

**THE 14TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE IN ESTONIAN STUDIES, AND THE 5TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “BALKAN AND BALTIC STATES IN UNITED EUROPE: HISTORY, RELIGION AND CULTURE V”**

**Tartu, Estonia & online, 18–22 September 2022**

From September 18 to 22, 2022, the Estonian Literary Museum in Tartu, Estonia, hosted two parallel and joint conferences – the 14th Annual Conference of the Centre of Excellence in Estonian Studies, and the 5th International Conference “The Balkan and Baltic States in United Europe: History, Religion and Culture V”. The conference was held with the support of the Centre of Excellence in Estonian Studies, the Department of Folkloristics of the Estonian Literary Museum, the Estonian Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and the International Society for Balkan and Baltic Studies. The organizing committee of the double international scientific forum included the following researchers from Estonia and Bulgaria: Mare Kõiva, Ekaterina Anastasova, Svetoslava Toncheva, and Anastasiya Fiadotava (heads), Sergey Troitskiy and Maris Kuperjanov (secretaries), Evgenia Troeva-Grigorova, Piret Voolaid, Milena Lubenova, Tõnno Jonuks, and Reet Hiimäe. The committee chose the topic “Nature and Culture in Ritual, Narrative and Belief” as the main unifying theme of the 14th Annual Conference of the Centre of Excellence in Estonian Studies. The selection of the main research topic by the above-mentioned researchers is based on the assumption that the binary opposition nature/culture (formulated by Claude Lévi-Strauss) is often seen in traditional and modern societies, and that this opposition finds multiple applications in many folk genres, in beliefs and customs of the calendar and family life cycle, in folk religious practices, in language, etc. On the other hand, the organizing committee of the event assumed that nature and culture are not always opposed; they are mutually connected and complementary. Based on this, the main unifying theme absolutely fits into the context of the relatively newly emerging fields of research aimed at a different, non-anthropocentric study of the world-more-than-human geography, multispecies ethnography, archaeology of fullness, etc., based on the posthuman vision of the world (J. Igoe, W. Dressler, E. Kohn, E. Maris, B. Büscher and R. Fletcher, S. Toncheva, etc.). The interest, according to the above-mentioned researchers, in such a study of the world in postmodern society is due to the increasingly acute challenges of climate change and, accordingly, the cultural attitude towards nature, actions and debates related to development and sustainability, standing at the centre of European and global rhetoric.

Finally, the choice of the theme stems from the fact that the study of the nature/culture dichotomy has become a broad interdisciplinary field where the humanities and social sciences collaborate with the earth and environmental sciences, economics, health, and food security. With such a focus on local and traditional environmental knowledge, and European mechanisms for nature protection, the lecture topics had as exemplary focal points: economy / political economy and coexistence of human and nature, arts and nature, nature/culture relationship in religion, traditional beliefs and practices, in festive ritual and life, in Paganism and Neo-Paganism. Meanwhile, as this 5th consecutive international conference marked fourteen years of meetings and discussions on the Balkans and the Baltic region in United Europe, the questions it asked were related to it, and were as follows: What has changed in the Balkan-Baltic region in the last fourteen years, and in this sense, how is its new history interpreted and rewritten? What is the situation with ethnic and religious communities there, and what new topics of debate are emerging in the Balkan-Baltic research space?

The conference was extremely eventful throughout the five days it was held. The first day, Sunday, 18 September, began with a seven-hour pre-conference workshop on the topic “Ecology of Nature and Ecology of Culture”. The next day of the conference, 19 September, coincided with the first day of the working week, Monday, kicking off the conference programme that was preceded by an official opening ceremony of the event with **Piret Voolaid** (Estonian Literary Museum) as the moderator. As VIP guests, **Tõnis Lukas**, Minister of Education and Research of the Republic of Estonia, and **Merike Kiipus**, the Acting Director of the Estonian Literary Museum, delivered congratulatory speeches to the organizers, lecturers, and guests of the international scientific forum in the main hall of the Estonian Literary Museum. Congratulatory words were also presented by **Mare Kõiva**, Head of the Centre of Excellence in Estonian Studies (Estonian Literary Museum), and online via Zoom connection by scientists from Bulgaria and Russia – **Ekaterina Anastasova** (Association of Balkan and Baltic Studies; Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with the Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), and **Irina Sedakova** (Institute of Slavic Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences).

The conference programme included four plenary lectures, given to the scientific audience by four researchers: Krzysztof Duda, Tõnno Jonuks, Marju Kõivupuu, and Yuri Berezkin. The first plenary lecture that opened the double international conference was the lecture by **Tõnno Jonuks** (Estonian Literary Museum), host of the event, on the topic “Nature, Nation, and Religion – The Appearance of Nature-Religion in Estonia”, with moderator **Eda Kalmre** (Estonian Literary Museum). Tõnno Jonuks is an archaeologist by profession, and his research interests are related to the materiality of religion between the early Mesolithic and the modern era, and the history of Estonian religions. His study of the prehistoric materiality of religion led him to a modern perception of

the past beliefs, and thus the religions of nature and modern paganism were a genuine continuity of ancient beliefs.

The second plenary lecture of the conference, also given on the same day, was by the Polish cultural anthropologist **Krzysztof Duda**, Head of the Department of Cultural Anthropology and Tourism at the Institute of Cultural Studies at the Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow, and Director of the Institute of Zootechnics in Krakow. The author of national and international publications in the fields of cultural anthropology, history of science and culture, Dr Duda is a member of the American Anthropological Association, the Carpathian Society, and *Res Carpathica*. In addition to this, Krzysztof Duda is a member of the History of Science Section of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Scientific Policy Committee affiliated with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Poland. His lecture was on the topic “Highlanders of the Eastern and Western Carpathians: Nature-People-Culture”. The moderator of the lecture was **Mare Kalda** (Estonian Literary Museum).

The third plenary lecture was also given by a representative of the hosts – **Marju Kõivupuu** (Centre for Landscape and Culture, School of Humanities, Tallinn University). She is Chairman of the Expert Council of Historical Natural Sanctuaries at the National Heritage Board of Estonia, folklorist and culturo-logist whose monographs reflecting her research interests related to the relationship between people, landscape and cultural heritage have been recognized not only at Tallinn University but also nationally throughout Estonia. Marju Kõivupuu supervises PhD candidates and gives lectures to graduate students on topics related to Estonian and comparative folklore, worldviews and religions, landscape heritage and everyday culture. She gave her plenary lecture on the fourth day of the conference, 21 September, on “Neo/Paganism and Nature Protection in the 21st Century”, moderated by **Piret Voolaid** (Estonian Literary Museum).

The fourth plenary speaker of the conference was Russian researcher **Yuri E. Berezkin**. He is Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor of the Department of Anthropology of the European University at Saint Petersburg, Head of the American Department of Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (*Kunstkamera*) of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and member of the Estonian Academy of Sciences. His research topics include cultural and political anthropology, comparative and non-classical mythology, folklore databases, distribution of folklore and mythological motifs as a source of data on ancient migration processes, prehistoric migrations and spheres of interaction and archaeology, and iconography of Native American art. Related to Professor Berezkin’s research interests listed above, he lectured on the closing day of the conference, 22 September, on “Prehistory in the Looking Glass of Oral Traditions (Following Traces of Ancient Mythologies in the Post A.D. 1500 Folklore)”. The plenary lecture was moderated by **Mare Kõiva** (Estonian Literary Museum).

The conference continued with the scientific papers presented in thematic sections. In section Gender – 1, with moderator **Anastasiya Fiadotava** (Estonian Literary Museum), three lectures were given: “Women’s External Pieties and Art: A Case of Old Believer Journal *Rodnaia Starina* (1927–1933)” by **Danila Rygovskiy** (University of Tartu), “Men’s Stories: Military Legends in Estonian Folklore” by **Eda Kalmre** (Estonian Literary Museum), and “Straight Edge, Veganism and Masculinity: Extreme American Subculture” by **Aimar Ventsel** (University of Tartu). In the Special Report section led by the same moderator, the floor was given to **Aado Lintrop** (Estonian Folklore Archives, Estonian Literary Museum) for the lecture “The Beast with Many Faces: Bears in Mansi Folklore and Mythology”.

**Arūnas Vaicekauskas**, moderator from the Vytautas Magnus University, led the Space and Water section, in which lectures were given by **Evy Johanne Håland** (Lifetime Government Grant Holder, Norwegian *statsstipendiat*, Arts Council, Norway) on “Water Sources and the Sacred in Modern and Ancient Greece”, and by **Victoria Legkikh** (Technical University of Munich) on “Holy Patrons of the City and Their Relics: From the Medieval Time to Modernity”. Meanwhile, in the Minorities section, led by moderator **Nikolai Kuznetsov** (Estonian Literary Museum), two lectures could be listened to: “Mordva (Ersa) Material in Estonian Collections and Ersa-Moksha Communities in Estonia” by **Natalia Ermakov**, and “Bilingual Ditties in the Modern Life of Udmurts of the Village Dyrdashur (Sharkhanskiy Rayon of Udmurt Republic)” by **Pavel Kutergin** (University of Tartu). The final event on this day of the conference was the workshop on the topic “Sacred Sites as Sites of Problems” with the participants **Kristel Kivari** (University of Tartu), **Elo-Hanna Seljamaa** (University of Tartu), **Tõnno Jonuks** (Estonian Literary Museum), and **Lona Päll** (Estonian Folklore Archives, Estonian Literary Museum).

On 20 September, ten sections worked in parallel at the conference, including the Gender-2 section, which was a continuation of the connecting scientific topic in the Gender-1 section, presented on the previous day of the conference. Its moderator **Lina Gergova** (Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) gave the floor to **Alexander A. Novik** (Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (Kunstkamera) of the Russian Academy of Sciences; Saint Petersburg State University) for the lecture “From Headscarf to Hijab: Headdresses of Muslim Albanian Women in the Changing Balkans in the 20th – Early 21st Century”, and to **Monika Balikienė** (Vilnius Institute for Advanced Studies) for the lecture “Love Magic: Spells on Menstrual Blood in Lithuania”.

In the section Forms of the Relationship Between Human and Nature – 1, with moderator **Irina Stahl** (Institute of Sociology, Romanian Academy of Sciences), the following scientific reports were presented: “Old Shrines, New Worshipers: Cultural Practices for Connection with Nature” by **Evgenia Troeva** (Institute of Ethnology and

Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), “Ecological Funeral: New Ideas in Contemporary Lithuania” by **Rasa Račiūnaitė-Paužolienė** (Vytautas Magnus University), “Developmentalism vs. Environmentalism or How Biodiversity and Grazing Livestock Husbandry Coexist?” by **Atanaska Stancheva** (Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), and “Convivial Conservation in Theory and Practice: Human-Bear Coexistence in the Mountains of Bulgaria” by **Svetoslava Toncheva** (Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) and **Robert Fletcher** (Wageningen University, Netherlands).

After the presented reports, the topic of the relationship between human and nature smoothly moved to the section Human and Animal, with moderator **Svetoslava Toncheva** (Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), where the following lectures were given: “Natural and Cultural Dimensions of a Snake in Bulgarian Folklore and Rituals: Semiotic and Ethnolinguistic Approach” by **Irina Sedakova** (Institute of Slavic Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences), “Diseases in Traditional Culture and Contemporary Society (Smallpox Variola Vera and Monkeypox)” by **Ekaterina Anastasova** (Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), and “Mythologems and Motifs of the ATU 570\* (Pied Piper) Plot Type in the Texts and Beliefs of the Belarusians and Estonians. Zoofolkloristics” by **Elena Boganeva** (Centre for Research of Belarusian Culture, Language and Literature, NASB) and **Mare Kõiva** (Estonian Literary Museum). This section, like the section Forms of the Relationship Between Human and Nature – 1, contributed thematically to the scientific work on 21 September, the penultimate day of the conference, of the section Human-Nature Relationships – 2, moderated by **Katre Kikas** (Estonian Literary Museum). Three very interesting lectures were presented there: “Zoofolkloristics: Water Horses in Belief Narratives – 3” by **Mare Kõiva** (Estonian Literary Museum), “Colours in Belief Narratives” by **Andres Kuperjanov** (Estonian Literary Museum), and “Nature in the Service of Satire: Zoomorphic Caricatures in the Russian Empire 1890–1905. The Balkan and Baltic Case” by **Sergey Troitskiy** (Estonian Literary Museum). The Human and Nature – 2 section was preceded by two more scientific reports on the same topic, united in the Human and Nature – 1 section with moderator **Ieva Pigozne** (Institute of Latvian History, University of Latvia). These were “The Tribal Narrative of Reverence and Resilience: A Study of the Entangled Natureculture Relation in the Folklore of Gujjars and Bakerwals Tribe of Jammu and Kashmir” by **Tanu Gupta** and **Quleen Kaur Bijral** (Indian Institute of Technology Jammu), and “Walking as Artistic Research: More-than-Human Agency in a Performative Ritual” by **Mari Keski-Korsu** (Aalto University). Finally, the topics human/animal and human/nature were supported by another very important topic – “Protection of Nature/Culture”, which gave the title to

a section moderated by **Liisi Laineste** (Estonian Literary Museum). The lectures given there were: “Study of Divination Technologies to Enhance a Deep Listening of Nature” by **Juan Duarte** (Aalto University), and “Nature for Protection, Nature for Sale: Conservation, Livelihoods and Social Conflicts in the Case of Bolata Bay in Bulgaria” by **Ivaylo Markov** and **Desislava Pileva** (Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences).

Nine of the research papers at the conference were united by the space sections. In the section Space – 1, moderated by **Rasa Račiūnaitė-Paužoliienė** (Vytautas Magnus University), the floor was first given to **Irina Stahl** (Institute of Sociology, Romanian Academy of Sciences) for the lecture “Crosses and Flowers of the Fields. A New Form of Romanian Religious Folk-Art”. This was followed by **Milena Lyubenova** (Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) with the paper “The Hidirellez Feast in Northeastern Bulgaria”, and **Solveiga Krumina-Konkova** (Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, University of Latvia) and **Karlis Aleksandrs Konkovs** (Faculty of Geography and Earth Sciences, University of Latvia) with the presentation “Life by the Lake: Lubana Region and Its People in Nature, History and Culture”. In the section Space-2, the moderator was **Gavrail Gavrailov** (Plovdiv University, Bulgaria), and the lectures given there were “Life in a Coronavirus: Leisure Inside and Outside the Home Space in Lithuania” by **Rasa Paukštytė-Šakniene** (Lithuanian Institute of History), ““There is (not) such a bird out there’: Conflicts of Knowledge in the Process of Designation and Management of Natura 2000 Sites” by **Petar Petrov** (Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgaria Academy of Sciences), and “New Sites and Rituals to Recall Vanished Cultural Landscapes (Villages under Reservoirs Waters in Bulgaria)” by **Lina Gergova** (Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences). The third consecutive section of Space – 3 was moderated by **Alexander A. Novik** (Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (Kunstkamera) of the RAS; SPSU) and united three papers. These were “Protected Area of Rupite, Bulgaria: Sacred Legitimization of Secular Interests” by **Violeta Periklieva** (Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), “Danurbanity – Valorisation of Local Heritage in Ulpia Escus-Novae Bulgarian Region (Belene, Nikopol, Gulyantsi, Svishtov)” by **Gavrail Gavrailov** (Plovdiv University, Bulgaria), and “The Pragmatic Basis of Figurative Nomination (On the Example of Belarusian Microtoponymy)” by **Tatiana Oliferchuk** (Centre for Research of Belarusian Culture, Language and Literature, NASB).

Another conference section, which united nine research reports, was dedicated to customs, beliefs, and rituals. The moderator of the Customs, Beliefs and Rituals – 1 section, **Žilvytis Šaknys** (Lithuanian Institute of History), gave the floor to **Bidisha Chakraborty** (Banaras Hindu University) for the lecture “Carving a Sacred Canopy:

Confluence of Nature and Culture in the Marwa Ritual and Songs of the Bhojpuri Community in India”, **Archita Banerjee** (Banaras Hindu University) for “The Ritual of Itu: Making Space for Nature-Culture Synthes”, and **Aurora Del Rio** (Aalto University, Department of Art and Media) for “Contaminating Mythologies”. The moderator of the Customs, Beliefs, and Rituals – 2 section was **Solveiga Krumina-Konkova** (University of Latvia). The lectures in this sections were “The Submerged Church at Zhrebchevo Dam: Sacral Site, Center, Scene” by **Yana Gergova** (Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), “Popular Beliefs and Sorcery Inducing Fertility at the Beginning of the 20th–21st Century: The Case of Lithuania” by **Nijolė Vailionytė** (Vytautas Magnus University), and “Folk Customs and Beliefs in Kosovo and Metohija Between the Two World Wars” by **Božica Slavković Mirić** (The Institute for Recent History of Serbia, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia). The third section, united by the theme of traditions and rituals, Customs, Beliefs and Rituals – 3, with moderator **Mare Kalda** (Estonian Literature Museum) worked on the next day of the conference, 21 September, during the entire forenoon, and five research papers were presented: “Ritual Dimensions in Calendrical Holidays” by **Kristina Blockytė-Naujokė** (Klaipeda University, Lithuania), “The Festival of the Finding of the Holy Icon (ΕΟΡΤΗ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΕΥΡΕΣΕΩΣ) or the Lanterns (Phanarakia), Tinos, Greece” by **Evy Johanne Håland** (Lifetime Government Grant Holder, Norwegian *statsstipendiat*, Arts Council, Norway), “Sacred Footwear: Latvian Perceptions in the 19th Century and Today” by **Ieva Pigozne** (Institute of Latvian History, University of Latvia), “Estonian Contemporary Beliefs and Narratives about Perpetual Motion Machines and Generators” by **Reet Hiemäe** and **Andrus Tins** (Estonian Literary Museum), and “Folk Performance Narratives in Kurubarpet Beershwara Jatre Ritualises the Kuruba Identity” by **Yashasvi M Maadesh** (Christ University).

**Božica Slavković Mirić**, in addition to being a lecturer, was the moderator of the Ethnobotany and Historiography section. There **Nadezhda Suntsova** (Izhevsk, Udmurtia) gave the lecture “Ethnobotanical Analysis of G.E. Vereschagin’s Works Devoted to the Traditional Economic Occupations of the Udmurts”, and **Pavlo Yermieiev** (V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University) presented his paper “Relationship Between Religion and Science in the Works of Mykhailo Maksymovych”.

In the section Migration, Identity – 1, with moderator **Aurora Del Rio** (Aalto University), the lectures given were: “Plants and Migration” by **Mariyanka Borisova** (Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), “Ruler Visibility, Public Space/Sphere, and Collective Identities in the Late Russian and Ottoman Empires” by **Darin Stephanov** (Kone Foundation), “Coloratives with a Dendrological Component as a Projection of the Worldview of Belarusians and Poles” by **Timur Buiko** (Centre for Research of Belarusian Culture, Language and Literature, NASB), “Celebration in Private and Public Spaces: Lithuanian Ritual Year in Three

Specific Periods” by **Žilvytis Šaknys** (Lithuanian Institute of History), and “Nature and Culture: Interaction Rites Between the Ukrainian War Refugees and the Society in Latvia (2022)” by **Māra Kiope** (Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Latvian University).

Estonian researcher **Tõnno Jonuks**, who was the first plenary speaker of the conference, also presented himself as a moderator in the Migration, Identity – 2 section. This section combined the following lectures: “Giulio Clovio. The ‘Foreigner’'s Creativity” by **Anna Troitskaya** (Estonian Literary Museum); “Sergey Smirnov About Relics in Serbia” by **Kornelija Ićin** (University of Belgrade); “Bulgarian Tolstoy Colony (1906–1908): Followers of the Religious and Ethnical Doctrine of Leo Tolstoy in the Village of Yasna Polyana, Primorsko Municipality, Bulgaria” by **Ralitsa Savova** (University of Pécs, Hungary), and “Baltic-Balkan Encounters in the Book-Migration: The Grand Duchy of Lithuania as a Provider by Liturgical Books: The Ethnicities of Byzantine Rite in the Hungarian Kingdom” by **Sándor Földvári** (Debrecen University, Hungary; Hungarian Academy of Sciences).

The five-day conference was also packed with seminars, five in total. In addition to the pre-conference workshop “Ecology of Nature and Ecology of Culture”, and the “Sacred Sites as Sites of Problems” workshop held on the first and second day of the conference respectively, the organizers of the Tartu Science Forum also offered the “Finnic-Ugric Animism”, “Art in COVID-19 Humour”, and “Estonian Singing” workshops. The “Finnic-Ugric Animism” workshop was led by **Laur Vallikivi** (Tartu University), and the speakers were **Eva Toulouze** (Tartu University, INALCO); **Stephan Dudeck** (Tartu University, IASS, Germany; University of Lapland, Finland); **Eszter Ruttkai-Miklian**, **Art Leete** (Tartu University), and **Nikolai Kuznetsov** (Estonian Literary Museum, Tartu University). The moderator of the first workshop, “Art in COVID-19 Humour”, was **Władysław Chłopicki** (Jagiellonian University). The discussant of the seminar was **Anna Pięcińska** (Marie Curie-Skłodowska University of Lublin), and the discussion was related to the following lectures: “Turning ‘Unknown’ Paintings into COVID-19 Memes as a Means of Humorous Criticism” by **Villy Tsakona** (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens) and **Dorota Brzozowska** (Opole University), “Mona Lockdown. The Use of Internet Memes in Humorous Corona Discourse” by **Ralph Müller** (Universität Freiburg, Institut für Allgemeine und Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft) and **Agata Hołobut** (Jagiellonian University in Kraków), “Cartoons and Memes: Images from Childhood used as Expressions in Adulthood” by **Saša Babič** (ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana, Slovenia) and **Jan Chovanec** (Masaryk University, Brno, Czechia), and “‘If God Asks...’: Hidden Emotions and Folk Beliefs in the ‘Mythical Meme’ of the Pandemic” by **Tsafi Sebba-Elran** (University of Haifa) and **Rita Repšienė** (Lithuanian Culture Research Institute, Vilnius). In one of the five scientific papers presented for discussion at this workshop, **Władysław Chłopicki** appeared not only as moderator, but also as co-lecturer, together with **Delia Dumitrica** (University of Rotterdam, Netherlands) and



**Anastasiya Fiadotava** (Estonian Literary Museum). The above-mentioned researchers gave a lecture titled “From Venus De Milo to Nike Ads: The Glocalization of Art References in COVID-19 Humour in Central and Eastern Europe”.

The theme of humour was continued after the workshop “Art in Covid-19 Humour”, with a presentation of the humour collection of Ivar Kallion. The venue of the event was the main hall of the Literary Museum. The event was followed by a visit of the conference participants to the Tartu Art Museum. After a five-day intensive scientific programme, the conference organizers announced its closing on the evening of 22 September with a cultural programme, an Indie group TARAI performance, preceded by a workshop on Estonian singing with **Taive Särg** (Estonian Folklore Archives, Estonian Literary Museum), who spoke about Forest Song Festivals, and **Janika Oras** (Estonian Folklore Archives, Estonian Literary Museum) on the topic “An Appetite for Singing. Singing Experiences of Elderly Singers in Estonia in the Context of Historical Singing Practices”. The content of the lectures given at the 14th Annual Conference of the Centre of Excellence in Estonian Studies, and the 5th International Conference “Balkan and Baltic States in United Europe: History, Religion and Culture V”, is to be published in a book in 2023.

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## **WORKSHOP “ART IN COVID-19 HUMOUR”**

The workshop “Art in COVID-19 humour” took place on 21 September 2022 within the framework of the 5th international conference “Balkan and Baltic States in United Europe: History, Religion, and Culture V”, which was held in Tartu, Estonia, on 18–22 September 2022. The project participants presented the research results of the year-long project “Study of Art in COVID-19 Humour”, which was sponsored by Jagiellonian University (Krakow, Poland).

The panel consisted of 13 researchers representing 10 countries and an array of different academic disciplines: folkloristics, linguistics, literature studies, art history, and communication studies. Using the material from the International Coronavirus Humour Corpus, which that was collected during the first wave of COVID-19 pandemic and consists of more than 12,000 humorous items, this workshop aimed to analyse COVID-19 humour, using references to art (e.g., painting or music) and popular culture (e.g., film, TV series, literature, etc.) as the area where the global and local collide and interweave, including some hybrid forms. In particular, the workshop focused on the Central and Eastern European and Baltic cultural spaces, looking into how local and regional traditions