirs, letters, and unpublished texts, held in the Institution of Manuscript at the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine (Kyiv). The methodological foundation is the approaches of the Cambridge School of Intellectual History, theorising on cultural memory and quantitative content analysis with MAXQDA-2022. The paper shows that Mykhailo Maksymovych's attitude to the demarcation problem of knowledge and faith resulted from a combination of his personal religiosity and his fascination with the ideas of Friedrich Schelling. Mykhailo Maksymovych perceived the Bible as a relevant description of the "factual" dimension of human history. He represented the philosophy of the heart, widespread in Ukrainian intellectual life of that period. Maksymovych's deep personal religiosity, combined with his theoretical ideas about the correlation between faith and knowledge, led him to the idea of Orthodox coherence between Russia and Ukraine. This was an actualisation of the

early modern idea, elaborated in the Kyivan Synopsis of the late 17th century. Mykhailo Maksymovych actualised these ideas on the basis of Romanticism. Early modern ideas were close to Maksymovych's consciousness because he was religious in the traditional Orthodox sense. Religious images of Ukraine in the works of Mykhailo Maksymovych were similar to the ideas of Konstantin Leontiev, a famous Russian conservative philosopher of the second half of the 19th century.

Keywords: biblical literalism, content-analysis, historiography, philosophy of the heart, Mykhailo Maksymovych, Romanticism, religion, Ukraine–Russia relations

Introduction

This paper aims to depict the attitude of Mykhailo Maksymovych (1804–1873) to the correlation between faith and knowledge, as well as the role of religion in the construction of images of Ukrainian land by this scholar. It should be noted that Mykhailo Maksymovych was a famous Ukrainian intellectual born in the Ukrainian part of the Russian Empire to the family of a local nobleman, a descendant of the Cossack elite. Mykhailo Maksymovych studied biology at Moscow University and became a professor of botany there. He was also interested in history, literature, and ethnography and took part in meetings with Alexander Pushkin, Sergey Uvarov, Nikolay Gogol', Alexander Gercen, and other representatives of the imperial intellectual elite (Maksymovych 1994: 388–394). In 1827, he published *Little Russian Folksongs* (Maksymovych 1827). It was one of the first collections of folk songs published in the Russian Empire (Hrushevskiy 1927). When Saint Vladimir University in Kyiv was founded in 1834, Mykhailo Maksymovych was invited there as professor of Russian literature and, simultaneously, as the first rector of the newly created University. Due to problems with his health, Mykhailo Maksymovych left the position of rector in 1835, and served as a professor intermittently until 1845, after which he lived in his small village house as a private person. Mykhailo Maksymovych was a generally well-known representative of intellectual life in Ukraine in the 19th century (Ostriany 1960).

Maksymovych's biography, as well as his works in botany, history, and literature, have been studied by historians in the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, the circles of the Ukrainian diaspora, and in modern historiography (Grush-

evskiy 1906; Hrushevskiy 1927; Markov 1986; Chyzhevskiy 1992; Velychenko 1992; Yas' 2014; Kutsyi 2016). However, the role of religion in Maksymovych's life and research activity has not yet been studied.

This research is based on the published works by Mykhailo Maksymovych (Maksymovych 1833; Maksymovych 1847; Maksymovych 1876; Maksymovych 1877; Maksymovych 1880), as well as his published personal documents, such as his autobiography and letters (Maksymovych 1898; Maksymovych 1994; Maksymovych 2004). The author of this paper has also studied Maksymovych's unpublished manuscripts held in the Institution of Manuscripts in the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine in Kyiv (IMVNL).

The attitude of Mykhailo Maksymovych toward the correlation between faith and knowledge was studied by the author using the methodological approaches of the Cambridge School of Intellectual History. Such famous representatives of this school as Quentin Skinner and John Pocock focus on the need to reconstruct the local and historically changeable sense of linguistic action and to understand the context of intellectual processes (Skinner 1969; Pocock 1985). Quentin Skinner and John Pocock used the concept of language games, described by Ludwig Wittgenstein (Wittgenstein 1922), to understand the history of ideas. This concept helps us understand the principles of Maksymovych's, as well as other historians of the Russian empire, use of such terms as 'belief', 'faith', 'religion', 'ethnicity', and so on.

The author studied Maksymovych's worldview in the context of the general situation in the intellectual life of the Russian Empire in the 19th century. This was understood in terms of the 'new imperial history' developed by authors from the journal *Ab Imperio*. The concept of the imperial situation was extremely important. Ilya Gerasimov defines the "imperial situation" as a parallel existence of different social hierarchies and value systems within the borders of the empire and, at the same time, the attempts of the imperial political and intellectual elite to acquire and schematise such diversity (Gerasimov et al. 2009: 3–32). The concept of internal colonisation proposed by Alexander Etkind is very appropriate here (Etkind 2011).

The concept of metaphors by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson should also be considered in order to understand the features of the religious images in Maksymovych's works (Lakoff & Johnson 2003). Based on the understanding that metaphors shape not just our communication but also the way we think and

act, the author of this paper tries to define the basic metaphors Maksymovych used to describe and understand the correlation between knowledge and faith.

Maurice Halbwachs' idea about the social construction images of the past is now generally accepted. Contemporary methodologist of history Lorina Repina arguably writes that we should pay attention to the unreflected mental stereotypes in historians' texts, as well as the social and political circumstances of their activity. Historians create images of the past that are permanently changeable, but, at the same time, such images tend to be canonised in terms of national and state narratives (Repina 2020).

The personal religiosity of Mykhailo Maksymovych

Religion was an essential part of Maksymovych's life. His childhood upbringing was in a monastery, where his parents had sent him to get an education. Maksymovych recalled in his autobiography:

Пятый год жизни моей прошел в Тимковщине. Оттуда я отдан был в Благовещенский женский монастырь, бывший в Золотоноше, в котором училась грамоте и мать моя, и все дяди мои Тимковские. Там у черницы Варсонофии, сестры генерала Голенки, прошел я Граматику, Часловец и Псалтырь (монастырский курс наук, установленный еще св. Кирилом-философом первоучителем славянским) (Maksymovych 1994: 389).

The fifth year of my life was spent in Timkivshina. From there, I was sent to the Annunciation convent in Zolotonosha, where my mother and all my Timkovskie uncles had been taught. With nun Varsanofia, general Golenko's sister, I studied Grammatica, Horologion, and The Psalter (it was a monastic course of sciences, which had been established by the saint Cyril philosopher, enlightener of the Slavs).

This was typical of Ukrainian nobility in the Russian empire in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The social connection between the secular elite and clerical circles in Ukraine was stronger than in ethnic Russian regions. In the central part of the Russian empire, the education systems for the Orthodox clergy and the representatives of the civic elite had been developing separately since

Peter's time, and the clergy was being formed as a distinct estate. The attitude of the Russian nobility towards the priests and monks was rather arrogant. In the Ukrainian part of the Russian empire, there was another situation due to the general features of the historical development of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine (Leiberov 2019: 152–165). Since the second half of the 16th century, when most parts of Ukrainian ethnic territory were within the Polish–Lithuanian commonwealth, Orthodox education here developed in strict confrontation with Catholic confessionalisation. As part of this process, Orthodox schools in Ukraine, such as Ostroh Academy, the schools of the Orthodox brotherhoods, and the Kyiv-Mohyla Collegium, adopted the principles of the traditional Western European education system. This specificity was preserved during the Ukrainian Cossack autonomies within the Russian empire. The European education traditions were an integral part of the education system in the Ukrainian Orthodox collegiums. The representatives of the Ukrainian Cossack elite studied there together with representatives of the clerical circles; Orthodox collegiums were intimately involved in the social life of Ukrainian cities. After the abolition of Ukrainian autonomies in the Russian empire, the traditions of social connection between clerical and secular elites were saved (Posohov 2014; Posokhova 2022). This is why the deep engagement of young Maksymovych in traditional Orthodox practices was rather typical for his social group.

It should be noted that many intellectuals in the Russian empire in the 19th century lost their childish faith after becoming adults (Ivaschenko 2020). However, Maksymovych's letters to his wife and others demonstrate that he was a very religious person until the end of his life. For example, in 1858, he wrote to his wife:

Привет тебе, моя милейшая Марусенько, из дому Елагиных, куда я приехал вчера в полдень, слушав обедню в благочестивом городе Болхове... А я отправляюсь завтра в дальний путь, на Оптину пустынь и в Калугу. (IMVNL, fund 32, unit 1, folio 1)

I am sending you a “hello”, my dear Marusen'ka, from Elagins' house, where I arrived yesterday at noon after listening to mass in the pious town of Bolhov... And tomorrow, I am going to go to the Optina monastery.

In 1870 Mykhailo Maksymovych wrote to his wife:

Все, что имеет ближайшее отношение к Алексею [сын М. Максимовича], что имеет влияние на его характер, нрав, ум и здоровье, все то у меня в уме и на сердце занимает главное место, после Господа Бога». (IMVNL, fund 32, unit 46, folio 2)

Everything that relates to Alexeyko [Maksymovych's son], everything that influences his character, temper, intelligence, and health, are all in first place in my heart after God.

Maksymovych was deeply connected with clerical circles; he communicated with bishops Innokentiy Borisov and Evgeniy Bolohvitinov not only because of their common scientific interests in the history of old printing but also because of their spiritual interests (Markov 1986: 24–25).

It is well known that Maksymovych translated psalms into Ukrainian (Holovashchenko 2006: 55–62). In the letter to Russian poet prince Pyotr Vyazemsky, Maksymovych wrote that he made translations to help the peasants in their glorifying God:

Я желал бы напечатать особою книжкою псалмов двадцать, которые переведены удачнее прочих, и посвятить эту книжку Острожскому братству, чтобы там, в Остроге, своенародная, местная речь слышалась не в одних простых и часто недобрых песнопениях, но и в посвященных хвалению Господа-Бога. (Barsukov 1901: 203)

I want to print a particular book of the twenty psalms, which had been translated more successfully than the others, and to dedicate this book to the Ostroh brotherhood in order to make the local language heard not only in simple and sometimes evil songs but also in the cants dedicated to glorifying God.

In general, Mykhailo Maksymovych was a conscious Orthodox Christian whose faith was essential to his life. That is why it is a relevant task to understand the correlation between the faith of the scholar and his scientific work.

The influence of Schelling's philosophy on Maksymovych's attitude to the correlation between knowledge and faith

Maksymovych's attitude to the problem of demarcation between knowledge and faith resulted from his attempts to harmonise the philosophy of Schelling with the traditional Orthodox worldview. Friedrich Schelling was very popular at Moscow University when Maksymovych was studying and teaching there. As a student, Maksymovych attended lectures by professor Mykhail Pavlov (1792–1840), who was primarily responsible for spreading Schelling's naturphilosophie in the Russian empire. It is well known that Mykhail Pavlov started his lectures in agriculture, mineralogy, and forestry with the question: "You want to know about nature, but what is nature and what is knowledge?" (Ostrianyn 1960: 38).

In Schelling's philosophy, the concept of integrity was fundamental. In *Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature: An Introduction to the Study of this Science* (1797), Friedrich Schelling argues that nature is the visible spirit, and the spirit is invisible nature (Schelling 1988). Schelling's historiosophy was formulated in his *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800). Friedrich Schelling developed the idea of history as a progressive, gradually self-disclosing revelation of the Absolute (Schelling 1993).

Based on these statements, Maksymovych developed his views on the integrity of knowledge and faith. In 1833, he published "The Letter About Philosophy" in the popular Moscow philosophical and political magazine "Telescope" (Maksymovych 2004a). Maksymovych described philosophy as generalising the other spheres of knowledge into a single, general beginning and developing knowledge from this into a harmonious system. He concluded that all science should be philosophical.

In the book "Reflection on Mature" (1833) Maksymovych claimed:

Природа представляет собою храм, полный неизреченными выражениями мыслей Художника Всевышнего, книгу, где каждое слово есть изреченная мысль Творца, отголосок всемогущего «ДА БУДЕТ». (Maksymovych 1847: 2)

Nature is a temple full of indescribable representations of the Supreme Artist's thoughts; it is a book where every word is an untold thought of the Creator and an echo of the omnipotent "LET IT BE".

In more detail, Maksymovych's unpublished "Notes About Human and Divine Knowledge" (1860s) considers the relationship between religion and science. Maksymovych wrote:

Познание, которое человек имеет о Боге, редко, и почти никогда, не бывает совершенном согласии с его остальными убеждениями, хотя человек сам и не замечает этого. Иногда мысли человека о Боге можно бы назвать христианскими, но в том же человеке понятия о религии и о изящных искусствах, если бы мы взяли их отдельно, оказались бы часто языческие, понятия его о науке были бы совсем безбожные... Люди, которые выше других по природным способностям, ближе других достигают внутренней целостности. (IMVNL, fund 32, unit 502, folio 8)

Cognition of God is rarely, hardly ever entirely, consistent with other people's opinions, although a person does not recognise it by himself. Sometimes, a person's thoughts about God can be characterised as Christian. However, if they were taken separately, his ideas about religion and art could be found as pagan, and his perceptions of science are totally godless... People who have better natural capabilities are closer to internal integrity.

This is why we can conclude that Maksymovych was sure that faith and rational knowledge should be integrated into a single system, an approach that came from his attempts to harmonise Friedrich Shelling's concept of integrity with the traditional Orthodox worldview. This brings us to the second problem: Maksymovych's use of specific Christian ideas in his scientific works.

Biblical literalism and the philosophy of the heart in Mykhailo Maksymovych's works

We can find a certain biblical literalism in Maksymovych's scientific ideas. In his popular "Book by Naum about the Great God's World", which was published in 1833 and then reprinted several times, Maksymovych used biblical statements to describe the creation of the world (Maksymovych 1833: 10). We cannot agree with the statement of the Soviet historians, that it was Maksymovych's capitulation to the censorship of the Russian empire (Ostrianyn 1960: 74). It should be noted that in the USSR Maksymovych was described as a progressive scientist, which is why such Soviet historians as Daniil Ostrianin and Polycarp Markov could recognise that Maksymovych had not understood something, although they tried to underline the elements of his worldview that could be characterised as progressive in terms of Soviet ideology (Ostrianyn 1960; Markov 1986).

However, studying Maksymovych's manuscripts shows that he used biblical stories about the Great Flood and the Babylonian tower to describe the history of languages even in his private notes, which the censors did not check. For example, in notes about literature (1834) Maksymovych wrote:

Был един язык и после падения. Расселение людей по лицу всей земли и смешение языков их – вот два роковых события в человеческом роде, непосредственным действием Божьей воли произведенные.
(IMVNL, fund 32, unit 389, folio 28)

There was a single language after the Fall. Resettlement of people over the face of the earth and confusion of languages were two fatal events in human history directly caused by God's will.

In his published article, "What Is the Origin of the Russian Land According to Nestor's Narrative and Other Ancient Russian Scriptures" (1837), where Maksymovych criticised Normanist theory, he also used the Bible to explain the ancestry of the Slavic people. Maksymovych sincerely believed in the literary sense of the Great Flood and tried to explain the origin of the Slavonic peoples from Noah (Maksymovych 1876: 75).

Maksymovych's unpublished extracts from the Bible deserve special attention. He wrote out quotations from Scripture using the words 'tribe', 'folk',

and ‘language.’ He underlined these words with a pencil and added notes like “tribe = dialect, folk = language” (IMVNL, fund 2, unit 2481, folio 1). It seems that he did not just try to understand the biblical context of these words; he also used the Bible to understand the nature of ethnicity. It should be noted that Maksymovych understood the nation in a primordial sense. The romantic concept of national spirit was essential for him (Yas’ 2006). The nation was described as an organism by Maksymovych, who perceived such a description not only as an anthropomorphic metaphor but also as a characteristic of the nation “as it is”. That is why Maksymovych used the Bible to understand the nature and sense of the “national spirit”, understanding nations as the thoughts of God in terms of Johann Herder (Schmidt 1956).

Mykhailo Maksymovych was a representative of the philosophy of the heart. He described the heart as the centre of the emotional and spiritual nature, which is connected with God. In Maksymovych’s unpublished notes for lectures about literature (1834), we find the following speculation:

Средоточие и источник внутренней жизни нашей есть сердце. В сем внутреннем таинственном святилище души почивот начатки духа, составляющего лучшую часть или сторону души нашей, кою обращены они к Божеству и жизни вечной. В сердце живет любовь – чувство беспредельное, вечное всеобщее – коим душа объёмлет все, которое всему дает жизнь. Любовь есть союз совершенства, союз истины, блага и красоты; характер её, гармония жизни. (IMVNL, fund 32, unit 389, folio 32)

Our heart is the centre and source of our inner life. There is a basis for the spirit in this internal mystical sacristy of the soul, and this spirit is the best part of our soul; it is dedicated to divinity and eternal life. Love lives in the heart, and love is an unlimited and holistic feeling; it helps the soul to embrace everything that gives life to everybody. The mind is a rational force of the soul, it allows us to turn feelings of the heart into thoughts. Feelings of truth are explained and turned into knowledge by the mind.

It should be noted that such ideas were rather popular in Ukrainian intellectual life in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Grigoriy Scovoroda (1722–1794) and Pamphil Yurkevich (1826–1874) were the most famous representatives

of the philosophy of heart (Chyzhevskiy 1992). Maksymovych's ideas about the heart were closer to the ideas of Pamphil Yurkevich because Grigoriy Scovoroda criticised some traditional Orthodox ideas and practices (Popovych 2003; Ushkalov 2019). At the same time, Pamphil Yurkevich and Mykhailo Maksymovych developed their philosophies of heart within the framework of Orthodoxy.

Maksymovych's religiosity and his concept of the 'Russian world'

Maksymovych's attitude to the role of faith in understanding history was essential for his concept of the 'Russian world', which was combined with the idea of the national spirit and an emphasis on Ukrainian specificity.

Contemporary Ukrainian historian Olexiy Yas' underlines this contradiction in the works of Maksymovych (Yas' 2014: 182–184). On the one hand, Maksymovych wrote extensively about the ethnic differences between northern Russia and so-called 'Little Russia', or Ukraine (he used these terms as synonymous). In the notes for the lectures at Saint Vladimir University in Kyiv, Mychailo Maksymovych underlines the features of Ukrainians in comparison with Great Russians:

В сношениях детей с родителями более было открытости, равенства, искренности, равно и в отношениях полов, любви молодой... От того более полное и стройное развитие душевных сил, от того чувство достигало до развития непосредственного, до страсти, и самая вера (религиозное чувство) теплее... Жизнь практическая, внешняя более развита у великороссиян, у украинцев – внутренняя жизнь духа. Жизнь первых – довольство, вторых – недовольство. (IMVNL, fund 32, unit 393, folio 10)

There is more openness, equality, and sincerity in the relationship between parents and children, as well as in the relationship of sexes, in the sphere of young love... That is why there is a more complex and consistent development of the soul's powers, and that is why emotion is more ingenious, and as far as passion, development, and faith (religious feeling) is warmer... Practical, external life is better developed among

Great Russians, and the internal life of the spirit is better developed among Ukrainians.

In terms of Romanticism, Maksymovych described ethnicity as an organism; the concept of the 'people's spirit' was fundamental to him, and he wrote about the differences between the spirits of the Great Russians' and the Little Russians'.

At the same time, Maksymovych defended the idea of so-called Russian integrity, using the term the Russian world in opposition to the West. Maksymovych wrote in the "Letter about Bohdan Khmelnickiy" (1857), which was addressed to Mykhail Pogodin, a professor at Moscow University:

Я думаю, что мой Киевский взгляд на Богдана сойдется с твоим Московским в одно Русское воззрение, также, как Московская и Киевская Русь – две стороны одного Русского мира, надолго разрозненные и даже противостоявшие друг другу, сошлись воедино – усилиями Богдана. (Maksymovych 1876: 397)

I think that my Kyiv view of Bohdan will be combined with your Moscow view in a single Russian outlook, as well as Moscow and Kyiv Rus' as two sides of the Russian world, which had been divided and even opposed to each other, and came together through the efforts of Bohdan.

David Saunders shows that Maksymovych believed in the unity of the empire, using the image of the Ukrainian past to give Ukrainians and Russians a fuller sense of their common cultural and historical base (Saunders 1985: 154). Oleksiy Tolochko has demonstrated that in the famous discussion with Mykhail Pogodin about the heritage of the Kyivan Rus', it was Maksymovych who defended the idea of Russian unity with his statement about the historical connection between ancient Rus' and modern Ukraine. At the same time, his opponent Mykhail Pogodin denied this connection; he stated that only Russia was historically linked with Kyivan Rus', and therefore, he recognised the specificity of the Ukrainian historical way (Tolochko 2012: 205–235).

It should be noted that in the middle of the 19th century, Ukrainian national consciousness moved to a new stage. In terms of Lysyak-Rudnickiy, it was the second stage of national building, when we can trace the separation of Ukrainian national consciousness from the Russian one (Rudnytsky 1988). Nevertheless, Mykhailo Maksymovych did not support this tendency. He lived till 1873,

but mentally, he was a representative of the first half of the 19th century, when Ukrainian and imperial loyalty could be easily combined, when Ukrainian national revival was perceived by the conservative Russian thinkers, such as Sheveriov or Pogodin, as a representation of Russianness. Olga Andriewsky, in her brilliant paper “The Russian-Ukrainian Discourse and the Failure of the “Little Russian Solution,” shows that by the middle of the 19th century, such perception went out of fashion (Andriewsky 2003: 188–190). However, we can see that Mykhailo Maksymovych remained in this old paradigm.

It seems to us that Orthodox religiosity can explain this feature of Mykhailo Maksymovych’s national consciousness. Religion was too crucial for him; therefore, Orthodox coherence was decisive even when Mykhailo Maksymovych described the differences between Ukraine and Russia. Mykhailo Maksymovych’s traditional religiosity became a barrier to adopting the modern national consciousness resulting from modernization, secularization, and Westernization (Kravchenko 2011: 364). Such consciousness sometimes includes a religious marker, but only as a sign of national existence among the other ones. However, Mykhailo Maksymovych perceived religion as an intrinsic value. Therefore, even recognizing and emphasizing Ukrainian ethnic and historical specificity in every possible way, Mykhailo Maksymovych remained in the framework of ideas about all-Russian unity. He understood this unity, first of all, in religious categories.

Mykhailo Maksymovych’s choice should be understood in the more general context of the modern Russia–Ukraine relationship. Olga Andriewsky argued that in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there were two different cultural paradigms of Russian–Ukrainian discourse. The first paradigm was founded on the idea of an ancient and sovereign Ukrainian–Rus’ land and people. This was shaped by the struggle for Cossack’ rights in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, legitimised by the Khmelnytsky Uprising of 1648, sustained in the 18th century through the historical chronicles of the Cossack elite, and given modern form in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Central to this vision was the notion that Ukraine–Rus’ had voluntarily submitted to Polish and, later, Russian monarchs on the basis of legal covenants that guaranteed it specific corporate rights. The other vision emphasized the idea of an all-Russian identity based on common Orthodox heritage, a common Rus’ origin, and a common historical destiny. This idea found its first full expression in the Synopsis, published in Kyiv in 1674 under the patronage of Inokentii Gizel, the archi-

mandrite of Kyiv Pechersk Lavra. The Synopsis justified union with Moscow on dynastic and religious grounds and cast the tsar as the Orthodox autocrat and the defender of the Slavic–Rus’ Orthodox realm. This concept became the basis for a modern Russian historical narrative (Andriewsky 2003: 196–197). The paradigm of all-Russian unity includes many more religious, specifically Orthodox, components than a paradigm of a sovereign Ukrainian–Rus’ land. This is why the very religious Orthodox Maksymovych accepted this view. Interestingly, this logic is found in the book by the Russian conservative philosopher from the second half of the 19th century Konstantin Leontiev, “Byzantinism and Slavdom”, in which the author argues:

Что, как не православие, скрепило нас с Малороссией? Остальное все у малороссов, в преданиях, в воспитании историческом, было вовсе иное, на Московию мало похожее (Leontiev 1876)

Only Orthodoxy has bonded us with Little Russia. Everything else was completely different with the Little Russians: other legends and historical developments that bore little resemblance to Moscow.

As well as Maksymovych, Konstantin Leontiev recognised the differences between Ukrainians and Russians, although for him Orthodoxy guarantees unity between Little and Great Russia.

We can also find another common feature in the worldviews of Maksymovych and Leontiev as both of them rejected the political dimension of Slavic coherence. It should be noted that pan-Slavism was gaining popularity in the Russian empire in the 19th century (Bushkovich 2003: 156; Kiselev 2015: 109). In particular, in Ukrainian territories of the Russian empire, pan-Slavism was present in the ideology of the secret Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius, which was suppressed by the government in 1847. Maksymovych was closely acquainted with the previous members of this Brotherhood, such as Taras Shevchenko and Pantyleimon Kulish (Maksymovych 2004b: 133–143; 299–307). He was also profoundly engaged in Slavic studies, writing much about Slavonic languages and traditions. Nevertheless, he had never described the Slavic peoples’ linguistic and cultural closeness as an argument for political unity. Moreover, arguing with Josef Dobrowsky and Pavel Šafárik, Maksymovych said: “There is no longer a single Slavic language, in the same way that there is no longer a single Slavic nation.” (Maksymovych 1880: 56)

Maksymovych constructed auto- and hetero-images based on the Orthodox worldview. Catholicism in such a narrative was described as hostile and alien (Kutsyi 2016: 16–17). For example, Maksymovych in his description of the Union of Brest, Maksymovych condemned it with the help of a combination of enlightenment criticism of religious violence and a very traditional apology of Orthodox Christianity as true Faith (Maksymovych 1876: 565–571). He also characterised the Cossack Uprisings in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth as “crusades for the faith and freedom of the holy Russian Kyiv land” (Maksymovych 1876: 508). Religion divided Slavic peoples, and was a reason why Maksymovych and Leontiev denied the political and cultural significance of Slavic unity.

The study of intellectual history raises issues about the typicality of certain ideas. A collection of works by Maksymovych, published after his death, consists of three large volumes (Maksymovych 1876; Maksymovych 1877; Maksymovych 1880). There are more than half a million words there. So, there is a question: which of his ideas were accidental in his texts, and which were more important for Mykhailo Maksymovych?

Quantitative content analysis using the MAXQDA-2022 program helps us solve this problem. With this program, we can detect the most used terms in the books and articles by Maksymovych (Table 1). It is interesting that the words “church” and “monastery” are used Maksymovych even more often than the words “chronicles”, “ethnicity”, “Rus”, and others. It is good evidence of the role of religious images in his works.

Word	Number of uses
Київ (Киев)	2645
was (было)	1500
for (для)	1449
churches (церкви)	1188
monastery (монастырь)	1095
prince (князь)	890
Rus' (Русь)	806
church (церковь)	731
time (время)	639
century (века)	613
hetman (гетман)	507
name (имя)	505
Ukraine (Украина)	465
chronicle (летопись)	460
Khmelnickiy (Хмельницкий)	455
Russian (Русской)	407
we (мы)	316
history (история)	299
city (город)	281
lands (земли)	275
day (день)	270
Dnipro (Днепр)	266
Russia (Россия)	253
people (народ)	222
book (книга)	206
Cossacks (козаки)	195
Little Russia (Малороссия)	183

Table 1. Word frequency in the collected works of Mykhailo Maksymovych

We can also assess the proximity of different words in the Maksymovych's texts. Content analysis shows that the word "Orthodoxy" is more often used in proximity (in a single paragraph) to the words "ethnicity" and "Russian" than in proximity to the words "church" and "Christianity" (Table 2). This shows that the religious images in Maksymovych's works were crucially important for the construction of "people's spirit" (in terms of Romanticism) as well as in formulating the complex hierarchies of loyalties.

	Poles	Cossacks	Khmelnickiy	Church	Catholicism	Orthodoxy	Ukraine	Rus'	Russian
Poles	0	3	35	30	9	25	36	16	36
Cossacks	3	0	9	12	2	6	11	5	10
Khmelnickiy	35	9	0	74	21	50	82	36	83
Church	30	12	74	0	33	67	88	52	117
Catholicism	9	2	21	33	0	30	24	23	32
Orthodoxy	25	6	50	67	30	0	58	37	72
Ukraine	36	11	82	88	24	58	0	50	116
Rus'	16	5	36	52	23	37	50	0	91
Russian	36	10	83	117	32	72	116	91	0

Table 2. The proximity of words in the collected works of Mykhailo Maksymovych

Conclusions

We can conclude that Mykhailo Maksymovych's deep religiosity, combined with his fascination with Schellingianism, caused him to formulate the idea of the integrity of knowledge and the absence of contradictions between science and religion. Maksymovych perceived biblical texts as a factually reliable story

about humanity's past. He represented the philosophy of the heart, developing it within the framework of traditional Orthodox anthropology. Maksymovych's deep personal religiosity and his theoretically formulated ideas about the relationship between faith and knowledge determined his attitude to the problem of Ukrainian specificity. Maksymovych emphasized the historical and cultural differences in the people's spirit of the Russians and the Ukrainians. However, he remained within the framework of the idea of all-Russian unity, which was perceived by him, primarily, in religious terms and which he developed based on Romanticism. Maksymovych's attitude to religion meant that modern national consciousness, which was being actively formed in the middle of the 19th century, remained mentally alien to Maksymovych.

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III

Crises

The Nature of Culture: Rites of Interaction Between Ukrainian Refugees and Latvian Society (2022)

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Abstract: The article deals with the challenge in migration studies to find a solution to the problem of how to analyse the rapidly emerging and increasing immigration of Ukraine war refugees, which started in 2022 in Latvia as well as in other European Union countries. This topic is important in migration studies to provide national and municipal decision-makers with a scientific perspective and rationale for informed decisions.

In Latvia, the humanities, including philosophy, have not yet been used to understand migration processes, although they do supply a wider context, which is necessary to understand the culture, attitudes, values, and peculiarities of an immigration group. The task of integrating and including the immigrant group presupposes knowledge and recognition of its uniqueness, which is best researched with the methods of the humanities, and significantly complements the approaches of economics, sociology and human geography.

Thus, the research presented in this article uses a wide range of social science research findings, ritual phenomenology, topological hermeneutics, and solutions from micro-group sociology as data sources to complement the understanding of migration as an object with a perspective that also includes human experience and the intersubjective space in which people meet to create community.

The objective of the study is to explore the research hypothesis, based on previous studies and daily observations, that a new social reality is emerging that can be called the newly emerged community of Ukraine in Latvia. This means that communication and reciprocity between most of Latvian society and refugees from the Ukrainian war has been, and is being, established.

The article analyses to what extent Latvian society was ready for the reception and inclusion of refugees from the Ukrainian war; how the inclusion of the concept of place can help to address the issue of the formation of new communities; how rituals reveal a new step towards the creation of communion on both sides of the newly formed community; and how rituals and interactivity interact in rituals involving micro-groups and micro-group forming rituals.

Thus, factors affecting the genesis of the Ukraine in Latvia community were discovered in the analysis of the interactive rituals that confirm the existence of a social reality aimed at integration and inclusion.

Thus, the study reveals the perspectives on the use of resources rooted in culture at the national and municipal levels.

Keywords: war refugees, rituals, newly emerged community “Ukraine in Latvia”, place.

Introduction

The state research program implemented by the Faculty of Geography and Earth Sciences at the University of Latvia in the DemoMigPro project (New Research Solutions on Demographic and Migration Processes for the Development of the Latvian and European Knowledge Society. VPP-Letonika-2021/3-0002) aims to supply new knowledge on and solutions to studies of demographic change and migration processes in order to foster the sustainable development of society in Latvia. It presupposes the evaluation of newcomers into various areas, their integration into Latvia, and how inclusive European society is. For the first time in Latvia in the study of human geography, religious science and the philosophy of religion researchers are also involved, together with lawyers, sociologists, demographers and migration specialists. This research program highlights the academically widely discussed connection between existential wellbeing, integration, and social cohesion (Dahlin et al. 2021).

The article deals with the challenge in migration studies which unexpectedly arose with the flow of Ukraine war refugees into European Union countries, including Latvia, after the Russian Federation invasion on February 24, 2022.

As of March 2022 their number was estimated at around 40,000 (37,000 were officially registered), and the flow has increased as war activities have moved to eastern Ukraine.

Therefore the intention, which is relevant to the project's aims, is to create a scientific basis for the understanding of the interaction between the newcomers' community arising from forced emigration to Latvia, and Latvian society. This review is necessary to provide recommendations to state and local government institutions in order to assist their informed decision-making.

The objective of the study is to explore a research hypothesis, based on previous studies and daily observations, that a new social reality is emerging, which could be called the newly emerged community of Ukraine in Latvia. This means that communication and reciprocity between the Latvian society and refugees from the Ukrainian war has been established and continues to be established. To demonstrate this, it is necessary to analyse the genesis of this community in its beginnings in 2022 by coding it as participation in interactive ritual performance, perception, and response processes between Latvian society and Ukrainian war refugees.

The research uses the methodology of philosophy, that is, the phenomenology of inner experience and topological hermeneutics, as well as the interdisciplinary use of other humanitarian and social science approaches. Thus, this article has the following structure, according to the tasks that contribute to the achievement of the objective.

The first section, "Latvia society before the arrival of Ukrainian refugees in 2022", discusses Latvia's societal character from the perspective of social cohesion, which is important to reveal the extent to which society was ready to receive Ukrainian refugees.

More programs were devoted to the study of the Covid-19 pandemic than to any previous crisis in order to understand wellbeing in Latvia. The studies, from the fields of sociology, medicine and human geography, not only revealed the current state of society but also various problems related to people's communication skills, cooperation, solidarity, relationship building in the family and mental health. These studies say a lot about types of social ties and conclude that in Latvia there is weak social cohesion or cooperation outside the personal or group bubble aimed at promoting the common good. Thus, the question arises, can we claim that, and to what extent was, Latvian society ready for the reception and inclusion of refugees from the Ukrainian war?

The second section, “Ukraine in Latvia: the concept of place in migration studies”, deals with the concept of place developed by the Australian philosopher Jeff Malpas. He synthesises human geography and philosophy in the concept of place as a methodological tool to show that migration is not only moving from place to place, but also that migrants take their places with them. That is, one’s own culture, attitude, values, peculiarities, etc., which become the basis for the dynamic cognition of the migrant community in the new place. Through culture, the nature of these people, ethnic groups, and regional peculiarities, in other words, the nature of Ukraine itself, is revealed. How can the involvement of the concept of place help in solving the question of the formation of a new community?

The third section, “Place, ritual, interaction”, begins with a reference to the definition of the ritual. Within philosophy of religion, Jack Williams has used phenomenology to develop the concept of embodied world construction. The rituals highlighted here in the context of interaction between two parts of the newly emerged community occurred during the Easter celebration, a divine liturgy for Ukrainian war refugees, Vyshyvanka Day, war refugees children’s drawings exhibition, and Sunflower Road. In what way do these rituals reveal a new step on the way to generating commonality?

In the fourth section, “Interaction ritual chains in small groups”, I use Randall Collins’ radical microsociology concept of interaction ritual chains to help demonstrate how rituals create interactive ties between Latvia society and Ukrainian war refugees. Interaction between representatives of the Latvian and Ukrainian communities in a micro-group is formed through existing ritual as well through the creation of as new rituals, which connect the intentionality of representatives of both communities in a common field of understanding. Analysed here are the Latvian Midsummer festival, the exchange of culinary traditions in small groups in various locations in Latvia, groups organised to weave camouflage nets and trench candles, art therapy groups, and groups at the House of the Holy Family in Riga. How do rituals and interaction form bonds in micro-groups and through rituals generate community?

The principal results of the research are the application of innovative methodology in migration studies. I also aim to identify the genesis of dialogue between Latvian society and Ukrainian refugees as well as the inception of their integration by analysing interactivity rituals. I am to justify designation of the newly emerged community of Ukraine in Latvia, providing a scientific

foundation for policy-makers to make informed decisions on culture-based inclusiveness experiences.

Latvian society before the arrival of Ukrainian refugees in 2022

Even a cursory glance at social networks is enough to discern phenomena associated with the time of the pandemic lockdown: personal anxiety due to the alarming and frightening manner of information in the mass media; societal divisions over vaccination; lack of communication skills in small groups such as family members; fear of dialogue with oneself in silence.

Looking for ways to improve human well-being in a lockdown situation, researchers focused on human communication practices that do not require a large investment, but only a change in attitude and behaviour. It's noteworthy that the concept of subjective well-being is not considered a homogeneous concept among researchers: "Also in Latvia, subjective well-being is most often identified with life satisfaction, happiness, success, and achievements, at the same time it is just one of the components of life quality" (Apsite-Berina et al. 2021: 29). Surveys show that the main concerns of employees during lockdown were: 1) balance between work duties and personal life (32%); 2) "whether the Covid-19 crisis will affect my company" (31%); 3) how to find the motivation to work (15%) (Aptauja 2021). These results led experts to the understanding that there should be more use of intangible stimuli such as emotional support, personal interest on the part of the employer in employees, and mutual understanding. The importance of outdoor activities in gardens, parks, and other natural areas increased significantly during the Covid-19 pandemic and was associated with a positive effect on the physical and mental health and well-being of individuals. During lockdown this kind of indisputably beneficial experience allowed one to engage with oneself and to return home to generate, in place of close co-existence with other people, a better home experience in terms of mutual communication and newly discovered values.

Apart from individual struggles to maintain a good work-life balance, there were also intrafamily and distant learning challenges in Latvia, which may have contributed to the increased levels of parental burnout and family violence (Krisjane et al. 2020: 56). There were increased numbers of marriage

conflict and even divorce due to permanent co-habitation during lockdown, as well as a rise in violence at home. (There are no reliable quantitative data in this area.) Improving communication skills and respecting the private space of others were strongly recommended solutions.

It became obvious that the root cause of ill-being is shortcomings in communicative strategies, both in the public sphere and in the field of interpersonal relations, as the emergency adversely affected the populations' well-being: "It affected behaviour and communication with other people within family and society" (Krisjane et al. 2020: 54). Another important indicator of ill-being during the pandemic was mental health. In the experts' evaluation, the mental health of young people is at a critical level, as 63% of young people in Latvia admit that their mental health deteriorated during the pandemic (LETA 2020). In addition, half of the general population considers that the pandemic had a negative impact on their mental health (Leta 2022). Consequently, we can observe an inability to properly share values when communicating.

The results of sociological studies allow us to look at these manifestations of individual ill-being in a wider context as a weakness of "cohesive social capital" based on solidarity in society. Specifically, "Solidarity means that the well-being of one person or of a group is positively related to the welfare of another individual or group.... The concept of solidarity is used to describe emotionally and normatively motivated readiness for mutual support illustrated by the call *One for all, all for one*.... Today, solidarity is understood as the action and set of beliefs which, by supplying mutual support, are focused on society consolidation" (Rungule et al. 2021: 50–51). Based on a study conducted by Riga Stradins University on life during the Covid-19 pandemic, researchers have concluded what the nature of "cohesive social capital" is in Latvia. Specifically, the respondents agreed that they can rely only on the circle of people closest to them, i.e. relatives, friends, associates. However, as social distance increases, trust in other people decreases. The closeness of people in their place of residence decreases, but the trustworthiness of "people in general" becomes even lower. (RSU 2021: 83). In a later analysis of the study, sociologists show how, based on Shalom Schwartz's value research methodology (Schwartz 2013), they have found differences in the values of helpers and non-helpers on a personal level to other people during the Covid pandemic. Comparing the values of helpers and non-helpers, the value of benevolence is more characteristic of help givers, while the value of conformity and power is more characteristic

of nongivers. So then aid providers are characterised by a smaller orientation towards the realisation of one's personal interests, readiness to limit one's interests, caring for the welfare of others, care for their social superiority, status, prestige, or power over other people, less conformity in observing social norms. (Rungule et al. 2021: 54). The level of social solidarity in the survey was measured by the quantitative expression of such factors as capability (a term created by Amartya Sen), mutual trust and reliance. The researchers conclude that "the population's assessment of changes in mutual solidarity/helpfulness during the pandemic does not provide much clarity, as more than half of the surveyed people believe that it has not changed. There are more who believe that solidarity has increased than those who say that it has diminished during the pandemic" (Rungule et al. 2021: 59).

Rungule et al., concluding their review of the study, write: "He/she becomes detached, unsupported, and weak. Therefore, we must go to the opposite end and come to common consciousness. And not only in a narrow sense, what we call bubbles, not just in a circle of like-minded people, but in something that can be based on a wider unity. It is necessary to find or restore the mechanism of how individuals, working together, can feel as something greater than each other separately." (Madris 2021)" (Rungule et al. 2021: 59–60)

At the same time, no studies have been conducted in Latvia on changes in values in society, which would be important to determine what values have changed when faced with the task of accepting refugees from the Ukrainian war after the pandemic.

In studies of other countries at least the general conclusions could be projected onto Latvian society. For instance, in Poland, which is geographically close to Latvia, sociologists concluded that:

our findings are the first to document that a global health concern is likely to produce a rapid reorganisation of what people consider important in life. For instance, people seemed more eager to abandon hedonistic pursuits during lockdown.... The increase of conservative pursuits (valuing security and conformity) corresponds well with previous findings that individuals are more prone to shift towards increasingly conservative values when the social or political context becomes less secure (Bojanowska et al. 2021).

With respect to values, the same sociologists suggested there was a direct link to well-being, i.e., individuals who value openness to change reacted to the Covid-19 pandemic more favourably. This might suggest that individuals who are open to change might had different interpretations of upcoming new events, seeing them as an opportunity for self-exploration and self-expression, even if these events were as severe as a worldwide pandemic (Bojanowska et al. 2021). Here “self-exploration” and “self-expression” could be rephrased in philosophical terms as a person’s search for authenticity in life, for a way to be, instead of just to function, in a certain social role.

Undoubtedly, the conclusions of the Polish study cannot be applied directly to the situation in Latvia. The assumption that could be made when reviewing media reports about victims of the pandemic and the public’s reaction to it, especially when it comes to people known to the public, such as the journalist Rolands Tjarve or the composer Mārtiņš Brauns, is that people in Latvia also feel threatened and pay more attention to values that were not so much in the foreground before.

Here it would be necessary to explain in what sense the concept of value is used in this article. Amid academic debate about the character and nature of value, the concept of value as understood here comes from Latin or medieval philosophy where value is a good (*bonum*), or good is a value (Rintelen 1972: 202). However, the term ‘value’ alone is not used in these texts. The modern term ‘value’ comes from Immanuel Kant’s transcendental philosophy, where he replaced *bonum* with the German *Wert* i.e., ‘value’. Value or good is of an ideal nature and characterises the activity of the human intellect, which inevitably assigns a value or good to everything that it meets in cognition. Values in a person’s inner world form a dynamic hierarchical structure that can change under the influence of various factors. Within ethics there is the question of what is good in subjective perception and what is good objectively. Sociological surveys rely more on so-called common sense, or the accepted idea in society that some concept relates to value, for example safety.

Among the values in Latvian society could be the value of life, although academically this has been discussed in only a few articles (Ijabs 2020). The rise in deaths from Covid-19, and personal contact with the deaths of family members, friends or co-workers have led to a reassessment of what had previously been lost in the everyday rush – the crucial importance of the presence of these close personal contacts. The value of truth proved to be very important both

for information on the treatment of Covid-19 and for orientation in a mixture of information and conspiracy theories, as well as for issues of social justice, such as the use of state funds in the pandemic, access to medical services, job retention and economic support of small businesses. Lockdown also caused people to rediscover the value of communication, as face-to-face meetings, including between family members and friends, were limited. In this way the lockdown forced a rediscovery of the value of human freedom and thus led to a rethinking of how human freedom could be better exploited, particularly in the search for an authentic way of life through self-exploration.

Consequently, when trying to outline the situation of Latvian society's values under the influence of the pandemic, and before the arrival of refugees from the Ukrainian war, and taking into account the studies described above, it is possible to make two judgments: 1) there is a lack of solidarity in society in terms of understanding and action in promoting the common good; 2) the world of the subject's values has been significantly affected by feelings of vulnerability posed by the dangers of the pandemic, although there is a lack of data to explore exactly how values changed. However, if we extrapolate the research conducted in Poland, also a country in the Baltic Sea region, we can assume that the threat of the pandemic has also affected the value system of people in Latvia; at least a large part of society has become aware of their own values related to life, health, safety, quality of human presence in the family, communication, etc.

Russia's full-scale invasion Of Ukraine and the start of the war were perceived by Latvian society as a huge threat as people realised that all former Soviet bloc countries and republics were potentially in danger. As Latvian ex-president Valdis Zatlers said in an interview on national television: "The war in Ukraine has opened the historical scars of the Latvian people" (Zatlers, 2022). In social media, in public discussions, and in private conversations, people expressed their concern about the possibility of a repetition of the occupation, deportations and persecution of the Soviet regime if the Ukrainian state did not stand up to the invaders. This would obviously be one of the factors that further deepened the understanding of other important values of the common good, such as statehood, sovereignty, freedom, etc. The actualisation of collective historical memory of the many wars that took place in the territory of Latvia, including the recent Second World War, also contributed to the greater openness of society and therefore to the acceptance of refugees from Ukraine. Such

a transformation of the nature of social cohesion was necessary in order that Latvian society would become much more open to the reception of refugees from the Ukraine war and to the activity of providing assistance and support.

Meanwhile, migration researchers faced a new challenge, for example how to describe and analyse the rapidly growing community of war refugees?

Ukraine in Latvia: the concept of place in migration studies

The ‘Ukraine in Latvia’ concept is appropriate when describing the process of interaction between Latvian society and the community of newcomers in 2022. In this interaction, migration reveals not only the movement of people from one place in the world to another, as per *the classical definition of migration, migration also entails the appearance of a certain place – in this case Ukraine – in the host society, starting with values and attitudes, ending with the regional culinary diversity of the home nation. In other words, Ukrainian migration brings to Latvia the very place, Ukraine itself, with its regional differences, way of living, identity, attitudes, interactions, and values.* What is decisive here is the idea of keeping one’s place from the home country. Professor of Philosophy from Tasmania University (Australia) Jeff Malpas explains more precisely the importance of place, writing, that “it is, indeed, only in and through a place that the world presents itself – it is in place, and our own being-in-place, that the world begins” (Malpas 2018: 12). In terms of migration studies, this means that migrants should be seen as people who do not change places, but rather as people who bring place with them. Malpas’s methodological developments allow us to start research on the Ukrainian war refugee community in exactly this way.

‘Place’ is one of the most essential concepts in geography, which also deals with processes of migration. In the 1970s, the positivist paradigm in the science of geography, which ruled from the 1950s, changed and place in human geography began to be viewed more in human terms as a location, a clearly defined point in space, and a meeting place of meaning where human emotions, beliefs – in a word, experience – are important: “to be human is to be in a place” (Creswell 2008: 134–135). Diverse ways of knowing and practicing geography are acceptable today, just as in the relationship between human geography and philosophy.

Jeff Malpas offers an alternative to the postmodernist and poststructuralist theories of place that have prevailed for a long time in the academic world. The original triangular structure, in which place, people and human relations with the place were interconnected, was later expanded by Malpas through phenomenology and hermeneutics, associating place with openness, as described in Martin Heidegger's fundamental ontology in which existence and the activity of human existence are realised (Malpas 2012).

Malpas also focuses on the interpretation of the concept of place, because the explanation of the relationship between man and place and human activity requires the inclusion of an epistemological dimension, which becomes possible with the concept of space characteristic of transcendental philosophy (Malpas 2008: 50). Currently, in the synthesis of philosophy and geography achieved by Malpas, he describes what it means to think topographically, using place, space, and other geographical concepts (Malpas 2017). Malpas applies the principles of topological hermeneutics (Malpas 2022) in the study of individual places, for example, to the historical and modern significance of the countryside, the city of Jerusalem, etc., integrating the findings of religious studies, the history of ideas, migration, urban planning, historical memory, and identity studies, thus encouraging philosophy specialists to use this approach in research on migration.

The pre-existing community of Ukrainian immigrants in Latvia had not merged with Latvian society but had created their own community, in which they practice the values and attitudes that were common before they were forced to leave Ukraine. War refugees from Ukraine are a completely different community and are different in their desire to return home rather than make efforts to take root in their temporary home.

The demographic landscape of Latvia shows that the Ukrainian ethnic minority in Latvia formed and grew after the Second World War when Soviet policy artificially promoted increasing numbers of Soviet citizens to relocate to the Latvia SSR. In the early 1990s, after the restoration of independence, the number of Ukrainians decreased rapidly due to both emigration and a decline in natural growth. The number of Ukrainians in Latvia in 1989 was 92,100, in 2000 63,600, and in 2016 44,600. Thus, the reduction from 1989 to 2016 was 47,500 (Zvidriņš 2022). It is difficult to talk about the visibility of Ukrainians in the overall activities of Latvian minorities until 2022. During this year, the Ukrainian Congress of Latvia became an active organisation in diverse types

of humanitarian aid and political support campaigns for Ukraine. Thus, thanks to joint action in support of Ukraine, we can certainly talk about a rapprochement between the existing Ukrainian ethnic minority and the community of war refugees, as well as the formation of a much greater understanding between Latvian Ukrainians and Latvians.

War refugees are people who have fled war and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country. On July 12, 2022, United Nations figures showed that at least 12 million people have fled their homes since Russia's invasion. Meanwhile, Ukrainian war refugees, as observed in Latvia and in other countries, stand out because of their wish to return to Ukraine. In November 2022, the national news portal reported that more and more refugees who came to Latvia from Ukraine and spent several months here are returning to their homeland. Latvian media has written continuously about this trend since the spring of 2022. Others return to spend the difficult winter here, in a familiar place. Meanwhile, responsible officials do not have accurate data on the movement of refugees from Latvia to Ukraine and back, while a slight decrease in the number of refugees can be seen by the number of refugee attending the support centre in Riga and the amount of aid paid out (LSM 2022).

Because of the refugees coming from Ukraine Latvian perception of Ukraine changed rapidly. Previously, stereotypes about Ukraine were determined by the legacy of the Soviet era, as well as by gaps in information about what had happened in Ukraine over the last 30 years.

In the context of the war launched by Russia against Ukraine, analysts conclude that it is necessary to consider the significant social changes since the declaration of Ukraine's independence in 1991. The events of Euromaidan in 2013–2014 have been an important reference point for the Revolution of Respect and Freedom in Ukraine:

The desire of Ukrainians to become part of the European Union is based on common values and a sense of belonging to one space of civilisation. Young people who first came to Maidan defended democratic values: human dignity, freedom, human rights, voting rights, independence, freedom of speech, independence of the state, homeland, family, and much more. It is with these values that Ukrainians associate the European Union. (Institute Respublika 2018)

A 2021 sociological survey showed that, when asked what their main values were, 45% of Ukrainians answered freedom of speech, 36% answered family, 31% answered prosperity, 31% answered the opportunity to criticise the government, and 30% answered Ukraine's independence. In answers to questions about Ukrainian symbols, the researchers wrote with a smile, "borscht with pampochka" is not the main thing, but rather statehood and ethnicity: 60% of the answers were about the flag, 52% about the anthem, 46% pointed to the language, 36% to the coat of arms and 29% to vyshyvanka (Ukrainian traditional embroidery). Other answers, with significantly fewer votes, were dumplings, borscht, Ukrainian nature, and songs. Choices like these, as the researchers conclude, are the first step towards realising the existence of a state, rather than just a territory inhabited by Ukrainians (Andriy Kotenskyi 2021).

Evaluating changes in public opinion over the past decade, researchers assume that the election campaigns of recent years have raised the confidence of Ukrainian citizens. They have started to believe that elections at various levels in Ukraine are run fairly: in this case the majority – 55% – are convinced of this (Yurydychna Hazeta 2020).

At the same time, the 2018 study found that 84% of young people name freedom as the main value (in comparison the figure for the middle generation is 80% and for the older generation 77%) (TUESWU 2016).

However, this is not only the result of the change of opinion after 2014 but also the success of the work on updating values at the national level. The national Values – Our Wall campaign promotes the actualisation of values, especially among school-age youth. For example, a team of animators connected with the Active Citizens Community held an event in a Dnipro secondary school that highlighted what values have been defended in the history of Ukraine, what values Ukrainians joined the Orange Revolution to promote, and what values are so important that everyone should defend them. The conversation they initiated was also about self-sacrifice, the spirit of the people, spiritual strength, and heroism. Another example comes from Khmilnytsia, a regional coordination centre of the Active Citizens Community, where a meeting was held with school-age youth in local libraries. At the end of the campaign, the students built a 'protective wall' from specially prepared bridges on which they wrote the values they were ready to defend. These values were: family, love, national independence, friendship, peace, unity, mercy, freedom, justice, trust, and honesty (Institute Respublica 2019).

Interaction between Ukrainian war refugees and the majority of Latvian society can be characterised as the formation of a new community in Latvia, i.e., drawing on the above, *place*. A meeting of two cultures that seek mutual understanding. The community of ‘Ukraine in Latvia’.

Place, ritual, interaction

The urgent need for the mutual acquaintance and coexistence of two communities in one space creates the need for cognitive rituals (Boyer 2020), which could describe the newly emerged Ukraine in Latvia community.

In the field of ritual studies, there are many definitions of the term cognitive ritual, although the general idea can be expressed as a sequence of actions that include gestures, words, symbolic actions and revered objects. Within philosophy of religion, Jack Williams has developed the concept of embodied world construction, based on phenomenology (Williams 2023: 1–20). He argues that rituals can shape and reshape the structure of an individual’s perceptual world. Embodiment in rituals has already been discussed in psychology before, understanding a situation through using bodily senses in a sort of sensory engagement that is linked with inter-subjectivity (Uland 2012). The embodiment concept also includes the interaction of verbal and nonverbal semantic levels in the performance which generate the richness of meaning in ritual performance (Wiseman 2022). Embodiment refers to a human person as an embodied spirit, which allows one to grasp the inner spiritual and cultural world of a person and point to various forms of expression in the ritual, including understanding the various functions of the ritual. The phrase ‘world construction’ describes the ritual formation or restoration of one’s culture and society, and one’s place in it in response to significant, challenging life situations.

In some studies of the relationship between place and rituals, special attention has been paid to the connection with the political background. Thus, for instance, in Israel/Palestine the dynamic of sacred places is central and becomes a path to claim land (Stadler 2020: 105–136). Adapting this to Ukraine in Latvia rituals, it could be said that their political background is important, and that the rituals also contain a fundamental demand for the existence and independence of the Ukrainian state.

In formulating the “radical microsociology” approach to society, Randall Collins presents the concept of “Interaction Ritual Chains” (Collins 2005). The very different social phenomena in our social lives are driven by the common force of rituals of interaction. Each person flows from situation to situation, attracted by this interaction. Avoiding further specific application of this theory in social life, here it is possible to establish that the most important aspect of interaction rituals is that they promote the cohesion of sociality, in this case the mutual acquaintance and cooperation of two communities, Latvian and Ukrainian.

Summarising the heuristic possibilities in the construction of a unified knowledge approach to synthesising these structural elements, we get the view that war refugees or forced migration participants in Latvia bring with them their place, i.e. Ukraine, their specific place of life in it, and their attitude towards it. Ritual performances are related to their world, their place, and the construction of their attitudes towards it, embodying this place, their cultural world, in the new place, Latvia. In addition, refugees’ rituals are cognitive, as they focus on their rapid and dynamic introduction to the new place of residence and their interaction with the community of that place. In turn, the *local place* community starts the path of interaction rites by participating in the performance of these rites. Interaction between both parts of this community takes place by being included in the events of the Ukrainian ritual calendar, which are not museum-like shows but are living rituals as in Ukraine itself, with an emotional value that is heightened by the reality of war.

Meanwhile, “ritual is not being together in conversation but a being together of a group in action” (Palmer 2000: 384). Ritual shapes the common life, and from this community with the Other and non-verbal interaction later proceeds language activity (Grondin 2001: 46). From the perspective of Hans-Georg Gadamer’s hermeneutics of play-festival-ritual, we have a case of continuing critical, meaningful conversation in society, with society, and about society.

The first mutual communication experience took place in the Easter Celebration.

Hundreds of Ukrainian refugees streamed through Old Riga on a cold and rainy day on Sunday, April 24, 2022, for the Greek Catholic Easter service. It was held in the Greek Catholic chapel of the Church of Our Lady of Sorrows in Riga and was overcrowded, as until that time the Ukrainian congregation was very small.

Unlike in Latvia, where Latin Rite Catholicism prevails, in Ukraine, the largest number of Catholics belong to the Byzantine Rite. A survey found that 71.7% of the population of Ukraine declared themselves believers. About 67.3% of the population declared adherence to one of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, 7.7% were Christian with no declared denominational affiliation, 9.4% Ukrainian Byzantine Rite Catholics, 2.2% Protestants, 0.8% Latin Rite Catholics, 1–2% Muslim (Razumkov Center 2016).

Therefore, so-called Greek or Eastern Catholics make a great number of believers in Ukraine, and thus also among the refugees. The divine service was led by Father Roman Sapuzhak, a Ukrainian priest who has been serving in Latvia for several years. After the service Ukrainian people in Latvia celebrated Easter at the House of the Holy Family. Citizens from Kyiv, Poltava, and Chernihiv gathered for the event, but a new influx of refugees was expected when people who had managed to escape from Mariupol arrived.

The meeting was initially confusing, as if people were afraid to accidentally spoil the first communication experience. The Latvians were restrained and the refugees stood quietly along the walls, waiting for the arrival of the clergy who would bless the agape festival. Then one of the refugee women dared to ask for hot tea because the day was cold and rainy, and believers were patiently standing outside the small chapel of the Ukrainian congregation, which is in the wing of the Church of Our Lady of Sorrows in Riga. It was like a revitalising signal, because an active movement on the part of the Latvians immediately began, and everyone was invited in for a hot drink in a caring and encouraging fashion. A dynamic society of people communicating with each other was formed in front of our eyes. The event was blessed by Father Roman Sapuzhak and the Archbishop of Riga Zbignevs Stankevics, who said that according to the Holy Scriptures, by welcoming the people of Ukraine, we had shown hospitality to Christ himself. He was visiting us in the form of Ukrainian people, bringing a blessing. The event was organised by Caritas Latvija, a Catholic charity organisation.

Discussing this episode with the aid of the hermeneutic communication theory of Hans Georg Gadamer, the problem is of generating mutual understanding in a dialogical way. The will to understand meets the resistance of the Other, which forces a critical look at one's previous views and stereotypes, creating sensitivity to the Other, which is a prerequisite of dialogism. It is necessary to suspend previous expectations of meaning, as Gadamer says, and to be open

to what is happening, allowing the truth to manifest itself (Gadamer 1999: 257). The hermeneutic situation of silence, during which the intentionality of the persons of both communication sides was focused on not allowing previous expectation to show themselves, was solved by a woman simply asking for hot tea. Further, the internationalities of the mutual wish to be open to each other and to communicate led to Gadamer's terms of mutual understanding.

Usually, preconceived notions, even stereotypes, as Gadamer points out, are deeply rooted and interfere with the dialogism of communication. However, in this case, what determined the mutual openness and the cessation of disturbances arising from previous assumptions, or the suspension of expectations of meaning, were the upheavals that took place in personal experience after the start of the war in Ukraine. From the phenomenological point of view, experience:

marks our singular, irreplaceable, and unique vantage point onto our worlds. It highlights our fragility, precarity, vulnerability, and finitude. It delimits regions of possibility and constraint, of acting and suffering, that coalesce, transform, and dissipate in the shifting moments that are undergone in the arc of any given life.... Edmund Husserl's famous call to return 'back to the things themselves!' (*zurück zu den Sachen selbst!*) was a commitment to examine all phenomena as they show themselves. (Zigon 2021)

Therefore, spontaneous weeping after the beginning of the war was a common phenomenon, by both Ukrainian and Latvian women. This was seen both in TV interviews and in various publications, as well as in everyday communication. Sure, Latvian women encountered the war only internally, reading the news, watching the Ukrainian TV channel Freedom, and meeting Ukrainian war refugees. In terms of human textual articulation, it was a complete *atopon*, or dead-end situation, as described by hermeneutics, because our society still lacks epistemological power to deal with the collective historical post-traumatic situation arising from the war, deportations, and Soviet occupation regime.

However, the new war brought it up to date and created a new layer. Issues of identity and memory in post-Soviet societies are often characterised in the context of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Post-traumatic stress as an existential condition still affects human life. For example, some psychologists

believe that the very high suicide rate in Russia and the Baltic countries is a consequence of Stalinism (Tracevskis 2004). Culture can soften the blow of the consequences of a collective trauma if it has the tools and practices to provide people with the ability to reproduce the meaning of what happened and to explain it. Otherwise, there is epistemological insufficiency, or people are insufficiently armed with the necessary knowledge (epistemic disempowerment) (Young de 1998).

Therefore spontaneous weeping as a response to this inner silence and the impossibility to express the experience of war and refugees' presence is transformative. In accordance with phenomenological content analysis it includes a holding together of the apparent polarities of human existence, apprehension of the "tragic dimension of human existence" seen as universal rather than uniquely personal, a sense of being startled, awakened, and triggered into an expanded awareness of reality, and an inward sense of freedom, vastness, or pure consciousness from which all activities begin (Anderson 1996). The weeping arises from the heart and signifies an open and softened position. Religious traditions honour the gift of tears and have found ways to ritualise it. These transcendent moments go beyond what the mind can understand: "This response draws out our deep feelings of connection with others. Sometimes in their suffering, pain, and isolation, and at other times in their joy and celebration. Practicing the gift of tears not only draws us closer to others, it also signals our gratitude to God for giving us the primal emotions that come from the heart" (Brussat 2020). Weeping expressed and continues to express the participation of the people of Latvia in the suffering of the people of Ukraine, an interaction with these people that creates a unity that is deeply lived in the heart and demands active participation through acts of help and support.

The Greek Catholic congregation in Riga has become the centre of divine liturgy rituals for Ukrainian war refugees.

Liturgical celebrations also serve to connect refugees with their homeland, as, for example, the Head of the Pastoral Migration Department of the UGCC, Bishop Stepan Sus, led the Liturgy for Ukrainians in Riga, on May 29, on the 30th anniversary of the Ukrainian parish of the Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ – the official title of the congregation.

The archbishop thanks God for 30 years of our parish here in Riga.

This place is special to many of our faithful, added His Excellency. In

the times of the underground, when in Ukraine it was difficult to pray and educate our future pastoral care, many of our priests studied in the Riga seminary. In the late 70s in Ukraine, there were no samples, no icons, and no UGCC church calendars. In fact, all the first religious Ukrainian literature was born here in Riga, and it was transmitted to Ukraine: “Thus, our faithful had the opportunity to live a church life and pray” (UGCC, 2022).

Archbishop Stepan Sus refers to the deep spiritual ties that united Ukraine and Latvia when, thanks to the efforts of Julian Cardinal Vaivods, permission was obtained from the Soviet authorities for representatives of Ukraine to study at the Riga Theological Seminary. Unity at the spiritual level, which was formed historically and is now implemented in pastoral care, is important. The lay support system allowed students to sign up in Riga, live and work in Riga, and study at the seminary. Now six of them are bishops in the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

A genuine liturgical ritual of interaction was the Latin rite service in the church of St Francis, on July 31. The Dudaryk National Academic Choir Chapel from Lviv gave concerts in Latvia, collecting donations for the support of Ukraine. The choir’s participation in the Holy Mass of the Latin Rite, celebrated by Father Roman Sapuzhak in Ukrainian, proved to be a special event.

On August 15 the Greek Catholic congregation also organised a pilgrimage for refugees during most important holiday for Latvian Catholics, the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven, to Aglona sanctuary, where they participated in the Stations of the Cross service, praying for Ukraine.

The first Ukrainian ritual performed openly in public was Vyshyvanka Day celebrated on May 19, in Riga. “For the first time, Ukrainians have so acutely felt the meaning of the well-known expression about the embroidered code of the nation” (Bauskas Dzīve 2022). Each Ukrainian county had its own way of embroidering this shirt, so that the pattern would determine the area and traditions specific to each county. Someone got that shirt by miraculously surviving in a closet in a destroyed house. And someone lost it along with the house. Someone is looking for it in another country, where the war drove him out. Some are under occupation, risking their lives, while others celebrated this holiday for the first time because they felt such a need for the first time, wrote the First Lady of Ukraine Olena Zelensky in her Instagram account.

In Riga Vyshyvanka was celebrated outside the National Opera with a concert of Ukrainian songs and an impromptu show of folk costumes from different regions. As a reminder of wartime, one of the ladies in national costume had put on a bulletproof vest and a helmet. The event was also attended by representatives of Latvian regions in folk costumes. This is the point from which Ukraine war refugees' rituals started to interact with the Latvian ones, as members of Latvian folklore groups participated in their national costumes, performing songs and dances alongside Ukrainian Vyshyvanka performers. In this way this became a ritual belonging to two communities performed in one place.

Another element of the interaction comes from traditional folk art masters, for example weaving belts and blankets and knitting gloves and socks using Latvian ornaments in social networks. These crafters shared their surprise at how similar, even identical, Ukrainian embroidery patterns are to Latvian symbols, for example the 'morning star' ornament (Auseklītis). Such a comparison of Latvian and Ukrainian ornaments had already been performed by a Ukrainian gymnasium student in Riga (Bazanova 2009), where the commonalities and differences in Latvian and Ukrainian ornaments were discussed based on geometric patterns and decoratively simplified plant and zoomorphic forms.

The exhibition of war refugee children's drawings, May 9 to June 17 2022, became a ritual of interaction between Latvian society and the Ukrainian refugee community. It is a ritual because people in very large numbers felt it necessary to attend this exhibition, which was also widely advertised in the national media. It embodied inner openness to refugees and to Ukraine's heroic fight. People bodily moved to the exhibition, used sensory perception to touch the destiny of Ukrainians as seen by the eyes of children. Visiting the exhibition became a confirmation of the construction of a world that is free and lives in peace but requires sacrifice to be protected.

The exhibition featured around 200 drawings created by young Ukrainian artists in the children's room of the refugee aid centre in Riga, established with the help of the Caritas organisation. But the original idea came from the art historian Gabriela Cabiere, a prominent Moscow art scholar and exhibition producer who left Russia eight years ago for political reasons and moved to Riga:

The children are initially very closed, they wanted to be left alone, but when the artist carefully works with them, shows them different colours and techniques, then the child opens, and their creativity is fully ex-

pressed. There are so many colours and themes here! There are homes, journeys, but of course a lot of war themes. A lot of pets, especially cats, which many of them have left in Ukraine (LSM 2022 a).

There are both similarities and differences when compared to previous research on drawings by war refugee children. In their drawings, Ukrainian children depict everything related to home: pets, houses, family, sea, ships, vehicles, flags, and their native towns. This is in line with the results obtained in studies by various researchers on various occasions, including drawings by Balkans and Syrian war refugees, which showed that depiction of houses were represented in 60% of children's free drawings (Farokhi & Hashemi 2011). The researchers suggested that it was probably that home was something refugee children longed for the most and that depictions of home symbolised the "emotions and stability that are achieved by living in the home, a place where basic needs are pursued" (Sokić et al. 2019: 256).

An immediately noticeable and characteristic feature of Ukrainian children's works is the dominance of the sun in most of the drawings. In an analysis of Palestinian and Syrian children's drawings in Turkey, a researcher explains the Sun as a symbol of the mother: "A child cannot exist without his/her mother just like the Earth cannot exist without the Sun. Sunny weather, clouds with light colours, and birds represent the happiness and joy of life, therefore the child seems to have positive feelings and mood (happiness, joy, etc.), which are reflected in his/her drawing" (Oztabak 2020: 489).

Ukrainian war refugees in Latvia are women with children, and teenagers, because the men of the family are subject to military service and so have remained in Ukraine. Therefore, many drawings use light and sunny colours to depict Ukrainian soldiers positively as defenders. Often these are members of the children's families.

The drawings can be used as a triage tool to assess the emotional state of refugee children, and as art therapy. A mother of one of the Ukrainian artists, Lydia, observed that drawing serves as therapy for the child and as an opportunity to survive the horrors: "She even took pencils to the bomb shelter and drew there, because it helped distract her thoughts. And even now it helps, but she has not yet fully recovered. Now she has become much shyer, she wasn't like that before" (LSM 2022a).

The exhibition of children's drawings aroused great interest, as it was an opportunity to get acquainted with the children's emotional worlds through their own eyes, without burdening them with unnecessary curiosity. The quiet interaction, on the one hand, allowed Ukrainians to discover their world in a childishly pure way, while on the other hand, Latvian society could heal its experience of the current war, which reopened the wounds of historical memory.

However, to be clear, the drawings shown in the exhibition in Latvia are different from the works of children who experienced devastating and cruel warfare in Ukraine. In October 2022 an exhibition by the Polish–Ukrainian Archives Project opened in front of the Russian Embassy in Riga, titled “Mum, I Don't Want War!”. The project includes more than 10,000 children's drawings about war and peace in Ukraine and aims to capture what children experience during wartime in their own country. In turn, Poland's National Archives holds more than 7,000 children's drawings from 1946, produced as part of a post-war initiative to enable young Poles to process their trauma from the Nazi occupation. By putting images and words together in thematic groups: fighting, occupation, family, repression, resistance, destruction, victory, hope, “the creators of the exhibition want to emphasise how similar the scenarios of invading wars are” (Republic of Poland Website 2022).

The common interactive ritual of Sunflower Road became the embodiment of meanings that the sunflower has in Ukraine's culture, and thus in the Ukrainian world. It takes place against the backdrop of hostilities and solidarity with Ukraine from Latvia's side as well.

Sunflowers are a visible part of Ukrainian culture, representing the country's spirit and identity. They have become an important symbol in Ukraine, appearing in many places such as flags, coins, stamps, postcards, etc. Ukrainians view the vibrant flower as a symbol of peace and resilience. Sunflowers represent adoration, loyalty and longevity. Known as happy flowers, sunflowers are the perfect gift to bring joy to someone's day or as a treat for yourself. After the Chornobyl nuclear power plant disaster in 1986, Ukrainians planted sunflowers in the devastated area. The flowers not only represented renewal and hope, they also helped extract toxins from the soil. Globally,

awareness of the association between sunflowers and Ukraine has grown since February 24, the first day of the invasion, when the news outlet *Ukraine World* shared a video on Twitter showing a Ukrainian

woman in Henychesk giving sunflower seeds to Russian soldiers, with the striking instruction to put the seeds in their pockets so the flowers will grow where they die. The video has racked up 8.6 million views on Twitter since it was uploaded on February 24 (Waxman 2022).

In 2022, the sunflower became the main symbol of nature in Latvia, used to show support for Ukraine. As early as March 24, the campaign to plant sunflowers began, initially covering the cultivation of seedlings. In May, the time came to put the carefully nurtured seedlings in the ground to take root: “Sunflower beds and fields are also a way that we can symbolically tell the Ukrainian refugees that we care about what is happening and are ready to help”, say the initiators of the campaign (LV 2022). The campaign was widespread in Latvia, with people planting sunflowers in municipalities, in individual gardens and near apartment blocks. Often, in big cities, the plantations were destroyed overnight. But by the end of summer, many people were happy to display their sunflowers; some had even grown taller than the person who planted them. In many local municipalities, people organised their own Sunflower Way, referring to the experience of the Baltic Way. So, for example, the leader of Ķekava district declared:

In 1989, the Baltic Way wound through here very close, when Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia literally joined hands, demonstrating unity in the fight for independence. Today, the whole world joins hands with the Ukrainian people. We are also part of it, providing support to Ukrainians, and we are not going to stop. We all know here that together we are a loud voice that resonates in so many ways. We have sunflower seeds. I invite you to sow them, because at first a small seed is just a whisper, but in the fall there will already be a chorus of sunflowers. Let’s build the first meters of Sunflower Way together! (Kekavas Novads 2022).

Everyone was welcome to take part in the Sunflower Road flash event in Riga on August 24, Ukraine’s Independence Day, in support of Ukraine, by lining up along the route from the refugee support centre to the Ukrainian embassy.

“We sat with our friends and talked about how we want to celebrate Ukraine’s Independence Day with a straight back, with some beautiful gesture, despite the difficult time. We understood that we should send a salute to the courage of Ukraine. We do that by sending this bouquet of sunflowers”, says the author

of the idea Laura Čaupale, a member of the Ukraine Friends' Association (Butkevičs 2022).

The people passed the bouquet of the national flower of Ukraine from hand to hand, shouting 'Glory to Ukraine' to each other. After that, in the centre of Riga, already with sunflowers in their hands, the people continue their journey to the Ukrainian embassy. Along the way, more and more Ukrainian Independence Day celebrants gathered to participate in the campaign with their own sunflowers in their hands and dressed in appropriate symbols. The event attracted many people because it recalled The Baltic Road, a peaceful political demonstration that took place on 23 August 1989 when approximately two million people joined hands forming a 600 km human chain through the Baltic countries, thus showing their unity in their efforts to move towards freedom.

Analysis shows that it was the Baltic Way in the collective historical memory in Latvia that was the constituent element of the rituality of that event. Specifically, it was the repetition of an activity that had crucial significance in the Baltic States pushing for the restoration of independence; at least this was the event with the loudest echo around the world, convincing other nations of the seriousness and peacefulness of Baltic nations' intentions. Therefore, the Sunflower Way was the embodiment of support and hope for Ukraine.

“It is something that unites us”: interaction ritual chains in small groups

The next step was taken on the path to a two-fold community of interactive rites, along with the prevalence of rituals in micro-groups. Borrowing the concept from the foundations of Collins' micro-sociology, at the same time more emphasis is placed here on the two-fold connection between ritual and micro-group. First, interaction between representatives of the two communities in a micro-group is formed due to rituals. Second, new rituals are conducted in micro-groups, which connects the intentionality of representatives of both communities in a common field of understanding.

One example of the first was the Latvian Midsummer festival. The Summer Solstice is undoubtedly one of the main holidays of the year and should be celebrated in nature. In many places, preparations for the celebration are made by repeating traditions and learning songs with the special sing-song cry “līgo!”.

The activities include gathering herbs, watching the sun rise and set, drinking beer by a bonfire, grilling meat, eating traditional Midsummer cheese (with lots of caraway seeds), singing and dancing, jumping over the bonfire, lighting a special bonfire at the end of a pole, and rolling a burning wheel down a hill to see if it will be a good year. Women wear wreaths of meadow flowers, and men with the name Jānis are crowned with a wreath of oak leaves because the oak symbolises strength and power.

However, in 2022, in many *places*, Midsummer festivities were prepared in such a way as to be appealing to Ukrainian war refugees. War refugees in Latvia were accommodated not only in Riga but also in rural tourism hotels, holiday homes on farms, the public buildings of local communities, etc., at the request of the owners. Cares, difficulties and work stress stopped for a moment during the Midsummer festival, in fact it was almost the first moment when representatives of both communities could freely devote themselves to celebrations, communication, and communion in the very favourable summer conditions in nature, with ritual activities that loosened and relaxed those present. Every culture manifests its nature (*physis, natura*, being) in this interaction, which includes connection with nature as a shared value.

Thus, in the Saulkrasti region, the Kalniņi family introduced their celebration traditions to Ukrainian war refugees who live in Latvia: four Ukrainian women live and work on the family farm, but the owner himself still regularly takes cars to Ukraine. To cheer up her employees, owner Klaida decided to show how Latvians celebrate St. John's Day. In the family, four integral parts of the holiday are important at Midsummer: cheese tying, the bonfire, the sun gates, and, when the sun sets, offerings to the fire. Ukrainian volunteers from the association in Riga also participated.

Summarising the opinions of Ukrainians about the holiday, one prevalent opinion is how wonderful the holiday is in nature. There is an exchange of information about how the same holiday – Ivan Kupala Day – is celebrated in Ukraine, how the day of welcoming the Cuckoo is celebrated and what is eaten and drunk (Sidoroviča 2022). In Ukraine, as Violeta Nikolayenko, leader of Berendejka, a Ukrainian folklore group, says, “in the morning, they bring drinks, make wreaths, guys cut wood and make a fire, it takes all night. There is a feast of eggs, oatmeal, pancakes and beer. If it is a rich village, then there is also meat. Otherwise, such a village, such a table.” (TV3 2022).

Elsewhere, Latvian singer of Ukrainian descent Katrīna Gupalo took part in the festivities, bringing with her a Ukrainian doll Bereginya, who symbolically protects the family and the house. Her father, a famous archaeologist, has often talked about similarities in Latvian and Ukrainian culture, even in language. Katrīna says: “It is something that unites us, which is why we support Ukraine so well and warmly now... This closeness comes from deep down, although the temperament of Latvians is northern and for Ukrainians southern, that power is felt, and at the solstice, there are many similar things” (TV3 2022).

New rituals were conducted in newly emerging micro-groups involved in the support of Ukraine, appearing in all of Latvia. At the beginning of March 2022 a Latvian newspaper reported:

When the mind refuses to accept Russia’s brutal invasion of Ukraine, the heart itself goes to war against the occupiers. In a brief time, several initiatives of active Latvian people have gained unfathomable popularity, and hundreds of other people have been involved in the production of useful goods for the defenders of Ukraine: they are sewn, woven, and welded. This production is sent to Ukraine through carefully tested routes, where it is directly at the disposal of the local national guard (Ēvalde 2022).

Many people were involved: municipalities, schools, groups of enthusiasts, artists, handicraftsmen, and volunteers after work in their free time. Students at a secondary school said that “preparing a camouflage net could be compared to making a dream catcher, only this dream is for peace in the world” (Ēvalde 2022).

As winter approached, people began to knit woollen socks with gorgeous Latvian patterns for the defenders of Ukraine: five tonnes, or more than 51,000 pairs, was the generous contribution of Latvian knitters to Ukrainians in the harsh winter of 2022. In autumn we started to find announcements like this on the websites of so many municipalities, organisations, and volunteer groups: “The cultural centre will hold a workshop for making trench candles. Those interested are invited to participate by bringing candles, candle tips, and other paraffin residues, as well as metal cans.”

Many such micro-groups were formed spontaneously when people read advertisements inviting them to participate in, for example, weaving camou-

flage nets or making trench candles, but when they arrived at the indicated place, they met representatives of many other demographic, professional, and social groups, both from Latvia and Ukraine and formed strong subsequent personal bonds. Thus, this cooperation generated various micro-group rituals such as drinking tea together, watching movies together, and other joint events depending on professional affiliation, for example, artists and museum workers in Jūrmala organised art therapy workshops for Ukrainian children to help them cope with the psychological trauma inflicted by the war.

Mutual exchange of culinary traditions is of great importance among the rituals of community acquaintance. Refugees from the Ukrainian war shared their impressions of the products available in Latvia, highlighting the large range of dairy products, especially the Kārums curd confectionary. However, they admitted proudly that there are only a few types of bacon here, compared to the rich offering available in Ukraine, which Latvian people gladly bought. Ukrainian refugees shared their surprise on Facebook that Latvians everywhere eat so much beetroot. However, since many Latvian citizens also gladly supported this website by following and liking it, and providing and distributing information, they explained that this is only the case at the beginning of summer when everyone prepares the so-called cold soups using beetroot and kefir.

One café owner offered *space* and work opportunities to Ukrainian cooks from among the refugees. This place became a place of real ritual visits, visited by several notable people including the current and former presidents of countries supporting Ukraine. People visit this place to embody their desire to help Ukraine financially, because the dishes prepared here from different regions of Ukraine, the variety and taste of which was unknown in Latvia. The food is generally available for donations collected for the Ukrainian army, but visitors give according to their means as much money as possible. Often families spend a long time preparing for this visit, saving money for the donation.

In many *places* in Latvia, women in rural communities organise homemaking courses for Ukrainian refugee women who have settled in Latvia. They learn from Ukrainian women how to make dumplings in the Ukrainian style and teach them how to make traditional Latvian cottage cheese.

By monitoring social networks, especially the Ukrainians in Latvia Facebook group, which is the main site for mutual information and assistance in finding necessary social links, the refugees of the Ukrainian war have ritualised their attitude towards the hospitality of the people of Latvia in a ritual of gratitude.

Ukrainian refugees get to know Latvian society and are moved by this “small nation with a big heart”. Refugees are grateful for everything they receive and grateful for support even after they have returned to their homeland. Many families who took refugees into their homes will have to go to Ukraine after the war to enjoy Ukrainian hospitality as a thanksgiving for their support in a difficult time.

A significant home place for refugees is the House of the Holy Family in Old Riga, where various activities are organised for them by Catholic charity organisation Caritas in cooperation with the Society Integration Foundation. The House provides social mentors for refugees as well as preparing volunteers to work with war refugees. Refugees can take part in Latvian language courses, excursions, and diverse other cultural events such as the Baltica international folklore festival, which took place in summer 2022. The activities continue to increase, looking for ever new ways of support the refugees, for example, at the end of the summer, it was possible to start a psychological assistance program under the leadership of a Ukrainian specialist who had already gained experience of such work coping with trauma caused by the war. People who get involved here do not focus only on classes, they also meet in a micro-group and connect among themselves, with personnel from the House and with members of other micro-groups in the House. The initial discord between the Ukrainian war refugees and political refugees from Russia and Belarus determined was significant. However, over time and with the help of staff at the House, it turned into a mutual reconciliation and the formation of new mixed micro-groups. They also developed their own rituals, such as personal meetings, joint visits to different places in Latvia, etc.

Thus, both at the public level and within micro-groups, ritual activities are established as important in interaction between Latvian society and the community of refugees from the war in Ukraine. Initially, there was a ritual performance with mutual participation which grew into community rituals, which then formed, and continue to form, the Ukraine in Latvia community.

If the meaning of these rituals should be expressed with the definition used here, then it should only be supplemented with a word that, unfortunately, is very often no longer meant implicitly, that is, rituals embody the *human* world construction again and again, helping us to become fully human in an *inhuman world*.

Conclusions

New unpredictable challenges are emerging in migration studies, and in addition to the approaches of human geography, economics, sociology, jurisprudence, and education science, new research perspectives are created by the wider use of humanities. This paper has demonstrated the resource potential of philosophy in the study of migration, inclusion, and integration, focusing on the influx of Ukrainian war refugees to Latvia in 2022 and looking for answers to the question of how to specifically describe this newly arrived community in interaction with Latvian society. From previous studies and everyday observations this article puts forward the thesis that a new social reality is emerging that can be called the community of Ukraine in Latvia. It was necessary to find the methodological equipment to show the genesis of such a community. It is its discovery that convinces us of the scientific validity of talking about a community made up of the majority of Latvian society and refugees from the Ukrainian war. This, in turn, gives the key to understanding exactly the nature of the forced movement of refugees from the Ukrainian war to Latvia. The parallels of historical geopolitical experience and the mutual understanding of the importance of freedom and independence is only an abstract, albeit active, factor in the creation of community. The genesis of communion was demonstrated through description and analysis of rituals of interactivity.

Firstly, the article determines to what extent Latvia society was ready to receive and include refugees from the Ukrainian war. The large number of research sources about well-being during the Covid-19 pandemic was used to determine the level of Latvian society's concern for the common good, concluding how society's social cohesion capital is quite poor. However, no studies have been conducted in Latvia on changes in social values, which would be important to figure out what values changed in society when it was faced with the task of accepting refugees from the Ukrainian war after the pandemic. However, the adaptive transfer of the results of studies of the values of other countries of the Baltic Sea region to the situation of Latvia allows us to conclude that the world of the subject's values has been significantly affected by feelings of vulnerability and threat that arose from the dangers of the pandemic. The start of the war in Ukraine deepened this sense of danger for people in Latvia and became one of the factors that further deepened the understanding of values of the common

good, such as statehood, sovereignty, freedom, etc. Such a transformation of the peculiarities of social cohesion was necessary in order for Latvian society to become much more open to the reception of refugees from the Ukraine war and to start actively helping and supporting.

Secondly, using the principles of topological hermeneutics developed by Jeff Malpas in the study allowed us to engage with the concept of place synthesising human geography and philosophical approaches to show community formation based on culture, which is absent from the migration studies conducted by other disciplines.

Thirdly, the mechanism of community formation was revealed in descriptions of rituals and their analysis. We started with the first communication during the celebration of Easter and moved on to the actualisation of Latvia's intertwined historical memory of the Baltic Way and the experience of Ukraine's hopes in the common ritual of the Sunflower Way. This definition of the ritual, in the article by phenomenologist Jack William published in 2023, is innovative and heuristically fruitful. William's concept of embodied world construction, which, due to characteristic universalism of the philosophical definition, covers various, even contradictory, aspects of the ritual definitions, combines them into a united understanding of human existential reality, i.e. that a person bodily realises the (re)construction of his/her spiritual and the cultural world in ritual.

Fourthly, by applying Randall Collins' sociology of micro-groups, it was possible to show that by participating in rituals, relations between Latvian hosts and Ukrainian refugees are formed in micro-groups, which have always been considered the closest type of human association. The cooperation of different micro-groups also creates its own rituals that strengthen both sides of the community.

Therefore, factors leading to the genesis of the newly emerging Ukraine in Latvia community were discovered by analysis of interactive rituals, confirming the existence of such a social reality, which is focused on integration and inclusion.

In the field of policy, this study reveals the importance of cultural resources in migration management. On the other hand, the field of migration studies encounters the possibilities of the humanities, as well as broadening perspectives on the integration of ritual research in the study of different forms of community.

The experience of this research provides new tools for better migration management, creating much wider possibilities for activities that could be carried out in the cultural field, organising rituals in state and other public celebrations where the formation of micro-groups could be guided and promoted. Likewise, micro-groups in municipal libraries, museums, public events, traditional cleaning of the environment, and individual public centres, etc., would create community rituals along with a sense of home for the refugees. As the Ukrainian proverb says: “*Ljudina stvorena dlja schastja, jak ptah dlja pol’oty*” (A person is created for happiness the way a bird is made for flying).

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EPIDEMICS IN THE VILAYET OF KOSOVO (1877–1912)

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Abstract: With the increase in activities and interaction between societies, the rate of spread of epidemics has also increased. Given that the physical structure and location of the Vilayet of Kosovo during the Ottoman period was in the middle of the Balkan Peninsula, connecting the land routes with the Central Europe, it had become a destination where epidemics spread easily. The main purpose of this paper is to analyse and evaluate epidemiological diseases in the Vilayet of Kosovo such as cholera, smallpox, dysentery, rubella. The main objective of this work is to cover the years 1877–1912. This paper, which deals with the epidemic in the Vilayet of Kosovo, investigates the historical background of the conduct of the central and local authorities as far as health policies and public health were concerned in the face of deadly infectious diseases. At this point, administrative and sanitary measures taken by the relevant institutions in the Vilayet of Kosovo had been identified, such as the employment of health personnel, the distribution of vaccines, border blockage, the restriction of the movement of people and putting them in quarantine. In addition, attention has been paid to the assessment and analysis of health services and hospital infrastructure in the

Vilayet of Kosovo. This study, which contributes to the knowledge of the history of epidemiology and public health in the Vilayet of Kosovo, is mainly supported by documents from the Ottoman Archives of the Presidency in Istanbul. In addition, studies, theses and research papers on epidemiology and public health in the Ottoman Empire were used.

Keywords: Vilayet of Kosovo, epidemics, health services, health management, hospitals

Introduction

The years 1877–1912 constitute the most important period of economic-social, cultural, ethno-cultural and political development of the population of this area (the Vilayet of Kosovo) from the time of its inclusion in the Ottoman Empire until its separation from the Ottoman rule. During this period, the Vilayet of Kosovo saw development of capitalistic commercial-monetary relations, which brought to the surface a bourgeois stratum of Albanian citizenry, and at the same time raised Albanian national consciousness, which culminated with the Albanian League of Prizren in 1878. During this period, a small stratum of intelligentsia educated in foreign schools also appeared, which then began to raise the issue of recognising the Albanian nation and the Albanian language. (Rrahimi 1969: 3, 191) For the first time the name of the Vilayet of Kosovo is mentioned in the Ottoman State Yearbook, in the year 1295 Hijri, i.e. 1878 according to the Gregorian calendar. (Salname-i Devlet-i Aliye-i Osmaniye 1878: 334) While the first Yearbook of the Vilayet of Kosovo dates to 1296 Hijri, i.e. 1879 according to the Gregorian calendar. (Kosova Vilayeti Salnamesi, 1879) There are many interpretations of the founding of the Vilayet of Kosovo. Shemseddin Sami has mentioned the name of the Vilayet of Kosovo in the minutes of the Assembly of 1877. (Sami 1896: 3748) The researcher Skender Rizaj also agrees with the same date marking the establishment of the Vilayet of Kosovo, while emphasising that the first centre of the Vilayet of Kosovo was Sofia. (Rizaj 1970: 666) The researcher Shukri Rrahimi points out that the Vilayet of Kosovo was founded in 1868 with Prizren as its centre. (Rrahimi 1969: 12), while according to the Turkish Encyclopaedia the Vilayet of Kosovo was founded in 1877. (Kosova Vilayeti 1975: 245) Since most researchers share the same consensus as to the year of establishment of the Vilayet of Kosovo, we are determined to start our study from 1877, when indeed the Vilayet of Kosovo was founded within

the Ottoman Empire, with our study ending in 1912, when the period of the Ottoman rule over these territories ends. During the 1877–1912 period, the administrative structure of the Vilayet of Kosovo underwent major changes. In 1878, the Vilayet of Kosovo consisted of the following sanjaks: the Sanjaks of Prishtina, Prizren, Skopje, Novi Pazar, Nis, Sehir Koy and Dibra. (Salname-i Devlet-i Aliye-i Osmaniye 1878: 336–339) In 1912, when the period of our study ends, the Vilayet of Kosovo consisted of the following sanjaks: the Sanjaks of Skopje, Prishtina, Senica, Peja, Taslica and Prizren. (Salname-i Devlet-i Aliye-i Osmaniye 1912: 742–756) According to the Yearbook of the Vilayet of Kosovo, in 1879 the Vilayet of Kosovo had a population of 960,156. Of these, 500,787 were Albanian, 145,786 were Serbian, 180,505 were Bulgarian and Macedonian, 43,156 were Turkish, 71,030 were Bosnian, 1,116 were Jewish, 17,776 were Roma. (Kosova Vilayeti Salnamesi 1879: 121–123) In 1893, the Vilayet of Kosovo had a population of 847,419. (Kosova Vilayet Salnamesi 1893: 220–223) In 1906–1907, the Vilayet of Kosovo had a population of 671,653, of which 423,393 were men, and 248,260 were women. (Karpat 2017: 179) Some of the most important events at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century that had an impact on the political, social and economic life of the Vilayet of Kosovo are the Treaty of San Stefano¹, the Congress of Berlin², the Albanian League of Prizren³ and the London Conference of Ambassadors.⁴

Until now, scholars from south-eastern Europe have focused their research on the study of political, diplomatic and economic history, as opposed to the history of science and medicine, which has remained an unexplored field. This paper is the first step in the study and analysis of a segment of the history of medicine in the Vilayet of Kosovo in the scientific field. The researchers of this region consider such topics to be peripheral and not of interest for research and study, rather, they focus on dealing with topics of a political nature, as a result of great divergences and the historical memory accompanied by continuous conflicts and wars that had occurred by the end of the last century. Nationalism has had an immense effect on the way history has been written and interpreted by historians in the Balkan, often in a non-objective manner. In the Balkans, nationalism has promoted the ideology of national identities, thus guiding researchers to focus on topics of a national character, including wars, uprisings, assemblies, etc. Nationalist feeling has influenced historians in the interpretation of historical events, adapting them to national narratives and often the daily policies of their government institutions. As a result, national-

ism has used history for political purposes, while nationalist politicians and leaders have used historical narratives to justify their political actions. This is also proven by the recent wars in the Balkans. Consequently, the documents dealing with the history of medicine in this nationalist-political constellation went unnoticed or were even overlooked by researchers.

If we take Kosovo as a specific example, the lack of funds for research is a challenge faced by researchers in our country. Thus, as a result of limited projects and scarce funds, such topics have not received proper attention. In addition, the lack of archival documents is another important factor in not studying the history of science and medicine in south-east Europe, and Kosovo in particular. The archives of Kosovo, Albania and North Macedonia don't contain documents that deal with events of such historical character. Thus, this constitutes a great challenge for scientists, historians and researchers who are interested in studying a particular period, or specific topics like ours. For the purposes of dealing with this topic, we have focused on the Ottoman Archive of the Presidency in Istanbul, which is a rich treasure of information about the Ottoman period and the Albanians, and in particular about aspects of the research into medical history in Kosovo during this period. The Ottoman Archive serves as a fundamental resource for researchers investigating, analysing and assessing historical and cultural matters pertaining to the Ottoman period. Ottoman documents are a trustworthy source that connect historians, scholars and readers with the past and the present. All the documents we have analysed and evaluated in this paper are written in the Turkish-Ottoman language, which was the official and administrative language of the Ottoman Empire, a combination of today's Turkish, Arabic and Persian languages. Due to the complexity of the Ottoman language and its special alphabet which contains Arabic letters, translation, interpretation, study and research are among the serious challenges faced by those who know this language. Since these Turkish-Ottoman language speakers were and are few in our area, the study of topics such as 'epidemics in the Vilayet of Kosovo' has been difficult to accomplish. We came to the idea for such a topic after we found by chance documents from the Ottoman Archive. Upon conducting a meticulous evaluation and thorough investigation of these documents, which constituted a whole on its own, we realised that the data discovered provide valuable insights into health practices, infectious disease management, and the health care system of the Vilayet of Kosovo during the Ottoman period. We assessed that the study of epidemics in Vilayet of Kosovo

during the Ottoman era is extremely important in terms of public health, the effect of epidemiology on history, the prevention of diseases and research on the effects of disease.

This paper is of value to both public health researchers and those analysing health care performance and health policy. The study of epidemics in the Villayet of Kosovo shall serve as a reflection of significant historical events, thus helping us to evaluate the influence of epidemiology on other historical events. If our study reveals successful disease prevention practices, this information can be applied practically in the field of public health. Furthermore, when evaluating the recent protocols and practices put in place during the Covid-19 pandemic, it could potentially serve as a benchmark for comparison. The study of this topic assists us in comprehending the changes in lifestyle and social practice that have influenced the development of epidemics. Epidemics have deeply affected the Vilayet of Kosovo, with substantial consequences on both the people and the economy. Consequently, the study of these effects within Kosovo contributes to understanding the social and economic changes of that era. Our research provides a new perspective, a fresh viewpoint and valuable insights into the history and culture of this period, potentially yielding important implications for both public health and historical research.

A brief history of how health services were organised in the Vilayet of Kosovo

Health services during the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the Vilayet of Kosovo were limited and poor compared to modern standards. Starting with the small number of hospitals, which meant limited health care with unadvanced medical techniques and a small number of doctors. According to the first statistics of the Ottoman Empire, in 1897, there were two hospitals in total in the Vilayet of Kosovo. (Güran 1997: 52) The cities where these two hospitals were located were not mentioned, and the number of hospitals for the Vilayet of Kosovo was small. Through the Ottoman documents, we note that the hospitals in the Vilayet of Kosovo were located in large cities and were part of the health care system. Between 1896 and 1900 the Vilayet of Kosovo had a total population of 989,698. (Prifti 2014: 506) Comparing the demographic data in the Vilayet of Kosovo with the small number of hospitals, we estimate

that access to health services was limited for many residents of the Vilayet of Kosovo, especially those in rural areas. In addition to the small number of hospitals, there were also very few health care staff in 1897, which constituted a great challenge to the provision of health services in the Vilayet of Kosovo. Health care staff consisted of four people including doctors, surgeons and 1 caregiver. (Güran 1997: 52) This lack of medical staff is also mentioned in Ottoman documents. Although, there was an attempt to appoint a doctor in some districts and sub-districts of Kosovo, it was not possible for this request to be fulfilled by the Ottoman authorities. The lack of doctors affected the health care of the population of the Vilayet of Kosovo and the ability of the empire to treat diseases in its vilayets. (BOA.DH.İD.136.5.)

The total number of beds in hospitals in the Vilayet of Kosovo was not mentioned in the statistics, although the number of beds reserved for patients with the most serious illnesses was mentioned, at two, with the number of other beds being three, making a total of five beds. (Güran 1997: 52) The small number of beds was in line with the limited and scarce number of hospital centres. In the Vilayet of Kosovo's hospitals, the number of patients was 11, all of whom were men, while the number of patients admitted during 1897 was 97, of whom seven were women and 90 men. (Güran 1997: 53) To make a small digression from these data we see that the largest number of patients who were hospitalised men, women did not go to public hospitals at the time as a result of the rules and social customs of the time, not only in the Vilayet of Kosovo but throughout the Ottoman Empire. From this small number of female patients we understand that health care in the Vilayet of Kosovo was rather oriented towards home-care doctors and traditional methods of healing. Based on the fact that the number of beds and hospitals was small, women were not supposed to have separate rooms. This approach at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century is an expression of the traditional social structure in which health care for women had a private dimension. In 1897, 66 men and seven women were cured in the hospitals of the Vilayet of Kosovo, a total of 73 cured patients, while the number of patients who died was 23 men. (Güran 1997: 54)

During the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century there was no structured system of hospital expenses as we have today with modern health care systems. However, through a document dated June 17th, 1903, we recorded that one of the hospitals mentioned in the statistics of 1897 was located in Prishtina.⁵ The document further states that the Accounting Office of

Prishtina was advised to allocate 9,500 kuruş to the authorities of Prishtina for the expenditures of the hospital. Hence, we understand that hospital expenditure in the Vilayet of Kosovo was not organised in a systematic and standardised way, as they are today, where allocated funds are distributed regularly directly to hospital centres, they were instead allocated in a hierarchical manner. (BOA.TFR.I.KV.228.22775.)

In addition to a hospital in Prishtina, at the beginning of the 20th century there was another hospital in the city of Peja.⁶ According to correspondence we have from the Ottoman Archive, on February 15th, 1903, the governor of Peja requested that the building used as a military hospital to be used as a flour factory due to the winter season and consequent shortages encountered. From this we understand that the conditions in these hospitals were not at a proper level in terms of providing health services. (BOA.TFR.I.KV.8.797.) After about a month, on March 19th, 1903, the Peja weapons depot, the construction of which remained unfinished, was converted into a hospital and patients were transferred there. (BOA.DH.MKT.8.797.) Therefore, based on a series of documents from the Ottoman Archive, we understand that we had an improvised hospital in the city of Peja. However, after about 4 years, correspondence with the governor of Peja shows that costs for the reconstruction of the hospital, with 60 beds, were included in the budget for 1907/8. (BOA.TFR.I.KV.216.21523.) In the case of Peja hospital, we understand that despite existing structures, such as public buildings and the weapons depot, not being designed for health purposes, these structures were suitable. When improvised hospitals are mentioned, we immediately think of hygiene and health care, which under these conditions were limited and constituted a challenge in themselves.

A photograph from the collection of Abdülhamid II was found in the library of rare books at the University of Istanbul showing the first military hospital in Mitrovica district, with 230 beds, one of the largest hospitals in the Vilayet of Kosovo, where, in addition to soldiers, the citizens from that area also received health care services. The exact years of construction of this hospital are missing, but based on the general years given in this photo, and using the historical context, this hospital is thought to have been constructed around the beginning of the 20th century. (İstanbul Üniversitesi, Kütüphane ve Dokümantasyon Daire Başkanlığı 2022)

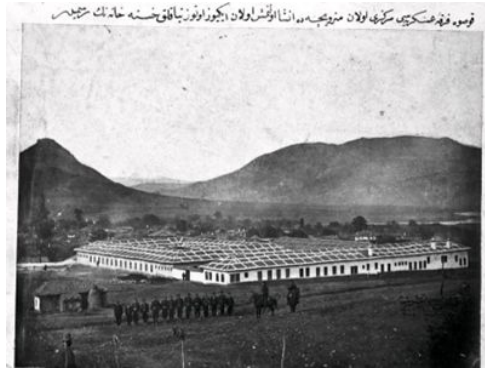


Figure 1. Military Hospital with 230 beds in Mitrovica, Kosovo. Collection II. Abdülhamid (1842–1918)

Although Mitrovica⁷ was not one of the main or largest centres in the Vilayet of Kosovo, hospitals during the Ottoman period were spread over different territories and there were differences as to their size and function. The hospital in Mirovica district was bigger than the hospital in the Sanjak of Skopje, which, according to Ottoman documents, initially served as a hospital with 120 beds, although the number of beds later increased to 150. Six physicians, one pharmacist, one head nurse and 22 nurses worked in the hospital at the time. (Türkmen 2004: 510) The construction of hospitals in certain locations, such as Mitrovica, had a strategic dimension since this city also constituted the north-eastern border of the administrative division of the Vilayet of Kosovo. Given that Mitrovica hospital was a military one, from a strategic point of view it ensured that Ottoman Empire soldiers who were wounded or sick were treated and returned to the army as quickly as possible. This made the Ottoman army more efficient and more flexible in action. At a social level Mitrovica hospital encouraged the loyalty of the population to the Ottoman authorities, which would have translated into stability and harmony in the Vilayet of Kosovo. Controlling pandemics during this period was one of the most important elements in the management of the spread of disease.

Epidemic diseases and their management in the Vilayet of Kosovo

Epidemics and infectious diseases have appeared in many countries at different periods of time, thereby transforming the social, economic, political and military policies of those countries. Migration, wars and environmental and air pollution are the main causes of the spread of disease. For the Vilayet of Kosovo in particular, and the Ottoman Empire in general in the 19th century, overpopulation in certain areas, trade, poor hygienic conditions, endemic disease and the lack of developed health systems, as addressed earlier, were the main factors in the rapid and deadly spread of infectious diseases. (Bingül 2020: 78)

Historically, diseases and epidemics have had a significant impact on the history of the Ottoman Empire, during different periods. (Tiryakia 2022: 356) Diseases that cause mass deaths or permanent changes to the human body can be listed as follows: plague, smallpox (variola), scarlet fever, measles (rubeola), cholera, typhoid, malaria, dysentery, chickenpox (varicella), mumps (parotitis), and whooping cough (pertussis). (Bingül 2020: 78)

Some of the infectious or epidemic diseases documented by the Ottoman documents in Vilayet of Kosovo in the period under study are cholera, plague, typhus, smallpox and measles. (Çatal 2021: 7) In the Ottoman sources, plague was known by two names, plague and pestilence. Plague was called the plague of the glands, while pestilence included all contagious diseases. Epidemics and plagues broke out in overcrowded settlements and arterial trade routes. Because sanitary conditions in the settlements were poor, it hit the poor sections of the population hardest. Umbrella termin for this time plague was the black death. (Krasniqi 2015: 206, 211)⁸ While some of the symptoms of these diseases are transmitted to adults, many were mainly seen in children, and so accordingly the relevant Ottoman literature of the period usually uses the heading 'paediatric diseases'. An example is smallpox,⁹ which is a severe febrile disease in children causing reddening of the skin on the hands, face, arms and legs within two to four days and can be deadly. (Bingül 2020: 83)

The presence of contagious diseases, especially smallpox, in the Vilayet of Kosovo was an important medical and social phenomenon at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. Based on a document from the Ministry of the Interior dated November 8th, 1890, the presence of smallpox is

recorded in the Vilayet of Kosovo, in the city of Peja. The document states that as a result of smallpox, the number of deaths was high. (BOA.DH.MKT.1779.46.) Since over the years there was a high number of those affected and those who suffered fatal consequences, the authorities in the Vilayet of Kosovo underlined the need to take serious measures to prevent the outbreak and spread of smallpox. In addition to the large number of deaths in the Vilayet of Kosovo, the epidemic also affected the local economy and the social stability of the population. The occurrence of smallpox in a village in the Vilayet of Kosovo would have been a worrying and important event for the authorities concerned. Therefore, the Kosovo inspectorate took steps to address the occurrence of smallpox in the village of Iskorovishte (also known as Skorobishte) in the sanjak of Prizren. Through identification of this location, the inspectorate indirectly requested intervention and action to prevent the spread of the disease. (BOA.DH.MKT.308.12.)

Due to the spread of various epidemics in the Ottoman Empire in general, and in the Vilayet of Kosovo in particular, vaccination¹⁰ was an important tool for preventing contagious diseases. Since smallpox spread more among young people, the vaccination of students in schools was necessary and vaccination regulations were put in place that excluded those who were not vaccinated from schools and government services. The reason that these two institutions were designated related to the fact that a larger number of people gravitated here, which meant the faster spread of the disease. (Bingül 2020: 83) Vaccinating officials had a big role in combating epidemic diseases, especially when society came up against smallpox epidemics. (Çatal 2021: 9)

Vaccination was not a common practice in the Vilayet of Kosovo in the second half of the 19th century, although by the end of the century local authorities had adopted various health care measures to fight epidemic disease. Therefore, the first document in the Ottoman Archive we come across on this issue dates to November 10th, 1890. In this document, the local authorities registered an urgent request with the Ottoman Empire Ministry of Health to treat the spread of smallpox in the city of Peja. Several letters were sent by medical practices to the authorities talking about the spread of the disease and mentioning the demand for vaccination in the city of Peja. (BOA.DH.MKT.1779.132.) Since smallpox had broken out in different centres in the Vilayet of Kosovo, there was a demand for vaccines from other areas as well. This is recorded in a document dated April 24th, 1896, when there were urgent requests from the city of

Prishtina for the distribution of vaccines to prevent smallpox from spreading. The demand for vaccination tells us not only about vaccines, it was also tells us about the medical practices of the time for the treatment and prevention of smallpox. (BOA.DH.TMİK.M.5.20.) Although the demand for vaccines in the Vilayet of Kosovo was huge, the Ottoman authorities had said that just 150 vaccines would be sent to Kosovo every week. (BOA.DH.MKT.2193.2) The Ottoman Empire's Ministry of Internal Affairs had published statistics on the vaccination of children in the Vilayet of Kosovo. According to a document dated 1901, 1,486 children were vaccinated within a period of three months. (BOA.DH.MKT.2524.34.) However, there was reluctance about vaccination, and it was thought that only children should receive it. There was prejudice against the vaccine, with some thinking it brought disease to society, something that related a lack of information, and also to disinformation. This is something that we can also observe today in relation to vaccination against Covid-19, although generally speaking scientific information has dominated over such beliefs (Bingül 2020: 85).

Dysentery or infectious diarrhoea was one of the other common diseases that was very widespread in the Vilayet of Kosovo. This is also supported by Ottoman documents, such as one dated September 11th, 1893, where presence of this disease is recorded in the village of Raçë in the Kaza (District) of Gjakova, an important town in the Vilayet of Kosovo. Furthermore, this document from the Ottoman Archive tells of the sending of a doctor to this village where dysentery appeared, as well as talking about the necessary sanitary measures that were taken to prevent the spread of dysentery to the population of the area. (BOA.DH.MKT.130.37.)

Diphtheria was another serious disease that spread easily and was present in the Vilayet of Kosovo. This rapidly spreading and deadly disease was a serious concern for local and central authorities. Therefore, the government was forced to engage personnel from the non-medical field in the Vilayet of Kosovo to manage the situation. The engagement of these non-medical personnel had a positive effect on the management of diseases and the functioning of the health system. Of course, this extended to the aspect of health education and communication aimed at educating people about the risk of diseases such as diphtheria and about the practices of due care for these contagious diseases. (BOA.DH.MKT.2328 44.)

That the epidemic situation in the Vilayet of Kosovo was difficult is shown by Ottoman documents such as that of April 6th, 1900. The sanitary inspectorate as an important institution, whose task was to monitor public health and prevent the spread of diseases in the Vilayet Kosovo, says that diseases spread differently in different areas of the Vilayet. Based on analysis and trends related to the spread of epidemic infections, the worst affected areas were the sanjaks of Prishtina, Prizren and Peja, and the districts of Gjilan and Mitrovica, including towns that are today part of Serbia and North Macedonia. This report, compiled by the Vilayet of Kosovo's sanitary inspectorate, included the dispatch of medical personnel to those places that lacked those personnel. (BOA.BEO.1468.110036.)

Cholera – a severe and rapidly spreading bacterial disease – was present in the Vilayet of Kosovo in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Government officials were cautious in taking measures to prevent the spread of diseases such as cholera. One of the measures taken in the Vilayet of Kosovo in November 1886 was the restriction of movement. The local and central authorities stopped movement in the border regions in order to prevent the spread of cholera to other vilayets. (BOA.MV.13.14.) In addition, Ottoman documents show that the Ottoman Empire also banned the passage of people from the Vilayet of Kosovo and other areas to Serbia, although an agreement was reached between Ottoman and Serbian authorities to facilitate movement between the Vilayet of Kosovo and Serbia when the disease situation did not constitute a danger at worrying levels. However, in case of suspected epidemics, the institutions were alerted and special measures were adopted for border control. (BOA.HR.İD.60.65.) Managing cholera was a serious health concern for the Ottoman Empire, in response to which regulations were introduced both to prevent, and to treat patients with, this deadly disease. A document from 1892 states that a copy of the regulations for the treatment of cholera would be published in the provincial newspaper of the Vilayet of Kosovo. (BOA.BEO.89.6605.)

On December 5th, 1908, the Inspectorate of the Vilayet of Kosovo sent a letter to the governor of Kosovo, stating that travellers coming from Bulgaria had reported occurrence of cholera there, and that therefore sanitary laws must be implemented immediately. However, the inspectorate was of the opinion that applying such measures to Bulgarian travellers could be interpreted otherwise by the Bulgarian government, and so to avoid any misunderstanding the Ottoman Empire's Minister of Internal Affairs should be consulted and the issue be handled in accordance with his reply. (BOA.TFR.I.KV.210.20944.) Ottoman

documents show that the Montenegrin government was not so careful in relation to its neighbours. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the institutions of Montenegro had claimed that in the Vilayet of Kosovo, in the districts of Gucia and Berane, smallpox and cowpox in animals had spread, and so they had decided to quarantine the borders of these districts. However, the Vilayet of Kosovo had reported that smallpox was not at a worrying enough level as to require quarantine. (BOA. HR.TH.313.61.)

One of the other measures that the Ottoman authorities had taken when managing the spread of cholera in the Vilayet of Kosovo was dispatching medical personnel to areas where there was an outbreak of the disease. Ottoman documents point out the presence of Cholera in the city of Peja, resulting in a doctor named Fejzullah Bey being appointed to manage the spread of cholera in this area. Doctor Fejzullah had the task of identifying those affected, isolating the cases, treating the sick, and informing and educating the public about the disease, disease prevention and health practices. This would have an effect on the community and on the prevention of epidemics in the Vilayet of Kosovo. The sending of funds and financial resources was another attempt by the central Ottoman authorities to manage epidemic disease in the Vilayet of Kosovo. The same document points out that a lot of money was sent to help with the protection of public health and fight against the spread of dangerous diseases in Peja. (BOA.DH.İD.50.25.) We have a copy of a telegram received in 1912 by the Governor of Peja regarding the allocation of funds to prevent the outbreak of cholera and about the supply of drugs and other necessary things in case of a cholera outbreak, while the Vilayet of Kosovo had also requested the Ministry of Internal Affairs delivered 500 kuruş as soon as possible. (BOA. DH.MUİ.156.158.)

Through the Ottoman documents, we have understood that the central and local authorities implemented a series of measures to prevent epidemics in the Vilayet of Kosovo. But as to how effective these measures were is another important horizon highlighted by Ottoman documents. Measures taken by the Ottoman institutions for the prevention and management of epidemics in the Vilayet of Kosovo had been effective. An Ottoman document dated October 11th, 1911, pointed out that an outbreak of cholera in the Vilayet of Kosovo had been prevented as a result of the measures taken by government authorities. This report from the Ottoman Archive came as a result of the rejection of the need for help by the Bulgarian Association because the

epidemic was under control, and there was no need for help from foreigners. (BOA.HR.SFR.04.857.78.) In order to understand further the positive effect of the measures taken by the institutions of the time, I will dwell on some other measures taken in the Vilayet of Kosovo. Ottoman documents indicate that significant approach and due care was obvious with the aim of preventing deadly diseases in the Vilayet of Kosovo. To illustrate this better, I will refer to a document from the Ottoman Archive that says that a lady who had travelled by train and stopped in the district of Prishtina (Zibifçe), was supposedly a carrier of an infectious disease, and that therefore the relevant authorities had sent her for further examination; after evaluation by a doctor, the lady concerned had returned home. (BOA.BEO.76.5646.)

Apart from cholera, the central and local authorities also took measures against other diseases such as bacterial scarlet fever. According to an Ottoman document, this disease was present in the city of Prizren and for this, adequate measures were taken to manage and prevent its spread. (BOA.DH.MKT.770.44.)

Rubeola, also known as measles, is an infectious viral diseases that was present in 1895 in the Vilayet of Kosovo, as Ottoman documents show. Meanwhile, the Ottoman army deployed there made a great contribution to the management and prevention of rubeola. Ottoman documents, such as the one from 1895, show the contribution of an army pharmacist from the fourth battalion, Ali Efendi, in the treatment of rubeola in the town of Plava and in the district of Gucia. For his service in the treatment of rubeola he was given an award. (BOA. DH.MKT.339.11.)

From a public health point of view, quarantine was the first important step taken by the Ottoman Empire to limit the spread of infectious diseases. (Yilmaz 2017: 175) When epidemic diseases such as cholera, plague, smallpox and typhus appeared, first a city was quarantined, and then the sick were taken under observation by the municipal physicians and were treated. (Çatal 2021: 9) According to documents from the Ottoman Archive in Istanbul this measure took place in the Vilayet of Kosovo. In the Vilayet of Kosovo on May 6th, 1893, people coming from the Austro–Hungarian Empire had to undergo a medical check-up for no less than twelve hours and were quarantined in Kosovo for 48 hours in quarantine centres. (BOA.DH.MKT.2050.12.) Ottoman administration had determined the location of the quarantine was to be in Zibfçe in Kosovo (Ayar 2014: 21) as a consequence of the outbreak of cholera in Romania. A doctor at the quarantine centre in the Vilayet of Kosovo, Robert

Mayer Efendi, was appointed quarantine doctor in Thessaloniki. Robert Mayer served as a doctor in a health institution built on the coast near the main port in Thessaloniki, with the aim of allowing passengers and staff who were infected with contagious diseases during the cruise to pass the quarantine period and receive medical treatment. (BOA. BEO. 258.19331.) We recently experienced the practice of enforced quarantine with the Covid-19 pandemic, where quarantine and full restriction on movement at borders served as key tools in curbing the spread of the virus. Although there are significant differences between the quarantine of the Ottoman period and quarantine of the current period, today's quarantine has been a hard measure for the community that has had an impact on the social, economic and psychological dimensions of people's lives. To better illustrate the impact on the economic dimension I will dwell on a document from 1911 that highlights a ban on the export of food products. The ban, in this case on grapes, prohibited their movement from Thessaloniki to Bulgaria and was related to the outbreak of cholera in Thessaloniki and Kosovo. (BOA.HR.SFR.04.682.76.) The ban had consequences for producers because of the lack of a foreign market, while it would also have had an impact on the domestic economy, for example such bans were followed by increases in the prices of certain products.

An interesting practice introduced by central Ottoman institutions was the pardoning of incarcerated people who suffered from serious or incurable diseases. Pardoning prisoners due to serious illnesses in the Vilayet of Kosovo is recorded through archival documents. On January 10th, 1888, Mehmed Fuadi, who had been sentenced to three years for murder by the Vilayet of Kosovo's Criminal Chamber of the Court of Appeal was pardoned for the sentence in the amount of six months due to his illness. (BOA. Y.A.RES.41.16.) Such practices were followed by relevant institutions in the Vilayet of Kosovo in different periods. For example on March 24th, 1912, three prisoners received pardons because they were suffering from incurable diseases and they were released from prison. (BOA.MV.227.48.) This practice is evidence of a flexible, practical and humane judicial system that, for the time concerned, I consider to be in contrast to legal systems outside the Ottoman Empire.

Conclusion

Epidemic diseases have threatened societies in almost every period of history. Between 1877 and 1912 the Vilayet of Kosovo faced a serious challenge in the field of public health. Epidemics, as in every country, brought political, social and economic problems to Kosovo as well. In this context, infectious diseases such as cholera, leprosy, dysentery and rubeola shaped behaviour and political-social relations in the Vilayet of Kosovo. Based on a general evaluation of the data from Ottoman documents, we estimate that in the face of infectious disease the Vilayet of Kosovo had limited and insufficient infrastructure, and therefore health care services, as a result of the lack of primary, secondary and tertiary health care resources. The medical infrastructure in the Vilayet of Kosovo during this 35-year period is characterised by a small number of public hospitals and a small number of medical personnel in proportion to the population and their health needs. The limited number of resources and medical infrastructure in the Vilayet of Kosovo resulted in low access to health care services. Thus, in most cases, the sick were not treated in health institutions. Rather, there was a focused on traditional home medicine, including the use of plant, meaning that the majority did not receive adequate medical treatment. Based on analysis of the data from the documents from the Ottoman Archive, we noted delays as to organisation, administration and funding of the health care system in the Vilayet of Kosovo. The local authorities faced a hierarchical system and delays from Istanbul in responding to their requests for financial assistance or even for doses of vaccine. The lack of equality, access and efficiency was typical for the health services in Kosovo. Thus, financial difficulties, lack of medical personnel, lack of development of methods and modern medicine, low awareness of health education, the unhealthy life of the population and uncontrolled foods were some of the factors that gave rise to outbreaks of infectious disease in the Vilayet of Kosovo. However, the central authorities, in cooperation with local authorities, took some general measures to manage the spread of deadly diseases in the Vilayet of Kosovo, for example increasing the capacity of health services, increasing the number of health personnel, building new and improvised hospitals, vaccination, limiting the movement of people and quarantine. Although the epidemiological situation is a clear indication that the measures taken to prevent the epidemic were often insuf-

ficient, the Sanitary Inspectorate of Kosovo tried to play a constructive role by making recommendations for adequate health care education on vaccination, quarantine and cordon sanitaire. Although epidemic diseases had negative consequences for the Vilayet of Kosovo, we should not overlook the fact that some measures taken against them were positively reflected in the construction of health infrastructure no matter how modest this was in the field of health.

Notes

¹ The Treaty of San Stefano, signed on March 3rd, 1878. According to Article 3 of the Treaty, Serbia would receive an expanded territory and annex the northern and north-eastern parts of Kosovo up to Mitrovica, where the Albanian majority lived. The Vilayet of Kosovo, according to Article 15 of the Treaty, would be governed by special commissions, mainly composed of locals. The decisions of these commissions would be submitted to the Ottoman state before implementation, and would enter into force after the meeting of the Ottoman Empire with Russia. (Gençer 1991: 225); (Preliminary Treaty of Peace between Russia and Turkey 1891: 2672–2674); (Buda 2006: 344); (Aktepe 2002: 218).

² The Berlin Conference Treaty was signed on July 13th, 1878. According to Article 25 of the Berlin Treaty, the administration of the Yeni Pazar sanjak of the Vilayet of Kosovo was left to the Ottoman Empire. However, Austria had the authority to have soldiers and to build military and trade routes throughout the sanjak of Yeni Pazar. The Gucia area, which were part of the Vilayet of Kosovo, were left to Montenegro. This concession, which allowed the delivery of an area inhabited by Albanians to a Slavic state, caused widespread and deep dissatisfaction among the Albanians of Kosovo. (Gencer, 1992, s. 516; Treaty between Great Britain, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Russia, and Turkey for the Settlement of Affairs in the East: Signed at Berlin, July 13, 1878, 1908: 412–413; Malcolm 2011: 268–269)

³ One of the most important events of the 19th century for Albanians was the establishment of the Albanian League of Prizren. The Albanians, opposing the provisions of the Treaty of San Stefano, united for the creation of a General Albanian National League, regardless of vilayets, social status, political views or religion. The plenary meeting opened in Prizren on June 10th, 1878, three days before the Congress of Berlin convened. The League of Prizren was a political-military organisation that essentially ensured the national rights, autonomy and territorial integrity of the Albanian nation. With the League of Prizren, the Albanian National Renaissance reached its highest peak of development between 1878 and 1881 and spread to all political, international, diplomatic and cultural areas of society. (Frashëri 2008: 197; Shqipërisë 2002: 130)

⁴ During the Balkan Wars, the Serbs occupied almost all of Kosovo. The Ottoman army retreated south. This invasion finally separated the field of Kosovo and its Vilayet from the Ottoman Empire. After the separation from the Ottoman rule, the Vilayet of Kosovo was not included within Albania. With the Treaty of London on May 30th, 1913, it came under the rule of the Serbian Kingdom. (Aktepe 2002: 218; Ünlü 2015: 41)

⁵ Prishtina was an important centre in the Vilayet of Kosovo. Between 1878 and 1888 it was the home of the governor of Kosovo. In the last periods of the empire, it continued to be the administrative centre of the sanjak, with five kazas and 866 villages. In 1895, the Sanjak of Prishtina had a population of 56,291. Today, Prishtina has a rich cultural and architectural heritage from the Ottoman period, characterised by mosques, hammams, fountains, residential houses, clock towers, the museum of Kosovo, the tomb of Sultan Murad, etc. (Kiel 2007: 346–347)

⁶ Peja was one of the important sanjaks in the Vilayet of Kosovo. In the second half of the 19th century, Peja as an administrative and economic centre had 500 shops in different parts of the city, in addition to 10 inns, a state mansion, a hammam, 12 mosques, two madrassas, 12 primary schools, a secondary school, over 20 factories, a barracks, two churches and two clock towers. (Ramadani 2018: 138–139) (Kiel 2000: 367)

⁷ Mitrovica was one of the northern cities in Kosovo Province. Mitrovica was situated on the border between the Vilayet of Bosnia and the Vilayet of Kosovo. After the annexation of Bosnia by Austria–Hungary, Mitrovica remained within the framework of the Sanjak of Novi Pazar, and was known as a place of export. A Russian Consulate was opened in Mitrovica in 1902. Today, Mitrovica has a rich cultural and architectural heritage from the Ottoman period, characterised by mosques, hammams, residential houses, tekkes, etc. (Ejupi 2018: 174–177)

⁸ Black death refers specifically to the plague of the 1340s in Europe.

⁹ The word variola was commonly used for smallpox and was introduced by Bishop Marius of Avenches (near Lausanne, Switzerland) in 570. It derives from the Latin word *varius*, meaning ‘stained’ or from *varus*, meaning ‘mark on the skin’.

¹⁰ Vaccination with the variolation method was conducted for a long time in the Ottoman Empire, which meant the transmission of the smallpox virus from one person to another through skin. This method of vaccination is shown in a letter sent from Edirne by Wortley Montagu, the wife of the British ambassador at the time, to her friend Miss Chiswell in England in 1717. This method saw the beginning of an important and effective period in the history of vaccination against smallpox. In her letter, Montagu wrote that smallpox vaccination had long been done in the Ottoman Empire and that she had vaccinated her child. This letter was important as it explained in detail how human-to-human smallpox vaccination was administered in Anatolia, 81 years before

Edward Jenner discovered the modern smallpox vaccine and brought the practice to Europe. (Wharnclyffe 1855: 308)

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COVID-19 in Saaremaa. Limited Resources and the Mechanisms for Healing and Prevention

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Abstract: COVID-19 challenged the entire population of the world, affected everyone, and all spheres of life, changing the content and ways of communication, cultural habits. The article investigates COVID-19 on Saaremaa island, looking at 1) how islanders with their limited territory and resources and therefore greater vulnerability coped during the pandemic; 2) the choices that individuals made in their everyday lives; 3) I present the mechanisms what people used for healing and prevention of COVID-19.

Keywords: COVID-19, explanations, rumours, everyday choices, home remedies, prevention, healing

Introduction

Although the crisis researchers of the 1990s underline two main types of crisis – natural and economic –, the 2020s offered a new and unexpected opportunity to view what happens when another factor comes to play: a new outbreak, a pandemic. The spread of the new infectious disease in China was known

through medical news in December 2019. In January our team started collection work, as beliefs and folklore were abundant (Kuperjanov 2020; Hiimäe *et al.* 2021). It was certainly expected that the disease would stay in Asia's relatively constricted area. Some months later it was expected that it would spread no further than southern Europe. In February, flights and road transport arrived in Estonia from China, Iran and several European countries with infected people.

On February 26th the first known case of the virus was announced in Estonia (Koroonakaart/Coronamap 2022). The outbreak started in Saaremaa, the largest island in Estonia and the fourth largest island in the Baltic Sea after Sjælland, Ojamaa and Fyn. The total area of Saaremaa is 2,683 km². The island's coastline is 874 km long. As of 2017, Saaremaa had 31,304 inhabitants, thus ranking ninth among the islands of the Baltic Sea by population. It is a place where the traditional way of life has been partly preserved, Saaremaa is also an attractive tourist destination and an important cultural centre.

On the 13th of March a state of emergency was declared in Estonia. This resulted in the closure of manufacturing, trade, tourism and food industries. Going to work was limited or even forbidden. The only places that stayed open were grocery shops and pharmacies. Ship and aerial traffic between the islands and the mainland were discontinued and only essential goods were transported.

The article investigates COVID-19 on Saaremaa island, looking at 1) how islanders with their limited territory and resources and therefore greater vulnerability copied other regions during the pandemic, 2) the choices that individuals made in their everyday lives, and 3) what people used for healing and prevention of COVID-19.

Data

Based on Leonard Primiano's work, I would like to highlight vernacular solutions as the "personal, aesthetic, cultural, and social investment [of an individual] ... as well as the way individuals privately and creatively adapt [culture] to their specific life needs" (Primiano 1995: 43). Vernacular culture can be flexible, dynamic, multi-sourced, but also global. Folklore studies usually does not use the voice of a single person, while this is common in religion studies. Here, the possibility of basing research on the words of one person as the main informant is used.

The paper characterises the course of COVID-19 using official data, media documents and vernacular opinions about the pandemic:

a) thematic interviews were used during the first crisis period (7) through which respondents were asked to describe their opinion on what kind of disease COVID-19 is, what their activities were during periods of movement restriction, and describe the foods and medicines they used to prevent or recover from the disease. A couple of questions were about loneliness and depression.

b) The vlog of Heidi Hanso, the owner of Pajuvärava farm. Hanso's sources of information consist of her own observations on the farm and its surroundings and everyday life in a remote village during the COVID-19 pandemic. She talks about her life, the illness and Saaremaa as a whole. One important reason for selecting Hanso's vlog was its immediate and optimistic message, and the home remedies she prepared. Her language use and orientation to social communication certainly deserve a separate study, but at the moment we will only focus on everyday life during the COVID-19 period, her adaptation to the restrictions and her home remedies.

c) Additional data was collected from Facebook groups, for example Koroonaviiirus. In addition, volunteers' Facebook reports and online comments about what was happening in Saaremaa were recorded. The data is stored in the catalogue of the scientific archive (EFITA F05-020).

d) Background and comparative data comes from diaries, a significant qualitative source (EKIA 2020; Nuust 2020), and academic papers published in many countries (Markov & Pileva 2021; Ilieva 2021; Hiiemäe *et al.* 2021; Gustavsson and Olivestam 2021; Gustavsson 2022; Fischer & Kadastik 2021; Uustalu; Kalda *et al.* 2022; Bridges, Brillhart & Goldstein 2023).

Timeline: state politics and islands

At the end of February Saarte Hääl (Island Voice, a local newspaper) wrote about “a real treat” for Saaremaa's volleyball fans. The Italian club Milano Powervolley would play two of their European games on Saaremaa as they could not hold them in Italy due to COVID-19 (Mihelson & Berendson 2020; Kalmus & Vinni 2020). The game, which was held on the 4th of March, caused the first cases of infection on Saaremaa. Nine Italians also had mild COVID-19 symptoms.

Based on the first information it seemed that every one of Saaremaa's inhabitants would be infected. At that time official knowledge of the disease and suggestions about what to do were minimal and contradictory, and I would say their style could be described as fear mongering. As additional drama, the virus spread to a retirement home where 22 people and nurses fell ill. Although the statistics say that not everyone got sick and that most people recovered quickly, panic can settle in due to a lack of information very quickly.

For example, one topic that was discussed was how “a few 100-year-old people have defeated the coronavirus. Old ladies from Saaremaa, Selma Leesi and Natalia Sigibert, did it.” (Paavle 2020) There was even an interview with one lady's relative who was living in Sweden and who said that her relative always had a very good physiology and good health (Timeline 2020, EFITA). The example of Saaremaa nursing home was encouraging and shed light on the fact that even members of the highest-risk group did not get sick or recover in a situation where there was no cure for the illness. The same was repeatedly experienced later.

As reaction to the pandemic, the Government Emergency Commission summoned the Scientific Council on the 20th of March. The Council was led by professor Irja Lutsar (University of Tartu) and staffed by professor Andres Merits (University of Tartu), professor Peep Talving (the University of Tartu and the North Estonia Medical Centre), Dr Pilleriin Soodla (the University of Tartu Clinic) and Kristi Rüütel (the Institute of Health Development).

Krista Fischer, professor of mathematical statistics at the University of Tartu, and biostatistician Mario Kadastik, senior researcher at the Institute of Chemical and Biological Physics, took up the role of data interpretation and producing forecast models (Fischer & Kadastik 2021). The Scientific Council published regular statistics in the newspapers. ETV (Estonia's state TV channel) broadcast sessions with members of the government and representatives of the Science Council. Public transmissions of information, bans and rules were repeated several times a day, all of which proved influential.

On the 24th of March, Dr Arkadi Popov, the head of the North Estonia Medical Centre's emergency centre, was appointed medical director for the crisis by the Estonian Health Board. His task was to coordinate the work of Estonian health institutes and give instructions on how to rearrange health services. All members of Science Council became well-known, but Popov soon became a legend for many people. He was the person who appeared on TV giving updates on the situation. He gained the trust of many with his bal-

anced evaluations of the situation; he spoke fluent Estonian as well as being able to give information in Russian for Russian speakers (27 % of the Estonian population are of Russian heritage).

From very beginning of the pandemic a media discussion began on how local Russians were oriented toward Russian information channels, and how their behaviour was different from that of others. Only after the first waves of the pandemic did the research results demonstrate that this argumentation was not valid. Vihalemm and Juzfovsky demonstrated (2021) that Russian-speakers had over the past years restructured their news media repertoires so as to rely less on Russian television as a source of news, and Estonia's Russian-speakers today show greater and growing confidence in local news providers than in news coming from Russia. Estonia's Russian-speakers are more enthusiastic users of local, Western and independent Russian news media than, for example, Russian-speakers in Latvia.

The situation on Saaremaa

Focus on Saaremaa was multifaceted including negative commentaries and mocking memes ridiculing and marginalising the islanders (EFITA), for example people wrote how patients were left untreated, having things like radiotherapy sessions cancelled (EKIA 2020). At the main hospital on Saaremaa, in the capital Kuressaare, four new COVID-19 wards were opened (Õun 2020), although they were never fully utilised. The first news was not optimistic: the medical director announced that there were 21 COVID-19 patients, one of whom was in the intensive care unit. More than 20 caretakers and other medical personnel were infected. A mass infection is to be expected, and the need for extra hospital beds was imminent: "There could be thirty of them by tonight," the hospital director said. His resolute estimation was that, "the virus has become very widespread on Saaremaa" (Lember 2020). On the mainland these words were taken to mean the situation was very serious.

The Minister of Defence, Jüri Luik, announced that due to the difficult situation on Saaremaa, a military field hospital would be sent there. "The Minister of Defence promised that the hospital will be ready for patients on Thursday, 2nd of April" (Luik 2020). The field hospital will be erected next to Kuressaare hospital. There will be up to 20 intensive care and 40 general places in the

tents. The field hospital will function as a part of the Kuressaare hospital and its personnel is being composed.

The emergency situation would end the normal way of life and everything would be monitored more closely than on the mainland. The methods were too harsh for the sparsely populated islanders. Some of the restrictions for Saaremaa and Muhumaa that were put in place by the Prime Minister late at night would see the closure of hairdressers and allow only takeaway food from restaurants (across the rest of Estonia this restriction came into effect at 10 pm). The restrictions applied to all businesses concerned. The main idea of these measures was to make sure that people moved around as little as possible.

“The aim is to limit unnecessary movement and avoidable contact as much as possible”, Tanel Kiik, head of the health commission, said. “There will be no mass fines but compliance with restrictions will be stricter than in other places in Estonia. The Police and Border Guard has the right to fine violators up to 2,000 Euros” (Tiks 2020, Kalmus 2020, National Guideleines 2020).

Multilocal living style

Many people have farms or summerhouses on the island where they went to live when COVID-19 struck, and soon found that they could not return to the mainland. As many people have a place to stay during their holidays, or could stay at their parents’ or relatives’ homes, or at friends’ homes, moving out of the city and teleworking was also significant for the interviewees. They also had relatives and friends all over Estonia, as well as essentially on all continents, which meant that informal information could be shared all the time and situations compared. The life of our main informant has been multi-local since childhood, yet here the focus is on the Saaremaa, to which she has always returned.

During the pandemic until the restrictions were eased Heidi Hanso kept a vlog on Elu24, a webpage run by *Postimees*, an Estonian newspaper, where she described how she felt during the pandemic, and how she felt about isolation and quarantine. She also described how she found the time and energy to get all the work done on the farm. To the general public she is known as the woman who, together with her children Uma and Raju, built and ran a farm in Saaremaa as seen in the TV series *Meie pere ja muud loomad* (‘Our Family and Other Animals’, 2016 onward). She also does most of the editing and TV

work at home, far away from capital city, as is suitable for a representative of the multilocal living style. “I have arranged my life in such a way that from the middle of May when the TV season ends, I will not go to Tallinn until autumn. In the summer I only take care of my farm affairs: I do construction work, take care of the animals and children, and host tourists at Pajuvärava.” (EFITA)

Heidi is connected with the open farms project, and more than a thousand people visited her farm on open farms day. She is a typical representative of the younger generation who has lived in many parts of the world. As a member of big family, one of six children, she values the importance of family: “Other relationships in life come and go, but your family is what stays.”

She gives a description of her relatives: “We are all very strong personalities and although we do not always agree on everything, we can discuss and solve all issues using humour and some healthy sarcasm.”

Heidi grew up on Saaremaa. Her kindergarten and elementary school were in Orissaare, Saaremaa, quite far from home. As an independent girl she continued her curriculum on the mainland, at Noarootsi gymnasium (a special Swedish school in western Estonia). Later she lived in Sweden, the UK and Cyprus, although between these periods abroad she always returned to Estonia. About ten years ago, she made the permanent move back to Estonia with her partner Risto. “It became clear that it would be possible to do television work successfully while living on Saaremaa. I have not been on maternity leave at home with either child – figuratively speaking, I was editing programs with the child on my chest.” (EFITA, Hanso).

In addition she has a home zoo: two outdoor raccoons, cats, dogs, goats, sheep, horses, geese, ducks, guinea pigs, rabbits, chickens and a peacock, her farm has a total of about 400 different animals, which made life quite a challenge during the time of COVID-19 and restrictions.

Explanations of diseases, smart solutions and self-treatment

In most cases, a social (ethnic) group defines the symptoms or sets of symptoms that are associated with a particular disease. In addition to explanatory models for why disease occurs (Kleinmann 1988; Kleinmann 1995, 2020), vernacular diagnosis and the treatment processes follow, along with the creation of defence

mechanisms, coping strategies and decision-making about the effectiveness of treatment. Several treatment options are usually considered and may be used simultaneously (Abbot *et al.* 2015).

Regarding COVID-19, there was more scare-mongering in the official explanations (it was a highly contagious and dangerous disease that spreads through contact with surfaces, water droplets, through the air; it was dangerous for all age groups, above all for the elderly, it was a completely new disease causing breathing difficulties (WHO 2015, WHO 2020, Berman & Ssorin-Chaikov 2020 (2)).

The same variety prevailed in the vernacular explanations, which debated whether it was a lung disease or a flu-style illness, which is why washing and disinfection, ventilation, being outdoors, and distance from other people were emphasised. With this wave of intense, sometimes overly dense, media information part of the population started to lose the ability to analyse the data and their fear of death began to increase, while others became more deeply sceptical when analysing the information. Some remained convinced that the mortality rate would not exceed 4 or 5 % as with influenza. Nearly the same information circled in other countries. The Guardian reported that about 26,000 people in 25 countries shared a widespread conspiracy-related scepticism about COVID-19. Among the most widespread conspiracy theories was the belief that COVID-19 death rates had been deliberately and greatly exaggerated, a belief shared by more than across all countries the average was 38 % (Henley & McIntyre 2020).

At the level of rumour, poisoning was suspected (for example poisoned drinking water in cities). People also suspected that the pandemic was a fiction of pharmaceutical companies or the rich, who would profit from panic about the disease, drug development and redistribution of income; or it was the 'great powers' struggling for economic profit. People speculated about whether it was another media bubble, which partly characterised the data presented about HIV, and especially about Ebola. The latter was widely introduced by the media as a killer disease, whereas in reality it spread in a limited area and did not represent an international threat (see Goldstein 2004; Rouhier-Willoughby 2020; Bennett 2005; Briggs 1996, 2004; Briggs and Mantini-Briggs 2003; Singh *et al* 2020.). People also called EBOLA as the last experiment before COVID-19, as a preliminary test to practice manipulating people. Estonia, with total restrictions, was compared to the tactics of Sweden, which did not impose absolute

limits, and the debate was against ‘herd immunity’, which was also seen as an effective tool.

Researchers from several countries have pointed out that during the crisis, rules were followed and new forms of communication were developed: The vast majority indicate that they were only with the people with whom they live in the same household, and very few are those who have gathered with relatives from the same populated area. There is also an increase in the number of people who have compensatory mechanisms that overcome the physical distance, namely the shared celebration online (Markov & Pileva 2021: 67, Radchenko 2020; Anisimov & Glukhova 2021 and others).

A noticeable number of Saaremaa inhabitants and Estonian people were ready to follow the restrictions imposed by the state. But people worked out their own versions of preventive methods, work and leisure activities, distance work and learning, based on the recommendations and possibilities. These forms include daily walking, work in the garden or forest, and moderate physical exercise w believed to be the best behaviour to avoid the disease. It was considered important to stay in the sunlight for as long as possible. It was possible to do all this on Saaremaa, especially since many people moved to rural homes, cottages, etc., due to the closure of their workplaces.

However, several recommendations were in the foreground. Continue previous hobbies, communicate with friends via computer or phone, learn a new hobby and engage in enjoyable activities (painting, playing music, sewing), get a new hairstyle (cut your own hair or dye your hair), avoid negative people and news, build yourself a balcony garden or have a window box. If these fulfilled the function of promoting personal well-being and psychological protection and helped people engage in meaningful activity (especially in city apartments), then the following group are direct representatives of healthy food, nutritional supplements and healing mixtures (EFITA, EKIA 2020).

For Estonians, wearing a mask, which until then had been thought relevant only for the medical profession, was a surprise. I think that adaptation would have been helped by media reports on the practices of countries where mask-wearing is widespread in society. Wearing a mask was accepted because masked access to grocery stores and pharmacies was compulsory.

In this regard, it is interesting that people were ready to wear a mask when moving alone in the countryside, as was practised by town people of different ages (EKIA 2020), but we also find the same behaviour in Hanso:

March 29, Sunday and the weather is gorgeous. I'm wearing a mask because I just went to take hay for the horses and instead of the usual two rolls I took six rolls because Saaremaa has a very tough special situation starting tomorrow and I just don't want to burden the authorities with why I'm moving somewhere with a cart and hence I brought more hay today. (EFITA, Hanso)

The most popular answers to my interview questions can be generalised as:

Sleep a lot and use as many vitamins from C, D and B groups as possible. Make yourself hot potato steam, use goose fat to lubricate your breasts, and eat citrus fruit as much as possible because, in addition to vitamins, you get essential oils, which reduce stress (as a counterargument noroviruses are associated with citrus fruit).

The list includes eating spicy domestic plants and fruit that has arrived on the market as miracle drugs in the last ten years, as well as spices, for example chilli, horseradish, avocado, ginger, garlic, lingonberries, cranberries and blueberries. Using nutritional supplements and at least some common herbs (St. John's wort, chamomile, yarrow) was recommended.

There were also conflicting views in communities regarding both the diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19. People discussed whether it should be treated like a lung disease or like a viral disease, whether it was reasonable to wait for an effective vaccine or drug (which could take up to a year), and whether alternative solutions should be sought both from the pharmacy and elsewhere, for example malaria tablets were used in Kuressaare Hospital during treatment given by the hospital's Chief of Medicine (Vainküla 2020); strong drugs against intestinal parasites were also discussed.

Everyday customs and treatments

The official media was against the use of home remedies, despite which the use of toxic preparations or medicines for other illnesses were shared by various Facebook groups, including those groups aimed at sharing reliable reviews of the situation. An exciting point was the adaptation of everyday customs to the special situation and the spontaneous behaviour of people, in which we find altruistic and community-considerate traits.

The interviews are characterised by concern for family members who were thought to be in greater danger than the interviewees. Neighbourly help and help for relatives developed quickly with for example food being taken to neighbours who did not have a means of transport or who were sick. This kind of behaviour spread widely both in cities and in the countryside, and perhaps it was especially interesting to see in communities where close communication usually does not take place. In apartment buildings and villages, closer integration took place due to the pandemic, although more on the level of emotional support. However, food was left at people's doors and telephone, Skype and other forms of messaging were valued as means of communication.

The opposite side of neighbourly help was withdrawal to one's own territory and avoidance of direct contact. In the wave of intense media information, an interesting phenomenon began to develop in which some of the population started to lose the ability to analyse the data, and their fear of death began to increase, while others became more deeply sceptical when analysing the information. Concerns about the sustainability of the economy were expressed both in interviews and in occasional conversations. Here we see successful prosocial behaviour, a positive attitude towards their living environment and the belief that situation like this bring out the best in people. When people returned to their summer houses on Saaremaa after the restrictions were eased, the main means of communication was still the telephone for more than year because, as close neighbours and relatives felt, people arriving from the other side of the country could bring disease.

Our main informant describes how a neighbour brought her food and left it at the gate. People also behaved in a similar way in the Saaremaa towns of Orissaare and Kuressaare, where neighbours brought essential food, sweets, and even flowers to the door based on a list. Grocery shops also developed a system for ordering food online, but preference was still given to neighbours bringing food as it was a cheaper and more flexible system.

Celebrating birthdays and other gatherings were also abandoned elsewhere (for example in Bulgaria, Markov 2022), while several elderly people who were interviewed admitted that they had lived for a long time already and there was no reason to limit themselves. Accusations were also made and it seems that society developed phobias about the elderly (interviews, EFITA).

At the same time, we found smart solutions that allowed birthdays to be celebrated in their own way:

Today is March 28, Hendrik Raju's birthday. My son turns 7 today and I thought I'd throw him a *drive-through* birthday party. I came up with such a birthday party idea that very few people came, at intervals of an hour and everyone who is known to be perfectly healthy and was a part of either mine or Hendrik's father's family. Maybe 4–5 people come throughout the day.

I made a table for them by the road and tied up the dogs. I unpacked all the things, not a single thing has been taken out of their package and touched. The birthday invitation stated that all relatives must come by at hourly intervals and bring their own plate, cup, fork and knife. And gloves. And then have to clean everything they take from here with them. – I locked up the dogs so that no one could touch them. And no one will touch the birds. I also sometimes fenced off the area so that no one would want to come to that part. (EFITA, Hanso)

With future crises in mind, prosocial behaviour should be developed more systematically in Estonia. This cannot be done through individual campaigns, but through consistent daily communication with citizens and by supporting vulnerable groups.

Severe mental situations arose in connection with illnesses, hospitalisations, nursing homes and funerals because people were not able access treatment or visit loved ones and funerals could not be held according to custom. The highest levels of discontent occurred in this sphere. The treatment of regular and chronic patients was limited, and non-urgent operations were postponed (although people said that COVID-19 was not so common, and daily work should have continued). At every step, the shortcomings of ordinary medical care and advice were felt in this way. In many cases, people's health deteriorated and symptoms worsened. Those waiting for operations describe great pain and hopelessness, and the general state of health deteriorated due to this lack of medical care.

Healing at home

Heidi Hanso describes her home treatment course, where we find some names from the previous list. There is no doubt that some plants and substances belong to the food culture of modern young people:

Nightly corona-fighting consists of a cup of Icelandic lichen tea and at least 15 minutes of physiological solution steam. In addition, horseradish, garlic, cranberries, etc., etc. There is some progress, the cough seems to be subsiding. Slowly, but surely. Any steam helps. A good nebuliser also if you don't want to be bent over a pot of potatoes all the time with a towel over your head.

Some of the recipes are part of so-called traditional Estonian cuisine. For example, Heidi gives a description of her family's consumption of horseradish, a practical tip to which her grandmother's teachings add weight:

Today I want to share the most awesome and potent medicine I know: making it makes you cry, burns your eyeballs, makes you cough... and is so damn powerful that it makes your eyes water when you eat it! Of course I'm talking about horseradish, which in my experience is the most powerful herb in our home gardens. Lots of essential oils, vitamins, potassium, as well as natural antibiotics and serious immune boosters.

I haven't been sick at all in the last few years, and the horseradish does play a part in that. Faith also has great power, but still, I'm convinced that this stuff will even help me get through the corona cough!

My grandmother had said that horseradish can be dug up every month with an "r" in its name. In the summer, when there are horseradish leaves, the ram is in the leaves and the effect of the root is not so strong.

Pesto was also used for healing. It is a relatively new condiment that has spread through wider use in Mediterranean cuisine in recent decades. At the same time, new dishes are replacing the Baltic Polish and German traditions, which are close to Estonian culinary culture. As people define their belonging and identity strongly through food culture, other interesting developments are taking

place here besides globalisation. However, the recipe shows a difference from Italy, because fewer ingredients are used, and Heidi prepares her pesto based on a friend's recipe. First of all, I will cover the beginning of making pesto and leave the recipe aside. The blogger's use of language is enjoyable, completely refuting a number of blog, language and other theories: "Last night I dug up a good portion of horseradish root wearing my head torch, about half a kilo, from the corner of the garden, washed it in well water, brought it indoors and peeled it. That alone made my eyes red." (EFITA, Hanso)

Pride, COVID measures and statehood

Based on cultural studies, it can be said that communities built themselves up during the pandemic, used the available opportunities to maintain people's professionalism (joint singing, new forms of learning, dance training, lectures and discussions, congresses), tried to maintain personal relationships and connections, and managed to expand their economic opportunities (for example through the development of e-commerce). Much entertainment moved to the web and was aimed at the domestic consumer (there was an increase in domestic tourism and local cultural events and an increase in the importance of local events). However, people's concerns and the corresponding search for solutions engaged with a wider sphere. The focus of conversations was not limited to health- and disease-related topics but touched on complex general problems. Hanso recalls in her blog:

Actually, I thought that I would talk a little about Saaremaa and entrepreneurship this time. The entrepreneurs of Saaremaa are under huge pressure. Our own domestic market is quite limited and very many businesses are tied to mainland clients. It's hard. In Saaremaa, there are mainly small businesses that do not qualify for any of the state relief measures created so far. Many are micro and small businesses. (EFITA, Hanso)

The government's initial financial support for the tourism sector and various areas helped alleviate the crisis. Tests were also made easily available which could be obtained from workplaces, and during the second wave and later from schools; after a year, free vaccination buses moved around, because many

members of at-risk groups who lived away from centres or were disabled did not have the opportunity to travel. Problems inevitably arose for low- and middle-income people, i.e., vulnerable groups of the population such as poorer, older, non-native Estonian speaking people and those living at significant distances from centres.

Generous behaviour during the pandemic is characterised by the fact that a number of volunteer doctors and local people were ready to help Saaremaa. As a gesture of goodwill, communication companies donated tablets with mobile internet and pre-installed communication apps so that nursing home patients could communicate with their loved ones (30 tablets in 2020). The government decided to pay emergency support of 50,000 euros to the family of the Kuressaare hospital caretaker who lost his life due to COVID-19, with the money allocated from the government reserve, etc. In the introduction, I mentioned that a field hospital was sent to Saaremaa, which instead became a logistics centre after barely a month because there were not enough patients and the hospital did not want interference.

Since there were no medicines, an intuitive-rational home treatment method was developed which combined old and new knowledge and experiments. The collected data indicates that Peltó's (2013: 153) approach also applies in the case of COVID-19. Peltó says that all people (with or without formal health training) have cultural belief systems about health and illness and in both cases, these systems are supported by observation and revised in the light of new information.

Hospital and official

In retrospect, the islanders were the subject of multifaceted behaviour. It's no secret that they were stigmatised and marginalised because in Estonian the first COVID-19 outbreak was here, leading to awkward fights during the initial period of the pandemic. This period is characterised by bold calls for volunteers and the rapid opening of testing tents.

Kuressaare Hospital announced that they have been in favour of mass testing from the start, and that is why they tried to test as many people as possible as quickly as possible when the corona crisis broke out, which was hindered by dictates. For example, people had to qualify for

testing by being in the right age group and having a chronic illness. The hospital comments: “Our inbox was filled with letters from concerned people who felt an injustice was being done to them. What to do? We had nothing to tell them.” (National Guidelines; Guidelines 3 2020).

The military and the medical system (especially hospitals) are strictly hierarchical organisations, as indicated by articles and comments, but tighter restrictions are generally indicated by word of mouth, blogs, newspapers, and comments. Volunteers from the area and the mainland rushed to help, but the hospital’s Chief of Medicine was soon accused of flirting with the media too much and inflating the number of cases (BBC interview 2020). At the same time he has been characterised as a bold decision-maker who used malaria medicine and recommended vitamin C to sick people.

The mayor of Saaremaa resigned under pressure from the media, social media and the government. Despite the effective prevention of the spread of the disease, the pressure was strong because permission was given for the Estonia–Italy volleyball match to go ahead. In April 2020, 24 doctors submitted a letter of complaint against E. Laane, Kuressaare hospital’s Chief of Medicine, who was accused of making several mistakes, including buying malaria drugs for patients with his own money. The patients’ council and some doctors came to his defence writing a letter of protection that was signed by about the same number of people as the letter of complaint (Kuressaare Hospital Patients Council 2020). In his answer to the letter of complaint, Laane pointed out that the signatories did not treat COVID-19 patients or work in the hospital, rather they were at home or even worked in Finland (typical of the current Estonian medical system, where people often work in two countries). The board of Kuressaare hospital decided that Laane would continue as Chief of Medicine. He gives an interview to a newspaper saying that from now on the hospital is obliged to send patients to the mainland, to Tallinn, for treatment and no longer have the right to make independent decisions. Of course, this does not go unnoticed by commentators who point to the politicisation of the entire health issue.

As the number of sick people decreases rapidly, the islanders begin to demand their civil rights, saying that the restrictions must be eased, traffic with the mainland must be restored, people must be able to get to their families and jobs, and that they want equal treatment with mainland people. Equal rights

are achieved, although not immediately but still quickly as the government gave in in this unusual situation.

Summary

Villages on Saaremaa (as with the majority of Estonian villages) are scattered, i.e. there is ample space between households with today adult family members living in their own dwellings; small towns are of the garden city type, which prevents disease outbreaks but makes service and transport logistics more difficult. Certainly, identity, pride and cooperation with the state were part of Saaremaa's success during the first wave of COVID-19. Today we know that many of the problems were still to come, starting during the second wave and afterwards. At no point did restrictions succeed in marginalising the island or any other single region at that period.

A year later, the report states that during the first spring wave of the pandemic, from March 1 to June 1 2020, 554 infected people were confirmed in Saaremaa, or 1.7% of the population (Fischer and Kadastik 2021, cf. Wong *et al.* 2023). The summary of joint research (Uusküla, Kalda *et al* 2021) findings from Estonia should be interpreted in the context of the high SARS-CoV-2 testing rate (80,630/100,000), a very low COVID-19 case fatality rate of 0.8% (both, as of March 18, 2021) and no significant excess (all-cause) deaths over the first year of the pandemic. According to today's official statistics, 766,663 people have suffered from COVID-19, and 2,837 people have died (Statistic). This confirms that the initial forecasts were more correct than the atmosphere of fear generated by the authorities and the media during the first half of 2020. Therefore the official (health) news and the targeting and information contained therein, and the psychological impact this had on isolated people, need separate analysis.

There were signs of fatigue in vernacular behaviour at the end of the first wave of COVID-19. For example, the keen observer will not miss the fact that older people and those with chronic diseases were particularly ill when contracting the disease. Although the media presents positive stories about those who recovered, the 'rich and famous' stand out in the press as being seriously ill, which in turn causes distrust among commentators. Representatives of the Saaremaa nursing home were surprised by the large number of positive tests,

but stated that the majority of residents did not have symptoms, except for two residents (Hooldekodu 2020). This caused people to raise the question of whether the crisis was as serious as scientists and the government claimed, as well as questions about equality and why state subsidies helped large companies in the capital and were seemingly not intended to help smaller companies and entrepreneurs in other areas.

Scientists have criticised countries and international organisations for the ways in which they coped with the pandemic and even called the management of the COVID-19 crisis a global failure (Sachs *et al.* 2022). For example, in Estonia, a lot of information was given round-the-clock. The same news was repeated, but also the recommendations of scientists and the state varied, which caused fear and confusion. Sometimes the recommendations contrasted with ordinary experience (for example the recommendation to isolate the sick did not work in cramped apartments, while it turned out that not all family members necessarily got sick, despite close contact). The study mentioned above highlights how the World Health Organization stuck to its position that the virus was spread through surfaces too long, and recommended that the surfaces be maintained. Although the airborne spread of the virus was known, at times political support for wearing masks was delayed (WHO 2020, 2022). In principle, various explanations and recommendations were implemented, which was a good foundation for spreading rumours and restarting several old explanatory models (Hiimäe, Kalda *et al.* 2021).

Some behavioural habits changed for a while: numerous architectural design articles in the USA have been published since 2020 suggesting that homes require greater outdoor transitional spaces, including porches, decks, balconies, gardens, etc. More than 70 % of people are willing to cook and eat at home after COVID-19 (Bridges, Brillhart and Goldstein 2023: 26).

The health crisis does not come alone, other issues in the form of economic and social problems are quickly added to it. Although some of the national initiatives were premature, including the stigmatisation of the islanders, the complete closure of the island, the closure of conventional medical services and surgery and the establishment of too many expensive unused corona wards, the treatment of the disease has been successful so far and it is currently at an equal level to flu.

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IV

News and Reviews

THE ESTONIAN AND UKRAINIAN CONFERENCE ON THE NATURE OF LAUGHTER



Viktor Levchenko in Tartu.
Foto: A. Madisson. 2023

Between May 18th and 21st 2023, the Odesa Humanities Tradition Society and Odesa I. I. Mechnikov National University staged the 15th international scientific and theoretical conference, titled *Laughter and Its Features: On the Nature of Laughter*, the latest in the series of biennial conferences that began in 2000 by. In 2023, due to the Russia–Ukraine war, the conference was held in Tartu, Estonia, through co-operation between the Estonian Literary Museum, the Cultural Endowment of Estonia, the Centre of Excellence in Estonian Studies via the European Regional Development Fund, the Estonian Humour Museum, Odesa I. I. Mechnikov National University, the Odesa Humanities Tradition Organisation, and the Centre for Humanities Education at the National Academy of Sciences, Ukraine.

The following events were part of the conference:

1. The opening ceremony with speeches by **Piret Voolaid** (Director of Estonian Literary Museum, Estonia), **Viktor Levchenko** (Odesa I. I. Mechnikov University, Ukraine), and **Oleksandr Kyrylyuk** (Centre for Humanities Education at the National Academy of Sciences, Ukraine).
2. Panel reports (more details below).
3. Roundtable discussions on Irony and Protest (chairman: **Sergey Troitskiy**), Estonian Humour and its Features (chairman: **Liisi Laineste**), and the Psychology of Humour for Existential Crises (chairman: **Inga Ignatieva**).

4. A musical performance from the children's choir of the Tartu Alexander Pushkin School, held at the Estonian Literary Museum, Tartu, Estonia.
5. A visit to the Eesti Vabariik 100 caricature exhibition at the Estonian Literary Museum, Tartu, Estonia.
6. A visit to the Nii see algas! caricature exhibition with caricatures by Urmas Nemvalts and Priil Koppel, at the Estonian Humour Museum, Rapla, Estonia.

During the conference, thirty reports were presented by scientists and scholars from Estonia, Finland, Germany, Italy, New Zealand, Poland, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom. The reports presented at the conference had a variety of objectives, and the speakers used a variety of methodologies and research data. However, the reports can be grouped by theme, with the proviso that some papers were at the intersection of several themes.

The largest thematic group was one that could be tentatively called humour studies (or gelotology). This group deals with issues relating to the essence, origin, nature, and mechanisms of humour, and the problems of conceptions of humour. **Toomas Tiivel** (ELUS, the Estonian Naturalists Society, Estonia), as part of his report *On the Origin of Humour*, considered humour to be a universal human behavioural pattern developed during evolution. Tiivel studies laughter as a form of possible expression of cooperation and symbiosis. It is a signal that provides information about the empathy, mental state, and sympathies of the person who is laughing. The universality of laughter as a human signal and the ability to produce and experience humour make it universal to all human cultures.

In their talk, entitled *Funny Situations and Features of their Implementation* **Olexander Mikhailuk** (Ukrainian State University of Science and Technology, Ukraine) and **Viktoriiia Vershyna** (Oles Honchar Dnipro National University, Ukraine) examine the role of funny situations in inducing laughter. They argue that funny situations often arise from a violation of established rules of signification, disagreements of meaning, or clashes between meaning and nonsense, and are a result of interpretation. It is the interpretation that makes a particular situation funny. The interpretation is dependent on the interpreter's subjective perspective on the situation.

There were several reports on linguistic aspects of humour in this thematic group. In his report titled *Cringe Overhang: The Perlocutionary Effects of Cringe Comedy* **Alexander Sparrow** (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand) examines the “cringe overhang” effect induced by cringe comedies. Sparrow utilises John L. Austin’s speech act theory to elucidate why cringe comedy elicits a “cringe overhang” in some viewers and a laughter or stress response in others.

Władysław Chłopicki (Jagiellonian University, Poland) provided a review of classic and recent studies of figurative language and humour in his report *Humor and Figurative Language*. The review covered Viktor Raskin’s early work from metaphor to interdisciplinary contributions to the field of cognitive linguistics. The review attempted to go beyond the blurred boundary between the stylistic and conceptual dimensions of humorous expression, i.e., between “figures of language” and “figures of meaning”.

Michela Bariselli (University of Reading and University of Southampton, United Kingdom) attempted to strengthen the appeal of incongruity theory in her report, titled *Incongruity, Derision, and Disdain*. Using Roger Scruton’s conception, she showed how the theory can account for derision without relying on feelings of superiority, instead appealing to derision as involving a form of devaluing in connection with incongruity.

In his report *What Cognitive Humour Processing Can Tell Us about How Logic Works* **Kostiantyn Raikhert** (Odesa I. I. Mechnikov National University, Ukraine) discussed the relationship between cognitive humour processing and the workings of logic. He explored the concept of the ‘logical mechanism’ within humour theories, framing humour processing as a form of inference. Raikhert referenced the work of C. Y. Chang, Y. C. Chan, and H. C. Chen, who characterise the structure of jokes as involving an expectation in the setup, followed by an incongruity with the punchline, leading to a resolution and the pleasure derived from the joke. Raikhert extended this idea by suggesting that if the setup is treated as a premise, it establishes an expectation through an inferred conclusion.

This thematic group also included reports on the philosophy of humour. In her report *The Phenomenon of Laughter in Olexandr Kyrylyuk’s Philosophy of Culture* **Inna Golubovych** (Odesa I. I. Mechnikov National University, Ukraine) surveyed the Ukrainian philosopher Oleksandr Kyrylyuk’s idea. Kyrylyuk studies particular invariant structures of universal type, which he referred

to as categories of ultimate foundation. These categories include birth, life, death, and immortality. Humour is related to each of these categories and can be represented by the corresponding worldview codes, which are alimentary, erotic, aggressive, and informational.

Through Martin Heidegger's fundamental ontology, **Liana Krishevsk**a (Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich, Germany) analysed the existential dimension of laughter. In her report *Laughter in the Face of Death: The Existential Dimension* she described laughter in the face of death, comparing it to angst, which determines the structural integrity of Dasein in Heidegger's philosophy.

Olena Kolesnyk and **Maryna Stoliar** (T. H. Shevchenko National University Chernihiv Collegium, Ukraine) presented a report entitled *Philosophy of Laughter: The Main Paradigms*. The authors analysed the metamodern approach to laughter as a spectrum of various practices and reflections, revealing the heterogeneous understanding of the laughter as a phenomenon in Kant's legacy.

A few other thematic groups can be identified as well, such as [Country name] and Humour. "Country name" in square brackets here refers to either Ukraine, Belarus, Estonia, Russia or the Soviet Union. The Ukraine and Humour thematic group was represented by reports from Andrey Makarychev (Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies, Estonia), Olena Pavlova and Maria Rohozha (Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine), Anastasiia Stepanenko (Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine), Vladimir Weingort (Kardis, a company of consultants from Estonia), Kateryna Yermieieva (Ukrainian State University of Railway Transport, Ukraine), and Olena Zolotarova (Interregional Academy of Personnel Management (IAPM), Ukraine).

In his report, titled *From Comedian to War-time Leader: Volodymyr Zelensky' between Popular Biopolitics and Practical Geopolitics* **Andrey Makarychev** discussed the contribution of the sitcom "The Servant of the People" to the emergence of Vladimir Zelensky as a political figure. **Olena Pavlova** and **Maria Rohozha** considered war memes as a form of cultural confrontation and resistance for Ukrainians in the Russia–Ukraine war in their report *Cultural Studies Approaches to the Study of War Memes in Ukraine*. In her report *War Humour in Ukraine and the Blurring of the Boundary between the Serious and the Unserious in 2022–2023* **Kateryna Yermieieva** argued that the model

of interaction between official and unofficial culture, as described by Mikhail Bakhtin, is not applicable in the context of the Russia–Ukraine war.

The three reports above all related to the Russia–Ukraine war in some manner. The following three reports were not concerned with the war. **Anastasiia Stepanenko** talked about how internet memes can be used to examine the cultural landscape of Kyiv in her report *The Intersection of Social Media and Urban Culture: Kyiv’s Internet Memes*. **Vladimir Weingort** analysed Ukrainian folk laughter culture using examples of folk pottery ceramic figurines from the village of Oposhnya, and the poem “The Aeneid” by Ivan Kotliarevsky, in his report *From the Terrible to the Ridiculous: ‘Decline’ in Ukrainian Folk Crafts*. **Olena Zolotarova** reported on the Odesa Festival Humorina As an Element of Ukrainian Culture.

The Belarus and Humour thematic group featured two reports. In his *Laughter during the Plague* **Pavel Barkouski** (The Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland) gave an analysis of a popular humorous Belarusian Telegram channel in the context of war, epidemics, migrant crises, and political repression in Belarus. **Anastasiya Fiadotava** (Estonian Literary Museum, Estonia/Jagiellonian University, Poland) conducted a case study on the use of humour to support Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, the democratically elected leader of the Belarusian people. Her report is titled *Humorous Support, Serious Critique: A Politician’s Cup in the Belarusian Online Public Sphere*.

The Estonia and Humour thematic group also features two reports. **Guillem Castañar** (University of Helsinki, Finland) conducted a study of the attitudes of Russian speakers in Estonia towards humour production, consumption, and sharing (his report is titled *Current Trends in the Humour Practices of Russian-speakers in Estonia*). And **Andrus Tamm** (Eesti Huumorimuseum/Estonian Humour Museum, Estonia) demonstrated that humour based on post-Soviet values is regressing due to financial constraints. His report, titled *The Evolution of Humour in Estonia in the Post-Soviet Era, 1992-2023*, highlighted this trend.

The Russia and Humour thematic group is presented by two reports. **Anna Krasnikova** (Università Cattolica di Milano, Italy) presented a report entitled *The End of a Beautiful Monstration: On One Carnival Procession and Language Defense in Russia*, discussing Monstration, a carnival manifestation that first took place in Novosibirsk in 2004 and has since become a significant social and cultural event in 21st century Russia. **Sergey Troitskiy** (Estonian Literary

Museum, Estonia) presented a report titled Humour and Protest. The report analysed humour as a tool for protest, specifically in Russian culture during the 2010s and early 2020s.

The study presented in **Maarja Lõhmus'** report, titled The Role of Soviet Humour stands out. Lõhmus (EAAS/Estonian Academic Society of Journalism, Estonia) investigated the role of humour in the Soviet Union in different periods (1940s–1950s; 1960s–1970s; 1980s).

Another thematic group could be called Literature and Humour. **Bartłomiej Brażkiewicz** (Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland) presented a report entitled Humour As a Narrative Tool in Sergei Arno's Prose, which contained an analysis of the literary techniques of the Russian writer Sergei Arno. Independent researcher **Alexander Lavrentiev** presented a report entitled A Satirical Depiction of the Post-information Society in Gary Shteyngart's Novel *Super Sad True Love Story*. Lavrentiev analysed the absurd dystopia depicted in the novel and showed that, in the world of the absurd, sometimes the only means to rehabilitate common sense and authentic feeling is humour.

In his report, entitled Parody and Ancient Satire: Plato's "Symposium" and Petronius' Trimalchio's dinner, **Viktor Levchenko** (Odesa I. I. Mechnikov University, Ukraine) drew a comparison between Plato's "Symposium" dialogue and chapters 26-78 of Gaius Petronius' *Satyricon*, known as Trimalchio's dinner. *Satyricon* is a good example of Menippean satire, known for its parodies and literary allusions. Levchenko showed references in Trimalchio's dinner to Plato's "Symposium".

Another thematic group was Culture and Humour. In this group we include reports by Liisi Laineste (Estonian Literary Museum, Estonia), Viktor Levchenko (Odesa I. I. Mechnikov University, Ukraine), Alevtina Solovyeva (University of Tartu, Estonia) and Anastasiya Fiadotava (Estonian Literary Museum, Estonia/Jagiellonian University, Poland). **Liisi Laineste's** report, titled The Grass Is Greener in TikTok: Dance Videos as Expressions of Humorous Creativity offered an account of a recent TikTok dance fad, the green green grass dance, with a particular focus on humorous renditions of the dance. **Viktor Levchenko** presented a report titled The Museumification of Humour, on practices of transformation of humour artifacts into objects in museum exhibitions. **Alevtina Solovyeva** and **Anastasiya Fiadotava**, in their report entitled Boiled Shoe, Enamoured Cow and Buddha in a Fur: Buddhist Humour in Mongolian Communities examined some cases of Buddhist humour in the

Mongolian cultural environment. These cases are taken from folklore that deals with the relationships between Buddhist monks and ordinary people.

Separately, **Stanislav Govorov** and **Alyona Ivanova's** report entitled *Suicide Humour As a Form of Dark Humour: Clinical and Psychological Aspects* was worth noting. Independent researcher Govorov, and Ivanova from the International Society for Humour Studies (ISHS), pointed out that suicide humour is an instrument for reflection on the taboo against suicide, and that this humour can help in understanding what suicide is.

The contributions to the conference are planned to be published in the journal *Δοκσα/Δόξα*.

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Kostiantyn Raikhert

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Caricatures as a Sphere of Communication in the Late- and Post-Ottoman Context (workshop in Istanbul, 25-26 March 2024)



The workshop, held in Istanbul at the end of March 2024, was more like a full conference in terms of the depth and quality of papers, the rich discussion, the scientific infrastructure of the event and the organisation of the workshop. The location was ideal. The workshop on caricature was held at the Karikatür Evi Caricature

Centre in the Kadıköy district, which is also home to the Municipal Museum of Caricature. This geographical context made the discussion of the results of cartoon research not just appropriate but necessary. The scientific event, organised by Dr Veruschka Wagner (University of Bonn/Bilgi University Istanbul) and Professor Dr Anna Kollatz (University of Heidelberg) brought much needed theoretical content to this ‘caricature region’, making caricature a serious and interdisciplinary matter.

The concretisation of subject and object allowed for the creation of an intellectual tension around the research problem and a common discussion field. The papers were organised into panels for ease of reference and in order to construct a particularly sensitive scholarly optic: Ottoman Humour and Caricatures (Chair: Oliver Reisner), The Global and the Local (Chair: Juho Korhonen), Sound and Science Fiction (Chair: Mariia Guleva), Women, Femininity and Misogyny (Chair: Valentina Marcella), Caricatures, Media,

Societies and Upheavals (Chair: Anna Kollatz). The second day started with the roundtable discussion Do Caricatures Have Agency?

Elif Kiraz, in his presentation Laughter and Morality in the Early Ottoman Humour Press: The Earliest Ottoman Caricatures Published in Istanbul in the Nineteenth Century, discussed the 19th century history of Turkish humour publishing and the appearance of Turkish caricature in magazines. An important theme of the caricature was criticism of so-called French fopperies and cultural trends in London, called 'alafranga'. However, as the speaker showed, it was not simply a criticism of Western trends in favour of Eastern traditions, as is believed in the research literature, because similar trends existed in European journalism at the same time. It was rather a struggle for the preservation of traditional morality, i.e. a struggle between tradition and innovation. Alafanga, then, should not be seen in terms of national identity, but in terms of ethics or history of ethics.

Anil Küçüktaka made a detailed analysis of the relationship between political economy and humour in publication. His presentation The Humour of Economy: National Economy (*Milli İktisad*) Caricatures in the Ottoman Press contained a witty philosophical analysis of the economic aspects of culture, analysing the influence of humour on the economy and of the economy on humour. The presentation titled National Stereotypes of the Ottoman Empire in Russian Geographical Textbooks as a Basis for the Caricaturistic Visualisation of Spatial Concepts at the Turn of the 20th Century, by Sergey Troitskiy, was about the late Ottoman Empire as an object of ridicule. The speaker showed how humourists saw the Turks and their state, and what stereotypical images were formed about them. To explain the sources of such national stereotypes, excerpts from school textbooks describing the qualities of Turks and their appearance were presented and analysed.

The theme of the perception of the Other was continued with The 'New Woman' As a Global Phenomenon: Ottoman Caricatures in the 1920s by **Veruschka Wagner**. Dr Wagner showed the development of stereotypes of women within Turkish caricature. The 'New Woman' image and its criticism was not only an intra-Turkish phenomenon. The association of this image with Western culture was certainly present in the Turkish consciousness, but it was not the only reason for ridicule. Rather, it was also common to 1920s satire in Europe, the United States and Soviet Russia. It was, as in the case of 'alafranga',

a struggle between tradition and innovation, between protective tendencies and cultural renewal.

Uğur Zekeriya Peçe, in his study *Loud and Funny: In Quest of Sound in Ottoman Satirical Journals*, used an original approach to the material, focusing on the sounds of the late empire. Sounds, according to the author, were present in almost all texts. Drawing on Alain Corbin's study of sensory history, Peçe showed how sounds were present in Turkish satire and what these sounds communicate to the viewer about the Turkey contemporary to the cartoonist.

The 1920s were particularly rich in various futuristic dreams in published writing. The rapid development of technical devices stimulated science fiction. This vision of the future was embodied both in serious and in humorous literature. **Anna Kollatz**, in her presentation *Egyptian Science Fiction from the 1920s: Satirical Visions of the Future?* refers to a series of cartoons by the Ottoman-Egyptian artist 'Alī Rifqī, published in the satirical magazine *al-Fukāha* in Cairo in 1926-1927. The cartoonist shows different aspects of the future through the lens of satire. It was not a satire on the future, but rather on modernity: the future appears in these cartoons as a hypertrophied and absurd present.

Following Prof Kollatz, **Eberhard Dziobek** also turned to 'Alī Rifqī cartoons. In his presentation *Women and Cars: 'Alī Rifqī's Cairo of the Twenties* Dziobek showed that technological progress was perceived as an object of ridicule from the point of view of tradition. In this sense, new trends, be they technological progress or new mores, become the object of attack.

Erdem Çolak, in his paper *The Representation of Femininity in Erotic Humour Magazines of the 1930s in Turkey*, showed how magazines circumvented censorship, particularly on erotica, by publishing images of naked women in a satirical magazine. The content ensured the magazine's commercial success, but labelling it as satirical allowed it to claim at any time that the pictures of naked women were a satire on new/Western mores.

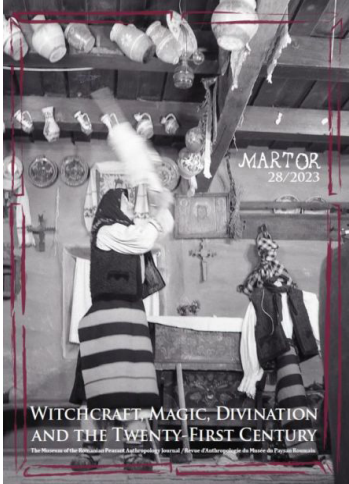
The logical conclusion of the academic part of the workshop was a report titled *Between Censorship and the Subversive Power of Humour: Caricatures in the Beirut Newspaper al-Ma'raḍ (1921-1936)*. Speaker **Katrin Köster** used the example of the *al-Ma'raḍ* newspaper to show the role of classical media, in particular newspapers and magazines, in the everyday culture of post-Ottoman regions, and the importance and place of editors in the political space.

The workshop aroused keen interest not only among scholars, but also among practicing Turkish cartoonists themselves, who listened to the presentations and participated in the discussion. Often there was nowhere to sit in the hall and listeners even stood on the stairs leading to the hall.

The organisers promised more academic events on Turkish cartoons in the future.

Sergey Troitskiy (Estonian Literary Museum)

Magic and witchcraft, Living Socio-cultural Phenomena



It may seem bizarre that at the beginning of the 21st century we still talk about the phenomenon of magic/witchcraft not as a past social or cultural fact, specific to times when ‘wild thinking’ was dominant and rational thinking was barely flickering. As you will see from the scientific articles summarised here – which make up issue 28/2023 of the anthropological magazine *Martor*, published by the Romanian Peasant Museum – beyond the glimmer of a diurnal, rationalist thinking, for contemporary man, magical, nocturnal thinking continues to remain alive and active.

From the article “Witches, Sorcerers and Demons in a Remote Corner of Northern Russia at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century” by Christine D. Worobec (Distinguished Research Professor Emerita at the Department of History, Northern Illinois University, USA), we learn about the beliefs of the inhabitants of more than 50 villages in the Kargopol district of the Archangelsk region regarding magic and its effects on everyday life, past and present. Villagers believe that the evil eye is an energy that both men and women can manipulate and that the sorcerer (*koldun*) can affect people’s fertility. In ancient times in this ethnographic area there was a belief in a forest spirit (the forest being a liminal place where ‘the natural world meets the supernatural’) that could make animals and even people disappear. Local people attributed magical powers to the shepherds of old, who could tame the forest spirit. Today, the inhabitants of the vast Kargopol region interpret personal misfortunes, illnesses that have not been cured by modern medicine, impaired female fertility and sexual impotency as evil effects of magic or witchcraft.

Olga Khristofora's (PhD in Cultural Studies and Doctor Habilitatus/Doctor of Sciences in Philology, Folklore Studies) article, "We live in the Country of the Victorious Kafka: Witchcraft and Magic in Present-Day Russia", studies the phenomenon of witchcraft and magical belief in contemporary Russia, as reflected in the press and online media. The most interesting part of the article, which is based on the author's research between 2016 and 2022, describes how narratives about magic are incorporated into official propaganda in order to paint a negative, evil portrait of political opponents. Here we also learn about the interference between the socio-political elite of contemporary Russia and the occult sphere. On May 20, 2022, the YouTube channel Feigin Live, owned by lawyer Max Feigin, broadcast an interview with political analyst Valery Solovey and occult specialist Andrey Kosmach about occult practices in the Russian government that talked about issues such as connecting to "reptilians", rituals orchestrated by Peruvian shamans in which Ayahuasca was consumed, shaman groups inspiring Vladimir Putin, people who want to remove Putin from the Kremlin being subject to psychiatry, for example Alexander Gabyshev.

In her study *Faire et defaire des attaques de sorcellerie dans la Lorraine (France) du XXI siècle*, Deborah Kessler Bilthauer (Chercheure associée au Laboratoire lorrain de sciences sociales à l'université de Lorraine (France), Doctor of Ethnology), based on research carried out between 2005 and 2012, in which she interviewed 40 healers and 20 patients, reveals the permanence of the socio-cultural phenomenon of witchcraft in a region in north-eastern France, describing the complexity of the rituals of counter-witchcraft carried out by various healers, as well as the alternative medicine, based on magic recipes, which continues to be active in this area. Far from being "a residual belief", says the author, in Lorraine in the 21st century magic continues to be "a coherent explanatory system", effective in various existential accidents, illnesses and misfortunes.

In her article "Changing Destinies by Fighting Against Bad Luck", Camelia Burghele (an ethnologist who specialises in traditional therapeutic magic and modern ways of adapting magico-ritual scenarios) analyses the transposition of magico-ritual acts from the traditional Romanian village to contemporary urban society. The modern witch is usually digitally literate and frequently uses online communication media (Facebook pages, blog or personal websites, video chat) including mobile applications (WhatsApp, for example) to attract clients or to perform her magical practices. In Romania after 2000, witchcraft became official: witches in Bucharest, Ploiesti, Buzău and Craiova set up

witchcraft schools. In 2019 the Romanian Academy of Witches was founded. In the rest of the article, Camelia Burghele analyses the manifestations of the magico-religious mentality during the Covid pandemic particularly in the ethno-cultural area that she investigates, i.e. Sălaj, a county in north-western Romania. Her observations are most interesting. During the Covid pandemic, locals proposed various alternatives to vaccination, for example prayer, worshipping relics, incantations, holy water, to the detriment of a rational approach, which would have involved accepting scientific remedies (the vaccine, in this case). Many of those interviewed recommended making a “Covid shirt”, modelled on one made in ancient times against the plague.

The article “Was I or Wasn’t I Bewitched? Conversations about Magic in Rural Transylvania”, by Elena Bărbulescu (Senior Researcher at Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca Branch, Institute of Folklore Archive of Romanian Academy) does not deal directly with any aspect of magic or witchcraft, but with “the discursive nature of witchcraft” (Favret Saada). The author interprets narratives about witchcraft based on interviews with peasants in the Apuseni Mountains, in eight locations in the area. The author is also interested in interpreting the witchcraft narrative as a *story with an open ending*. The key interview is with Badea Avrămuț, a “local storyteller” and victim of malpractice. The interview reveals the conflict between the two rationalities, “scientific, medical rationality” and “magical rationality”, and how the belief that he has been bewitched helps him maintain his status within the community.

Tunde Komaromi (Associate Professor at the Department of Communication and Media Studies, Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary), in her article “Marriage and Magic in a Transylvanian Village”, studies the influence of magic on marriages in the Transylvanian village, how the act of magic influences the conclusion or, on the contrary, the dissolution of marriages, and the interpretative role that magic plays in the collective mind when it comes to villagers explaining why a young man has remained unmarried, why quarrels between spouses undermined their relationship or why one of the spouses has died: “witchcraft is a convenient explanation for inexplicable misfortunes”, the author observes. One of Tunde Komaromi’s most interesting observations is that no marriage contracted by appealing to witches has a smooth and happy course. They all fail, in one way or another, through divorce, illness or the death of one of the spouses.

Laura Jiga Iliescu (Senior Researcher at the “Constantin Brăiloiu” Institute of Ethnography and Folklore in Bucharest, The Romanian Academy, and Associate Professor at the University of Bucharest), in “Oneiric Authentication of a Miraculous Shrine: Case Study from a Dobruja Monastery, Romania”, deals with an unusual cultural phenomenon in the form of the healings that take place at an ancient stone cross, which, 20 years after the emergence of the mystical phenomenon, has come into the custody of an Orthodox Christian monastery. Iliescu focused on analysing the narrative strategy that gave Christian authority to the site. These are mainly a series of legends that relate the origin of the healing cross to the local Christian martyrdom past.

“Reflections on Christian Magic”, by Astrid Cambose (Researcher at the Department of Literary History, “Alexandru Philippide” Institute of Romanian Philology, Romanian Academy Iași Branch), deals with the interferences between religion and magic through an analysis of Christian magic. Although magic is condemned by the Christian churches, in practice some ordinary believers, fortune tellers and clairvoyants – exponents of popular religion – resort to magic rituals by fasting for magical purposes, using priestly cures, performing ‘black liturgies’ and consecrating various objects in church which they then use in magic rituals.

In “The Magical Power of Caluș Against Iele’s Possession in Dolj County”, Mihaela (Marin) Călinescu (Research Assistant at the Romanian Book and Exile Museum in Craiova) analyses the healing of the person “taken from Caluș” by Iele (female mythological beings), a neuro-psychic disorder, within the ritualistic game of Caluș, revealing significant features such as the transfer of the illness from the victim to a member of the game band, the death and resurrection motif, the return from trance.

Starting from the description of an initiation ritual in Tamang shamanism in Nepal, Vasile Albineț (PhD in anthropology at the Department of Sociology, National School of Political and Administrative Studies (SNSPA), Romania), highlights in “Bolerako-cu! Speak, I’m Talking to You! Reconstructing the Self in Tamang Shamanism”, the importance of ritual in restoring psychic balance, the mental health of the subject undergoing this ritual and the way in which it confers identity, a “narrative of self”, in a world of instability and fragmentation. “Witches in Fairy Tales and their Use in Therapy” is Tunde Komaromi’s interview with Greta Vaskor, a dialogue between a psychotherapist specialising in family and individual therapy and an anthropologist who has delved into the

fields of magic and witchcraft. This interview reveals the healing importance of magic stories in therapy, as they engage the emotions and minds of patients and provide models for solving existential problems.

In this issue of *Martor* Nicolae Mihael (researcher in the Department of History and Archaeology, “C.S. Nicolăescu-Ploșor” Institute for Research in Social Sciences and Humanities at the Romanian Academy, Craiova, Romania) publishes an exciting article titled “Did White Swallowwort (*Vincetoxicum hirundinaria*) Exist or Not during the Organic Regulation Regime? Notes on some Previously Unknown Documents from Wallachia”. The article addresses the conflict between Romanian popular culture and modern culture, which has become state culture, based on the discovery of some unpublished documents in the archives of Romanați County, Wallachia, written in 1835 in which “the non-existence of the plant *white swallowwort*, famous in Romanian traditional legends, is publicly proclaimed”. It is said that this plant had magical properties, for example outlaws could pick the lock of any door or window, and would be protected from physical harm even if a posse shot arrows at them.

In “On ‘The Familial Occult’: An Interview with Alexandra Coțofană” Anamaria Iuga (head of the Ethnological Studies Department at the National Museum of the Romanian Peasant, Bucharest, Romania) interviews Alexandra Coțofană about the book she coordinated, *The Familial Occult: Encounters at the Margins of Critical Autoethnography*, a volume that studies researchers from the social sciences and humanities who have been initiated into various magical practices within their families.

The last part of the anthropological magazine *Martor* (“Reading Notes and Book Reviews”) contains reviews and reading notes in which magic is approached from an interdisciplinary perspective including the disciplines of ethno-anthropology and literature, and from the angle of art history and the history of religion. Here we read about the occurrence of archetypal magical images in Romanian art (Bogdan Neagota’s “Notes on the Iconography of Witchcraft in Romanian Art”), the witch hunt in the Basque region in the 1609-1614 period (Ileana Benga’s “Insights on Magic and Early Christianity”) and the interpretation of gemstone amulets in Late Antiquity by Hajnalka Tamas (“Magical Objects, Magical Writing: Amulets Across the Ages”).

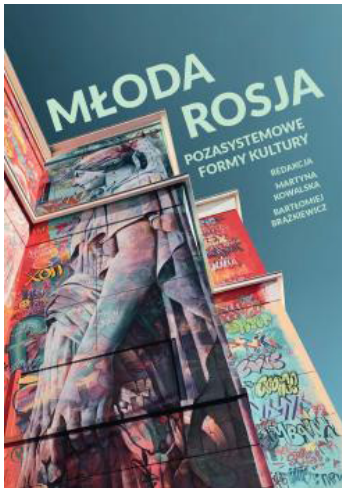
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Young Russia: Non-System Forms of Culture. The Other View of Russia

MŁODA ROSJA: POZASYSTEMOWE FORMY KULTURY,
red. Martyna Kowalska i Bartłomiej Brązkiewicz, Kraków:
Wydawnictwo Księgarnia Akademicka 2024, ss. 182

[*YOUNG RUSSIA: NON-SYSTEM FORMS OF CULTURE*, ed. Martyna Kowalska and Bartłomiej Brązkiewicz, Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka Publishing 2024, 182 pp.]



The book *Young Russia: Non-System Forms of Culture* is a result of collaboration between researchers from various universities and institutions, including the Estonian Literary Museum, Humboldt University, Jagiellonian University, and the University of Bordeaux. The interdisciplinary approach of the publication ensures a diverse range of perspectives and points of view, contributing to the book's universal quality and making it of interest to different academic disciplines.

The publication comprises nine articles preceded by an introduction in which the publication's main idea is outlined. This part includes general definitions of revolt (in the context of Russian culture), system and non-system, which are subsequently developed in the following chapters. Rebellion is defined as opposition to a system that represents enduring values that have been established for centuries and which are widely accepted by society and state authorities. Furthermore, the system is the officially sanctioned and dominant cultural trends, while non-system represents an alternative culture and opposition to the ubiquitous socio-cultural-political system. In addition, the editors, Martyna Kowalska and Bartłomiej Brązkiewicz, describe the challenging process of publication, which

was temporarily suspended due to Russian aggression in Ukraine in February 2022. The difficult path from writing to publication serves to enhance the value of the book. The authors were aware of the geopolitical shifts occurring in the world, and although they do not explicitly refer to these changes in articles, they incorporate them into their analyses.

Despite its alphabetical rather than thematic order, *Young Russia...* is a coherent and complementary account of various forms of rebellion. However, two of the nine texts are particularly noteworthy as they address broader cultural issues beyond the conventional boundaries of art. The first article, by Michał Kuryłowicz, touches upon the topic of historical education, while the other paper, by Sergey Troitskiy, examines the subject of humour, irony, and memes, which are the most contemporary phenomenon in this area. The remaining texts, although they refer to these *expected* areas of culture, are also interesting and unconventional. Researchers frequently turn to niche works, which are often unobvious and even shocking (e.g. *Плюс жизнь¹, 28 дней²*). These publications reveal a different face of Russian contemporary culture, which differs significantly from the commonly known official mainstream culture and art. On the one hand, they illustrate the challenges facing Russian society, but on the other, they offer a glimmer of hope for change. Currently, the voices of opposition and disagreement are relatively quiet. Additionally, the war has further stunted change, yet it is hoped that over time society will become more and more aware and, despite the threats, will stand against the prevailing system. However, at the present time, official discourse does not permit discussion of social pathologies (such as homelessness, poverty, drug addiction, diseases), war, feminism, etc.

The main theme of the book is the concept of the *non-system*. The researchers offer various interpretations of this term, yet all of them share a common thread: an attempt to transcend the limitation of the socio-cultural and political framework. Artists and phenomena challenge the reality in various ways. These include, for example, writers who remain outside the mainstream, directors who address current social issues, playwrights who are not afraid to break social taboos. In addition, the book also touches on different cultural spheres: literature, drama, poetry, history, humour, and music. These fields seem to be different from each other, but the featured artists are united by one goal: to go beyond the familiar, to show the truth about the world and to break free from patterns.

In order to demonstrate the comprehensive and multifaceted scope of the book, it is necessary to discuss its individual parts. The publication commences with a paper titled “Non-System Dimensions in Sergey Arno’s Works” by Bartłomiej Brażkiewicz. The author presents a broad definition of culture, with a particular focus on Russian culture. He goes on to analyse works written by Arno, who uses irony and satire to mask criticism. The most significant issue is for the writer is *to be himself*, even if it results in misunderstanding.

The second article presents remarks on contemporary cinematography in Russia and the phenomenon of Sokurov’s Masterclasses, particularly the works of Kira Kovalenko, which address the topic of The Caucasus. Olga Caspers bases her research on the concept of “своеволе”³ and subsequently presents Kovalenko’s films as a sign of protest.

The following paper concerns poetry. Maria Stepanova’s poems are analysed in the context of war. The language is deconstructed in the manner analogous to the surrounding world during war, resulting in the style that is curt and sharp. Florence Corrado also examines the role of language, words, and their deconstruction in critical situations.

The next article, by Martyna Kowalska, concerns committed literature in which the authors oppose injustice. Moreover, the article illustrates the critical situation of the Russian social welfare system and points to the ongoing problem of a lack of support for people in crises. The main text is preceded by an introduction in which the author defines the idea of committed literature.

The text by Michał Kuryłowicz, which has already been discussed above, is in turn a discussion of Nikolai Rozov’s concept of history. In it, the author presents the researcher’s proposal to purge Russian history of myths and political games. Furthermore, the author attempts to analyse the phenomenon of Russia’s self-definition over the years and concludes with his reflections on the events of February 2022.

The next researcher, Marta Lechowska, addresses the subject of theatre, or more precisely anti-theatre. She provides a description of the activities of Mikhail Ugarov, who put forward the thesis that theatre is an anachronism that has remained in the past and does not respond to the needs of the contemporary world. The director, who departs from the conventional approach, is increasingly perceived as an extremist in the Russian reality, largely due to his documentary theatre productions that expose the truth.

The following text, written by Pascale Melani, contains an analysis of the feminist drama *28 дней*. The playwright presents the stories of the female biological cycle in her drama, which is divided into sections corresponding to specific phases. This article draws attention to the problem of feminism in Russia and topics related to femininity, which are still perceived as taboo.

Sergey Troitskiy's paper focuses on theories of humour and irony, as well as the online space as a venue for young people to express their rebelliousness. In addition, the article extensively addresses the concept of Aesopian language, which can also be used as an instrument of opposition.

The final text concerns music that transcends the mainstream due to its artistic nature. Elżbieta Żak focuses on a particular band's alternative music, which defies all genres. Their concerts are rather performances than conventional musical events. As a result, they attract a large number of fans, not only in Russia.

Young Russia... appears as a voice of justice that does more than merely highlight Russia's pessimistic, authoritarian, and anti-European characteristics. The authors initiate a crucial discussion on those who oppose national power and those who are outside the cultural mainstream. The book demonstrates that Russia is not an authoritarian monolith, as it allows for the expression of dissenting voices. The researchers highlight the phenomenon of the "system vs non-system" opposition within different groups (writers, playwrights, musicians, etc.) and in different subject areas. There are overt political objections, but also disagreements with certain actions in social and cultural life. However, the main problem in Russia is that the very refusal to support those in power is an anti-political and anti-Kremlin expression. All forms of nonconformity are suppressed, yet the creators persevere. Despite being misunderstood and marginalised, their work holds a significant position within the culture. It is possible that dissident traditions are developing once more in Russia. Although they will affect only a few, the courageous artists will leave a lasting mark on history.

This book can serve as an excellent foundation for students who have just started their research path, but it could also become an extension of existing studies for more experienced researchers. Using relatively straightforward language, the group of specialists present different forms of protest against the national power and socio-cultural system. Despite the multiplicity of opinions expressed, the book presents a coherent narration of contemporary Russia. *Young Russia...* represents a premilitary step towards further discussions on

non-system culture in Russia, as well as an attempt to revisit Russia and the research on it and the conversations that have almost completely fallen silent with the advent of the war. This book demonstrates that Russia is a diverse country where not everyone accepts authoritarian rule, injustice, and the consideration of problems as taboo subjects.

Notes

¹ Eng. *Plus Life*.

² Eng. *28 Days*.

³ Eng. wilfulness.

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Wiktoria Jarska, MA in Polish philology at the Jagiellonian University and a third-year student of the Bachelor's degree in Russian Studies. Her research interests lie in the areas of the history of Polish literature (especially 19th and early 20th century) and Russian literature, as well as comparative literary studies. In addition, she expands her research to include social, cultural and anthropological perspectives. She has also been engaged in the study of Polish as a foreign language for the past two years.

New books on semiotics

Two books on interdisciplinary semiotic studies in the space of Balkano-Balto-Slavica were published in Moscow. They present the proceedings of two conferences under the same titles held in 2022 and 2023 at the Institute of Slavic Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow).

Semiotics in the Past and Present. Ed.-in-chief I. A. Sedakova, eds. M. V. Zavyalova, N. V. Zlydneva, A. B. Ippolitova. Moscow: Institute of Slavic Studies, 2023. – 384 p., ill. ISBN 978-5-7576-0488-6 DOI 10.31168/7576-0488-6

The book includes 21 articles on the theory and history of semiotics, linguistics, folklore, mythology, ethnology, literary studies and poetics, history of arts and cinema.

The “Foreword. A View on Semiotics from the 21st Century” by *Maria Zavyalova, Natalia Zlydneva, Irina Sedakova* sheds light on the achievements of the international semiotics with an accent on the works of the Moscow-Tartu school and the publications by the scholars of the Department of Typology and Comparative Linguistics at the Institute of Slavic Studies (Russian Academy of Sciences). The authors describe the major aims of the semiotic project which are coordinated with the centennial jubilee of Jury M. Lotman (2022) and are designed to evaluate the role of the semiotics and its place in the contemporary academic studies.

Sergey Zenkin in his article “Semiosis and mimesis” notes that mimesis quite often serves as a means of communication between people or animals, and it should be compared with other forms of communication, based upon exchange of signs. He revises the very notion of mimesis and suggests that the mimesis of representation (artistic or not) should be replaced by a mimesis of communication between two or more independent subjects. The author outlines the differences between mimetic and semiotic types of communication.

Igor Pilshchikov dedicates his article “‘System’ and structure’ as terms and concepts (Shpet – Tynianov – Jakobson – Lotman)” to the study of the evolution of the corresponding terms as applied to literature and art by the Russian formalists and some of subsequent structuralist theorists from the 1920s to the 1980s. Yuri Tynianov’s, Gustav Shpet’s, Grigorii Vinokur’s and Roman

Jakobson's ideas paved the way for Yuri Lotman's dialectics of system and structure. According to Lotman, a structure (=text) birthed from a system (=language) metamorphoses into a system in itself, consequently giving rise to new structures (=texts).

Svetlana Tolstaya publishes the article "Propp's method and the problem of typology of Slavic mythological characters" in which she discusses the possibility of using the method of Vladimir Propp for studying the structure and history of the Russian fairy tale to the analysis of Slavic folk mythology. She suggests that the function of a mythological character, just as Propp's classification of fairy tales is based on the concept of a function (i.e. action) of a hero, can serve as one of the typologically significant indicators (along with the habitat, time and place of appearance, etc.).

Georgiy Levinton in his article "Notes on Jakobson's epistolary heritage" offers some observations on the two main epistolary corpora of Roman Jakobson. He analyses the letters from Nikolay Trubetsky to Jakobson and correspondence of Jakobson with K. Levi-Strauss. The author comments on the nature of the correspondence, its pragmatics and Jakobson's attitude to the history of science.

Natalia Zlydneva's article "The problem of modality in painting and the heritage of the Moscow-Tartu school" draws on the problems of studying visual art in the Moscow-Tartu semiotic school, as well as the problem of correlation between theoretical views and artistic practice in the Soviet humanities. Based on the analysis of the 1979 article by Yu.K. Lekomtsev (1929 - 1984) "The Process of Abstraction in Visual Art", the conclusion is made about the breakthrough potentials of the semiotic approach of the scientist to the study of the modality of an image. It is shown how Lekomtsev's article reflected the realities of Khrushchev's "thaw" - the perception of contemporary Western art, as well as the experience of the 1920s generation of artists-expressionists.

Dmitry Polyakov in the article "Semiotic essayistics: works of Vladimír Macura on the history of culture" highlights little-known studies of Czech culture in Russia, written by Vladimír Macura (1945-1999), a Czech philologist, cultural historian, translator and writer, author of the books "The Sign of Birth (National Revival as a Type of Culture)", "The Czech Dream" (about the most important Czech cultural constants), "Happy Time" (about the culture of the era of socialism), etc. Even in his early publications Macura demonstrated his passion for the ideas of the Moscow-Tartu semiotic school.

Irina Sedakova dedicated her article “Bulgarian festive March and semiotic models of calendric time” to the complex analyses of unique festive month in the Bulgarian Ritual Year. March has absorbed the models of several calendric systems – the Thracian, ancient Greek, Balkan and Slavic, pre-Christian and Christian ones. Recently some state feasts have been added to this combination and they made the whole calendric picture even more varied. In spite of the complex genesis of the March rituals, the configuration of the fixed and moveable feasts of the Easter cycle, Gregorian and Julian calendars, the holiday system in Bulgaria looks very harmonious. The feast of Forty Martyrs of Sebaste is scrutinized in detail.

Anna Plotnikova, Natalia Golant published the article “The beginning and end of life as a single complex of ideas (Based on ethnolinguistic materials of the beginning of the 21st century)”, in which they explore lexical and ritual-magical parallels between childbirth and funeral-commemorative customs. They have collected data in two archaic regions among the Russian Old Believers in Romania (Dobruja) and the Vlachs (Romanians) in eastern Serbia (the vicinity of Zajecar). The authors also turn to a wider cultural and linguistic background, drawing on material from various Slavic languages (Serbian, Bulgarian, Slovak, etc.), Romanian and, more broadly, from the Indo-European context.

Maria Zavyalova in her article “‘Way of the Rose’ in the incantations of the Balto-Slavic area” denotes the areas of distribution of the charm texts. It is not always easy to trace the paths of plot migration from one local tradition to another. In the case of the “text of the rose”, i.e. the story about the way of a divine character with roses in his hand reveals gaps: among the Slavs it is common only to Belarussians, while in Lithuania it is represented both in the Lithuanian, but also by the Polish tradition.

Inna Shved devotes her article “Semiotics of the house in modern oral stories about the funeral and memorial rites of the Brest region” to the study of the house as a key element in the locative code of the Slavic funeral and commemorative rituals. The narratives recorded in the last two decades Brest region (Belarus) reflect the “spatial picture of the semiosphere” (Yu. Lotman). The correlation of the topography of the rite and the ritual text with the mythological and real space is analyzed, as well as the category of the boundary, through which the semiotic oppositions “one’s own – someone else’s”, “internal – external”, “center – periphery”, “top – bottom”, “living – dead”, etc. are introduced.

T.A. *Mikhailova* wrote her article “Cú Chulainn as Culann’s dog: towards a reconstruction of an archaic mythological motive” starting with the investigation of the episode in which the Irish epic hero got his name Cu Chulainn, i.e. *Culan-the-Smith’s Hound*. In early Ireland, the prefix ‘Cu’ (Hound) was used in names of kings and of heroes, as it is generally considered, to denote warrior status. The author does not fully agree with this straightforward interpretation. She draws attention to the fact that the Irish hero is referred to as not just *Hound*, but as *Smith’s Hound*, so she makes parallels with the Indo-European cult of the smith in general and the “smith myth” in the Irish tradition in particular.

Several articles are dedicated to literary studies: A.V. *Toporova* “Relations between the Living and the Dead in Dante’s Comedy”, J. *Vojvodić* „Semiotics of Chichikov’s way” and N.A. *Fateeva* „Poetry as a self-reproducing system”. Historians also publish articles on various aspects of Medieval and modern times: V.Ja. *Petrukhin* “Rus’ and alien ethno-confessional space in the initial annals” and N.S. *Gusev* “Symbols of ‘own’ and ‘somebody else’s’ in the descriptions of Bulgaria by Russian travelers of the turn of the 19th – 20th centuries on the example of the work of N.A. Epanchin”. Arts history is touched upon by *Liudmila Akimova* “Dog on Durer’s engraving “Melencolia I”, *Inna Merkoulouva*, *Marina Merkoulouva* “About the Semiotics of Passions in the modern Theater Space: Questions for Reflection” and *Denis Viren* “‘The Man from London’ by Béla Tarr: an observer in space”. Last but not least in the book is a memorial essay by *Andrey Toporkov* “Meetings with Yu. M. Lotman (1977–1984)”.

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An essay by *Maxim Makartsev* & *Irina Sedakova* “Moscow Balkan studies and semiotics in 1970–1989 (myth, folklore, ritual)” sheds light on the history of the semiotics in the USSR and Russia in 1970-1990, in one of the centers of the Moscow-Tartu school of semiotics – Institute of Slavic studies, Russian academy of sciences, Moscow. The Institute was the place where the distinguished acad-

emicians Vyach.Vs. Ivanov and V.N. Toporov have been doing their innovative research and made their publications. Their colleagues and younger scholars follow the major paths that have been shown by the distinguished academicians.

Dmitry Polyakov in his paper “‘Living semiotics’ by Venko Andonovski: Between the lexicon and the manifesto” analyzes the ways the semiotician approach is being used in the modern humanitarian field of knowledge, according to the famous Macedonian writer and philologist Venko Andonovski. *Maria Zavyalova* (Moscow) in her essay “To the Question of the snake/serpent mythologeme in the Baltic tradition: Eglè – Queen of Serpents” follows the traditional scheme of semiotician research methods and gives a detailed investigation into a chthonian character which appears in various genres of Baltic folklore. *Oksana Tchoekha* discusses ethnolinguistic issues of the folk terminology and its links to the ritual year in her essay “Months named after festivals in the modern Greek folk calendar”. *Nikita Gusev* dedicated his paper “Youth of Bulgaria and Bulgarians in Russian Journalism at the turn of the 19th – 20th centuries” to the notions of young and old age in the depiction of Bulgaria and shows the polysemic character, positive and negative axiology of these two notions. *Anna Leontyeva* in her paper “Jewelleries of the inhabitants of Sofia in hereditary records of the end of the 17th – beginning of the 18th century: Values and their symbolic character” investigates the Osman texts and describes the values of Christians and Muslims, two neighboring confessions in the Balkans, to show the tolerance in their relations. Cinema studies are an obligatory part of semiotic studies, so *Denis Viren* in his paper „Co-productions in the ‘Eastern Bloc’ cinema and the problem of borders” pays attention to the semiotic values of the borders and the metaphors of Western and Eastern societies back in the times of the socialist block.

Finally, *Nataliya Zlydneva* writes about the “Graphics by Edvard Wiiralt and its parallels: Towards the problem on semiotics of passions in art”. The well-known Estonian artist chooses the ugly features and creatures in the world and gives the audience their visual interpretation. Part of his graphics *The Hell* is used in the design of the cover of the book.

Both books are published in Russian language with resumes in English. They can be downloaded free the site of Institute of Slavic Studies https://inslav.ru/sites/default/files/editions/2023_balcanica_8.pdf; <https://inslav.ru/sites/default/files/editions/2023semiotika.pdf>.

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Humans and Bears

Svetoslava Toncheva *Humans and Bears: Politics and Coexistence Models*. Sofia: Prof. Marin Drinov, 2022, 178 p.2022
(Хора и мечки. Политики и модели на съжителство. София, 2022)



Svetoslava Toncheva's monograph *Humans and Bears: Politics and Coexistence Models* falls within the field of several anthropologies. On the one hand, it is influenced by the posthuman turn in social sciences and humanities and therefore engages with the anthropology known as multispecies anthropology, labelled with definitions such as posthuman, extrahuman or more-than-human. This anthropology seeks to transcend both the anthropocentric perspective and the nature–culture divide, as well as view both human and non-human species as actors who *jointly* participate in political, economic and

social processes. On the other hand, the book is an example of engaged anthropology, an anthropology that not only deals with issues that excite or trouble (parts of) our society, such as policies and practices of biodiversity conservation and encounters between humans and large carnivores, in this case, but also attempts to provide models that could be useful for solving these problems.

Coexistence is the key word both in the title and in the whole monograph. The author strives to answer the question of how successful coexistence between human and non-human species could be achieved, with brown bears in particular. In order to provide answers, Svetoslava Toncheva presents two case studies from two small areas in the Rhodopi mountains in southern Bulgaria that allow for a comparison to be made. In the collection of empirical materials, and in their analysis, she relies on the approaches of multispecies ethnography, selecting those that appear fruitful for the purposes of her research, adaptively combining them into an approach of her own, which she calls ethnography of

multispecies encounters. To reveal the human attitudes and practices she applies classical ethnographic methods, placing an accent on human knowledge and experience related to brown bears, whilst to understand the knowledge and behaviour of brown bears she relies on long-term observations and research by an ecologist and expert on brown bears, for whom bears are, so to say, an ecotourism resource. Local ecological knowledge is analysed as differentiated for the various groups among local communities as defined by characteristics such as age, gender, occupation and activity (children, women, hunters). In doing so, the author demonstrates that knowledge is not homogeneous and unified for the general population in a single village. Toncheva's observations and reflections on the relationship between local ecological knowledge and practical experience, and how these influence perceptions of wild animals, are also worth the reader's attention. Actor-network theory serves as a framework for the interpretation of relationships and interactions between humans and bears, with the latter assigned the role of a relevant actant. The analysis of human–bear interactions provides valid reasons for the division of the inhabited space into three categories: “intimate” space inhabited by humans, “intimate” space inhabited by bears, and an intermediate coexistence space, periodically and cyclically used by both species. Similar distinction makes it possible to understand that conflict between humans and bears mainly occurs when one species crosses the boundary into the intimate space of the *other*.

The two case studies provide divergent results. In the first case, human–bear coexistence can be identified as rather harmonious or adaptive (where people and bears adapt to each other's presence), while in the second conflict is apparent. These differences are not only a result of the differentiated knowledge and experience, and boundary crossing, but also of the economic benefits or losses of coexistence. In the first case, sustainable ecotourism based on bear observation and tracking of bear signs brings some financial benefit to a small part of the local community. In the other case, the income is only related to compensation payments in cases of bear induced damage (destroyed beehives, dead livestock, etc.). These payments, however, appear insufficient and related to complex and lengthy procedures. This contributes to the formation and maintenance of negative attitudes towards bears. The empirical material and Toncheva's reflections demonstrate that the protection model of wild species through compensatory payments, widely applied in Europe and around the world, can hardly be viewed as successful.

Which conservation model would be successful is actually a question that preoccupies the author for most of the book. She reviews the main conservation models throughout the history of nature protection, most of which appear to be based on the culture–nature dichotomy, which has prevailed over the centuries in philosophy, natural sciences and politics. It is for this reason that these models are being criticised. Based on her ideas regarding coexistence and her observations on the cohabitation practices of humans and brown bears, Svetoslava Toncheva argues in favour of the novel approach elaborated by Bram Büscher and Robert Fletcher in 2019, i.e. that of convivial conservation.

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