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# **Folklore**

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# ORTHODOXY AND ORTHODOX SACRAL BUILDINGS IN ESTONIA FROM THE 11TH TO THE 19TH CENTURIES

*Jaanus Plaat*

**Abstract:** The article provides an overview of the history of Orthodoxy, reaching the territories of Estonia and Setomaa (Petseri/Pechersky District) from Russia, as of the 11th century up until the 1840s, when the Estonian Lutherans began to massively convert to the Russian Orthodox Church. Prior to this changing-of-church-movement, Orthodox and Old Believers' congregations in Estonia primarily comprised the Russians living or temporarily residing in Estonia, and in Setomaa – the Seto people and Russians. In addition, the so-called *poluverniks* of Virumaa area are also dealt with. The article focuses on the establishment of Orthodox churches, convents, monasteries and chapels (incl. Seto *tsässons*) in the territory of the present-day Republic of Estonia and the Petseri/Pechersky District in the Pskov Oblast, Russia (the habitat of Seto people). Photographs of the oldest preserved Orthodox sacral buildings have been taken during the fieldwork of 2007–2010.

**Key words:** Estonia, Orthodoxy, Orthodox sacral buildings, *poluverniks*, Setomaa (Setoland), Seto *tsässons*

This article provides an overview of Russian Orthodoxy and its churches, priories and chapels in Estonia, from the earliest known dates in the 11th century to the 1840s when massive numbers of Estonians started to convert to Russian Orthodoxy. The movement, from the Lutheran to the Russian Orthodox Church in the southern Estonian counties, started in 1845. Until then, Orthodoxy was mainly the religion of the local Russians and Seto people, and remained influential among the *poluverniks* of eastern Estonia, the Russians who blended with the Lutheran Estonians.

The first sub-chapter describes the distribution of Orthodoxy and the construction of its sacral buildings in the present-day territory of Estonia and Setomaa (Setoland), from the 11th century to the end of the Swedish era, when the prevalent Christian confession in Estonia was Lutheranism (preceded by Roman Catholicism). The second sub-chapter will examine the construction of Orthodox churches since the beginning of the 18th century, when the Estonian territory was conquered by Russia during the Great Northern

War, and the Russian Orthodox Church became free to establish its churches in Estonian towns. No thorough studies of Orthodoxy, or its sacral buildings from the beginning of the 18th century through the 1840s, have previously been published, either by Estonian historians or by authors writing from the Orthodox point of view.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, the current article pays more attention to this period, as well as to the Orthodox churches of the time, which are the oldest surviving Orthodox religious places of worship in Estonia, with the exception of the oldest churches and *tsässons* (Seto Orthodox chapels) that have been preserved in Setomaa and were built during the 14th–17th centuries.

The history of the Old Believers (living in Estonia since the end of the 17th century), who were the followers of Russian Orthodoxy, prior to the reforms by the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Nikon in the 17th century, is not dealt with thoroughly in this article.<sup>2</sup> Suffice it to say that the Old Believers started to build their houses of prayer and *skeets* (convents) since the 18th century.<sup>3</sup> The Unified Church (*Edinovertsy*, Russian: *единоверцы*, i.e. ‘co-religionists’), which tried to bring the Old Believers back to the Orthodox Church, is also not discussed here.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to the Orthodox sacral buildings, this article provides an overview of how widely Orthodoxy spread among Estonians and the local Russians, as well as among the *poluverniks* of eastern Estonia. Likewise, the article also describes Orthodoxy in Setomaa, an area which was partially or wholly incorporated into Russia for centuries (specifically as a part of Pskov), prior to accession with the Estonian territory in 1920, and therefore under the direct influence of Orthodoxy, unlike the rest of Estonia. However, the Orthodoxy and sacral buildings of the Setos (such as the convents in Irboska/Izborsk, Petseri/Pechory and Mõla, as well as the churches and the *tsässons*) are quite different from the ones in the rest of Estonia and will be further discussed in future written works. Therefore, mainly the founding of these churches and *tsässons* will be discussed here, in the framework of Seto Orthodoxy.

The information, about establishing Orthodox religious buildings, is insufficient, especially regarding the early period (before the 17th century), and partly in dispute (e.g. information on the Orthodox churches that were established in Tartu in the 11th century).<sup>5</sup> One of the aims of this publication is to present possible, but unconfirmed, information on the early sanctuaries, as a starting point for future studies. When referring to the names of the churches, the Russian style saint names are used, followed by international name forms in parentheses, where applicable.

In this article, photos will be presented of churches in Estonia and the Petseri/Pechory (Setomaa) area, built during the period under discussion, as

well as of older Seto *tsässons* in present-day Estonia. All of the photos were taken by the architectural photographer Arne Maasik during the fieldwork led by the author of this article in the period of 2007–2011.<sup>6</sup>

## **ORTHODOXY AND ORTHODOX SACRAL BUILDINGS IN ESTONIA DURING THE 11TH–17TH CENTURIES**

Byzantine-Russian Orthodoxy is probably the earliest form of Christianity which reached Estonia. To some extent, the ancient inhabitants of these territories were probably first christened into Orthodoxy in the 11th–12th centuries. Therefore, it must have been before Estonia (except Setomaa) fell under the influence of the Roman Catholic Church at the beginning of the 13th century. Since the early contacts with the “Russian belief”, several Old Russian loan words have entered the Estonian language (e.g. *rist* (in Russian *крест*): ‘cross’, *ristima* (*крестить*): ‘baptise’, *papp* (*поп*): ‘priest’, *raamat* (*грамота*): ‘book’ and *pagan* (*поганый*): ‘pagan’). These words were introduced in the Baltic-Finnic languages before the 13th century and the German conquest (Setomaa 2009: 166; Sõtšov 2004: 14; Tarvel 1987: 18–19; Sild 1931/32: 110).

The first Christian church may have been constructed as early as in the 11th century in **Yuryev (Tartu)**, a town established by the Russian invaders. The claims of primarily Orthodox authors about two Orthodox churches being constructed in Yuryev in the 11th century are debatable, but nor is there conclusive proof against these claims.<sup>7</sup> The feasibility of Orthodox churches, being established in the 11th century, has been confirmed by Anti Selart and Olaf Sild, scientists who have studied the early influence of Orthodoxy in Livonia. Olaf Sild, a church historian, has written about Russian estates around Tartu in the period of 1030–1061: “Probably a church or a chapel had also been built here,” and the “nearby *Ugalans*” (residents of the Ugala district) may have been exposed to Russian church rituals and traditions. But Sild also admits that there is no Russian loan word meaning ‘church’ (possible sources being the Russian words *храм*, *церковь*, or *погост* for a village around a church) in Estonian, although several other religious loans of Russian origin are in use. Overall, this might mean that it was too early for a church to actually be built. In the Russian provinces, the wide-scale construction of churches took place later (Sild 1931/32: 106, 112–113), and in the 11th century these territories, close to the Russian borders, were pagan in many aspects, even though Christianisation had been instituted by the authorities.

According to the existing archaeological data, the existence of a church or churches in Tartu between 1030–1061 may be assumed, but this has not been

confirmed.<sup>8</sup> Researchers are of the opinion that there is no continuity between the Russian settlement in Tartu in the 11th century and the medieval town of the 13th century (Tvauri 2001: 212–213, 250–254; see also Selart 2009: 283). This means that, even if there were any churches (or just one) in Yuryev in the 11th century, the buildings were probably demolished, and there is no link between these and the two Orthodox churches that were active in Tartu after the German invasion in the 13th century – namely, the churches of Nikolai (St. Nicholas) and Georgi (St. George).<sup>9</sup>

Anti Selart is of the opinion that the excavations at the Georgi (St. George's) church and in its graveyard in Tartu, as well as other archaeological finds, demonstrate that Russian inhabitants were present in Tartu in the middle of the 13th century at the latest. The Georgi (St. George's) Orthodox Church was situated in the territory of the present-day Botanical Gardens and the Nikolai (St. Nicholas') Orthodox Church near the Jaani (St. John's) Church (Selart 2009: 283–284; 2006: 18–19). Nevertheless, archaeological data do not confirm the sites of the two churches, let alone the construction work dating back to the 13th century.<sup>10</sup> However, by the 15th century at the latest, these churches were present in Tartu. Written records of the two Orthodox churches in Tartu date from 1438<sup>11</sup> and the churches were probably built considerably earlier.<sup>12</sup> It was possible to establish churches that belonged to the merchants from Pskov and Novgorod (the Georgi Church was built by Novgorodians and the Nikolai Church by Pskovians) due to the commercial relations of these two Russian towns with Tartu and Tallinn as members of the Hanseatic League (see Selart 2006: 9–10, 18–19; 2009: 283–284).

In **Reval (Tallinn)** the Russian Nikolai (St. Nicholas') Orthodox Church and cemetery were mentioned in the manuscripts of the town in 1371, situated, at that time, between the Oleviste (St. Olaf's) Church and the town wall (Kleinenberg 1962: 242; Berens 1974: 363). The new Church of St. Nicholas, probably built by Novgorodians, was mentioned in written sources from 1421–1422 as being already at its present location in Vene (Russian) Street<sup>13</sup> (Kangropool & Bruns 1972: 14). According to sources from the 15th century, the church belonged to Novgorodian merchants who, along with local Orthodox priests, were persecuted by the municipality. The Nikolai (St. Nicholas') Church was a chapel for Russian merchants in the 15th–16th centuries; it was strictly isolated from the public town space and shared a roof with the storehouses used by the merchants (see Kleinenberg 1962; Selart 1998a: 68; 2009: 281–282).

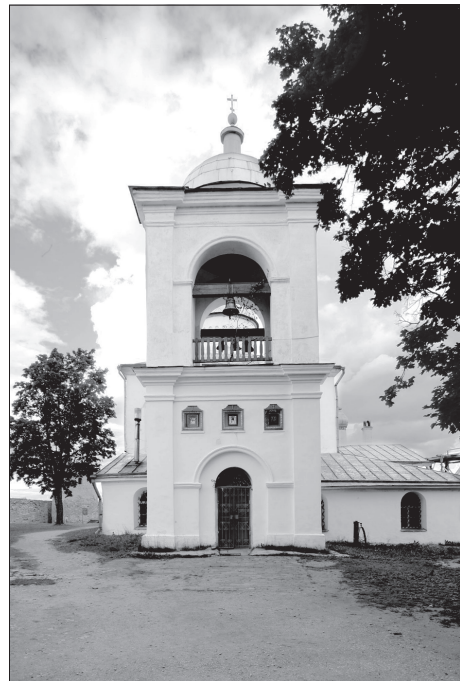
According to various records, the Nikolai (St. Nicholas') Church was destroyed and rebuilt several times. At the end of the 17th century the Nikolai Church in Tallinn was the only active Orthodox church in the Estonian terri-



tory, which was under Swedish rule at that time. The church building stood there until the beginning of the 19th century.<sup>14</sup> Yet in **Setomaa** (which was Russian territory at the time), there were scores of Orthodox churches, priories and *tsässsons*/chapels at the end of the 17th century. Of these early Orthodox buildings (built during the 14th–17th centuries) the ones that have been preserved, in the Pechersky District, are the two Nikolai (St. Nicholas') Churches and the Church of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Irboska (in Seto/Estonian language, *Izborsk* in Russian), the church on the island of Kulkna (*Kolpino* in Russian), the Mõla (*Maly* in Russian) priory (in ruins) and church, the Senno and Tailova churches and several churches in the Petseri (in Russian *Pechersky, Pskovo-Pechersky*) Monastery.

The oldest of the Setomaa churches, still intact to this day, is the Church of St. Nikolai (St. Nicholas) in Irboska (Izborsk), built in the 1340s within the Irboska stone stronghold. This is also the oldest preserved Orthodox church in Estonia within the boundaries established by the Tartu Peace Treaty in 1920. This church with its one apse, one dome and four pillars is typical of Novgorod church architecture. In the 1930s, during the first period of Estonian independence, the congregation of this church included numerous Setos and Estonians, side by side with Russians.<sup>15</sup> The same applied to the mixed congregations of the Mõla and Kulkna stone churches, built in the 16th century, and the Tailova Church, completed in 1697.<sup>16</sup> However, now, only Russian-speaking congregations are active there. Over the centuries, these churches, the oldest in Pechory District, have been repeatedly rebuilt and renovated, which is why they have lost some of their original appearance.<sup>17</sup>

The Orthodox Church mission may have reached Setomaa as early as in the 11th or 12th century. If we are only able to make assumptions about the influence of the earlier Orthodox churches and monasteries with regard to spreading the religion among the non-Russian-speaking people of



**Photo 1.** *The Church of Nikolai (St. Nicholas) in the Irboska fortress (in the Pechory District of the Pskov Oblast of the modern Russian Federation). Photo by Arne Maasik 2008.*

Setomaa, the role of the Petseri (Pechersky) Monastery certainly cannot be underestimated. The cave Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God was consecrated in 1473, which is considered to be the year of establishment for the Petseri (Pechersky) Monastery.

Over the centuries, the Pechersky Monastery became the spiritual centre for not only the Russians in the Pechory Region, but also for the local Seto people. There are good reasons to talk about the increasing influence of the Pechersky Monastery and with it, the Orthodox religion, among the Setos since the 1520s – this is when the Pechersky Monastery became a special site for pilgrims, largely thanks to the famous Mother of God icon of Pechory.

In addition to the Pechersky Monastery, the Mõla (*Maly*) Monastery may also have contributed to spreading Orthodox religion among Setos in the 16th century. Some researchers claim that the Mõla Monastery played a vital role in Christianising the natives of Eastern Setomaa (see Setomaa 2009: 240). A Monastery of the Nativity was founded in Mõla in the middle of the 16th century (according to folk tales, the monastery was already established in the 1480s by St. Onufri of Mõla). The stone buildings, partially preserved, were constructed in the mid-16th century, and the Church of the Nativity, still standing to this day, was probably built as early as before the Livonian War. Most of the monastery buildings were destroyed in 1581 by the army of the Polish king Stephen I Báthory.<sup>18</sup>



**Photo 2.** *The Church of the Nativity in Mõla (Maly), built in the mid-16th century. The bell tower and ruins of the Monastery of the Nativity in Setomaa. Photo by Arne Maasik 2008.*

Since the 16th century, churches have also been established in the areas chiefly inhabited by Setos. The first historical records of the Väraska Orthodox Church in Setomaa date back to as early as the end of the 16th century. The old wooden church in Saatse was completed in 1673 and the Saatserinna congregation is first mentioned in 1763 (Kivistaja 2005: 30; Setomaa 2009: 288, 329). The 16th–18th century wooden churches of Väraska and Saatse have not preserved until today.<sup>19</sup>

As a result of the activities of the Pechersky and Mõla monasteries, as well as those of various churches, it is possible that Orthodoxy was quite widespread in Setomaa by the 17th or 18th century (and maybe even in the 16th century). During the 17th and 18th centuries and from thereon, the Seto Orthodox religion remained a mixture of the old religion or “Seto religion” and the Orthodox religion (especially its cult of saints).<sup>20</sup>

Besides the Orthodox churches and the Pechersky and Mõla monasteries, the Orthodox cult in Setomaa was practised in homes, natural places of worship and village chapels, known as the Seto *tsässons* (in Russian *часовня*). Most of the *tsässons* were erected upon the initiative and at the expense of the local inhabitants and were dedicated to a specific Orthodox Church holiday or saint, after whom the *tsässons* have been named.<sup>21</sup> Annual, or semi-annual, larger get-togethers and church services were held by priests on the day of the respective saint and church holiday. For the rest of the year, the locals have used the *tsässons* for praying or funeral ceremonies.

The oldest preserved *tsässons*, within the Estonian territory of Setomaa, are those of Mikitamäe (probably completed in 1694, according to the dendro-chronological dating method), and Uusvada *tsässon* (probably in 1698) (see Läänelaid & Raal & Valk 2005). Some of the *tsässons* in the Pechory District of Pskov Oblast are even older.

Mikitamäe Toomapühapäeva *tsässon* is also the oldest wooden sacral building in continental Estonia (Ruhnu Lutheran Church, the oldest wooden sacral building on the Estonian islands, dates from 1644). Toomapühapäev (in the Seto language *Tuumapühapäävä* or *Ollõtuspühä* or *kõllapühapäävä* or *väiko lihavõödõ*), the holiday of the *tsässon*, is celebrated a week after Easter. The Mikitamäe *tsässon*, relocated and left to decay during Soviet times, was once again relocated, restored and consecrated in 2009. The Uusvada village chapel in present-day Meremäe rural municipality is the second oldest *tsässon* within the Estonian territory of Setomaa. According to lore, the *tsässon* of Uusvada belongs to Anastasia (in the Seto language *Nahtsi*), whose day is celebrated in Setomaa on November 11.<sup>22</sup> There are also several other Nahtsi *tsässons* in Setomaa.





**Photo 3.** *Mikitamäe Tuumapühapäevä (in Estonian Toomapühapäeva, for Setos also ollõtuspühä or kõllapühapäevä or väiko lihavõõdõ) tsässon. According to dendro-dating, the oldest tsässon, preserved within the Estonian territory of Setomaa, built probably in 1694. Photo by Arne Maasik 2008.*



**Photo 4.** *Mikitamäe Tuumapühapäevä (Toomapühapäeva) tsässon after restoration in 2009. Photo by Arne Maasik 2010.*

From Setomaa, the Orthodox Church mission spread to other parts of Estonia. The Pechersky Monastery is associated with the next wave of Orthodoxy to come into the Estonian territory during the Livonian War (1558–1583). Igumen Kornelius, the head of the convent from 1529 to 1570, had a special status in disseminating Orthodoxy among the Seto, and to some extent among Estonians as well. According to folk tradition and chronicles, Kornelius headed the campaign to construct churches for local residents who had converted to Orthodoxy, not only in the Pechersky District, but also in the present-day Võru County, next to historical Setomaa. About the widespread Seto legends of the Igumen Kornelius, or the Pechoran Strongman, see Muistendid 1963: 315ff.

In present-day **Võru County** (Estonia), in the vicinity of Vastseliina, Kornelius established the Church of the Nativity of the Lord in Tabina and the Church of the Trinity in Hagujärve (Kirikumäe) before 1570, during the first half of the Livonian War. It is possible that Kornelius also played a decisive role in founding an Orthodox church in the present-day Valga County, near Lake Aheru.<sup>23</sup> The churches for the newly christened Estonians and Seto were provided with clergymen, church attributes and financial support. Kornelius' wish to spread Orthodoxy among Estonian peasants has also been mentioned in the priory's writings (Setumaa 1928: 356–357; Kase 1999; EÕK 2007: 58–60; Tihhon 2007: 20; Setomaa 2009: 243).

Kornelius and his assistants were active in Estonia during the Livonian War, taking advantage of the advance of the Russian troops. In 1558, the Russian forces invaded Vastseliina, the main centre near the border of Old Livonia, which enabled them to build Orthodox churches in the surrounding areas. An Orthodox church was also probably constructed in Vastseliina. The churches in Tabina and Hagujärve (in the later Vastseliina parish) were probably destroyed by the end of the Polish-Swedish wars. There are records from 1638 that mention them as being in ruins. The icons were taken to the Pechersky Monastery when Russia was defeated in the Livonian War (Selart 1998a: 70, 1998b: 24; Setomaa 2009: 243, 455).<sup>24</sup>

In addition to the churches founded by the Pechersky Monastery, Russians constructed churches in several Estonian towns and settlements, as well as in some frontier regions in the countryside, after conquering the greater part of Medieval Livonia (Selart 2006: 9; Setomaa 2009: 243). In the invaded territories, the Tartu (Yuryev-Viljandi) Bishopric was founded, probably in 1570.<sup>25</sup> The churches were mostly built to suit the needs of the military and the gentry serving the Tsarist government. In 1581, the Swedish king told his military chiefs to have mercy on the Russian churches and priories that were especially numerous around **Tartu** (Aleksius II 2009: 92). Not much information has been preserved about these, often field churches for the troops, and

buildings temporarily used as churches. What is known, however, is that in Tartu there were several churches and at least one Orthodox priory (according to Balthasar Russow, there were at least two convents at the time of the Swedish military campaign in 1578 – Russow 1993: 303).<sup>26</sup>

In **Narva**, two churches were founded (one in the Ivangorod stronghold and the other in the town of Narva), by the orders of Ivan IV, after the town had been conquered by the Russians in 1558. Those churches were active until the Swedish conquest in 1581 (Ivask & Sinjakova 2005: 10–11). In 1558, Russians also built an Orthodox church in **Vasknarva**, where an Orthodox Russian community might have existed previously. The Holy Trinity Church in Vasknarva existed for some time under the Swedish reign (Liiv 1928: 16, 73–74; Moora 1964: 44; Selart 1998a: 69–70).

After the Russian defeat in the Livonian War and the armistices with Poland and Sweden, the Estonian territory was divided between Poland and Sweden. Most Russians left and the churches were either demolished or just gradually deteriorated. Still, in several places the Russian churches survived for some time at least. In **Viljandi**, there were two Russian Orthodox churches in 1599, probably built during the Livonian War, which were used by Lutheran and Catholic congregations.<sup>27</sup> In Vastseliina, the Russian priests had even been paid for work on the churches during the first decade of the Polish reign (Selart 2006: 21).

The ruins of the medieval Church of Nikolai (St. Nicholas) in Tartu were still present at the beginning of the 17th century, when the Swedish authorities returned the ruins to the Russian community that had survived in Tartu, but they were unable to reconstruct the church (see Berens 1974: 393). However, there are reports from the Swedish period of the construction of an Orthodox church in **Vastseliina**. As it happens, the Russians had burnt down the Lutheran church of Vastseliina during the Russian-Swedish war that lasted from 1656 to 1661, and had built an Orthodox church in front of the Vastseliina stronghold. This building, called a “Moscovite tavern”, was used as a Lutheran church after the war (see Kõpp 1959: 97; Setomaa 2009: 455).

In addition to Orthodox churches built in Tartu, Tallinn and elsewhere in Estonia during the Livonian War, churches also appeared in the Estonian-Russian borderlands and in **Virumaa** (mainly in present-day East Viru County) during the 16th century at the latest. The Russian community in East Viru County has a long history and the Orthodox creed was present quite early in this Estonian region. According to Aliise Moora, the Novgorodian and Pskovian priests might have christened the Russian-Votian population of the Alutaguse region as early as the 13th century, whereas the Narva River started to function as a distinct borderline since the 13th and 14th centuries (1964: 38).

By the 16th century at the latest, the River Narva had become the border that separated the Orthodox and Roman Catholic worlds, but there were still some Orthodox Russians on the western bank and probably some Votians, as well, who had converted to Orthodoxy. In 1492, the Russians built the Ivangorod stronghold on the eastern bank of the river, where there were also some Orthodox churches built by Novgorodians. According to one opinion, the Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God may have been erected in the stronghold as early as at the end of the 15th century, but by other assessments this took place in the 16th century.<sup>28</sup>

In the 16th century, the legend began to spread, of the revelation of the Mother of God in Kuremäe, and of the miracle-working icon of the Dormition of the Mother of God, which was supposedly found at the revelation site. According to one widespread version, the local Russian peasants had built a small wooden chapel during the second half of the 16th century, at the same place on *Püha* ('sacred') Hill, the name of which was later changed to Pühtitsa (see Liiv 1928: 71ff; Pjuhtitskii 1991: 3). The historian Otu Liiv doubts that the chapel was built in the 16th century on this hill, regarded as sacred also by Estonians, and has offered several versions of the legend of how the Mother of God icon was found by Estonian peasants (1929: 71–72).

Metropolitan Kornelius of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate has written about this particular event as follows: "After being given the heavenly gift – the miracle-working icon – the devout Orthodox peasants from around Pühtitsa built a chapel on the lower terrace of the Sacred Hill of the Mother of God, in which the icon bestowed on them was placed. ... During those restless and troublesome years and in times of disorder and wars, the local people protected the holy icon of Pühtitsa by always restoring the destroyed chapel."<sup>29</sup> Recurrent destruction and reconstruction of the chapel was also noted by the Patriarch Aleksius II in his monograph (1999: 120), where he seems to refer to the time of the Swedish reign following the defeat of Russia in the Livonian War, the period that lasted until the Swedes were defeated in the Great Northern War, which broke out in 1700.

Sources that mostly originate from the Lutheran Church affirm that, during the Swedish reign, crowded meetings were held around the Pühtitsa chapel every year on the 28th of August, the Day of the Dormition of the Mother of God according to the old calendar (Liiv 1928: 81; Pjuhtitskii 1991: 3). Those who convened around the chapel and reconstructed it after several devastations were probably local Orthodox Russians. The crowd gathered at the chapel on the Day of the Dormition of the Mother of God comprised people from several parishes and even from Russia, despite prohibition and threats.<sup>30</sup> The gatherings were especially large during the 18th and 19th centuries and, at least by



that time, there were also many Estonians among the prevailingly Russian crowd around the Kuremäe (Pühtitsa) chapel.<sup>31</sup> Estonians had probably attended these events even earlier, during the 16th and 17th centuries. The chapel was active in Pühtitsa until the 19th century.<sup>32</sup>

Claims have been made that the Swedish authorities also used their soldiers to wreck Orthodox chapels in Vaivara, Jõhvi and elsewhere in present-day East Viru County (Aleksius II 1999: 120). Otu Liiv has noted a complaint from the Lutheran pastor of Jõhvi from 1652, which said that, in addition to the Kuremäe chapel, the Russians held their rites near the old chapel in the village of Lähtepää in the territory of the Illuka manor, as well as near the Maarja (Mary) chapel in Viru-Nigula (Liiv 1928: 81–82).

The ruins of the Viru-Nigula Maarja chapel, which was situated in present-day West Viru County and was shaped like a Greek cross, the only building of this kind from the Catholic period in Estonia (Tamm 2001: 21), supposedly date back to the 13th century. The ruins have also been associated with Russian-style church architecture. To assume that the chapel was Orthodox in the beginning might prove premature as the construction history of this sacral building has not been researched by way of archaeological means. Villem Raam has written that the plan of the chapel resembles the small church type of central Russia which developed at the beginning of the 13th century (*Eesti arhitektuur 3...* 1997: 162–163).

During the same period, when Estonians assumedly attended the Orthodox gatherings of the 17th century, some of the Russians of the East Viru County converted to Lutheranism. The Orthodox Russians started to call these converts *poluverniki* or *poluvertsy* (half-believers) for, despite attending Lutheran churches and becoming members of Lutheran congregations, some of them also followed many of the Orthodox rites.<sup>33</sup> Those were the (partly) Estonianised Russians who lived in the territory between the River Narva and the northern bank of Lake Peipsi, and who had probably been living there as early as since the 13th century.<sup>34</sup> During the Swedish reign in the 17th century, most of the Russians in the Iisaku area converted to Lutheranism and were Estonianised over a period of time, despite the later attempts of the Russian government to re-Russianise them. Only the population of the lakeside villages remained Russian-speaking (Kurs 2006: 102). According to Otu Liiv's study, the Russian-speaking population of south-eastern Alutaguse (Vasknarva area), especially of the villages by the River Narva, remained only formally Lutheran during the 17th century (as they were the members of the faraway Narva and Vaivara Lutheran congregations), for there was no local Russian-speaking pastor. The people of this area attended an Orthodox church on the opposite bank of the River Narva, or had priests come to them. According to the records of the



Jõhvi pastor Thomas Kniper, by 1698 there were villages in this area which had no official coverage by any church and where the Russians had built their own chapel, which was presided over by an Orthodox priest from the opposite bank of the river. At the end of 17th century, Orthodox practices were quite widely followed in this area (Liiv 1928: 74ff, 86–87, 124). The Estonianisation process for some of the Orthodox Russians probably started during the Lutheran Swedish era and was even more active during the reign of Orthodox Russia, during which the Tsarist government guaranteed the local Lutheran church its former leading position among the peasantry.

### **ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN ESTONIA FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE 18TH CENTURY UNTIL THE CONVERSION MOVEMENT OF THE 1840S**

Based on the above information, speculations can be made that, by the end of the Swedish reign, some Orthodox influences from Setomaa in southern Estonia and from the Russian communities in eastern Estonia might have spread among the Estonians. But these influences were probably still weak, with the exception of the multi-ethnic areas in present-day East Viru County. After the Great Northern War, which started in 1700, Orthodox Christianity began to spread more widely again, along with the Russian conquest of Estonia. Nevertheless, the dominant faith, within the Estonian territory conquered by Russian forces, was still Lutheran, the rights and privileges of which were declared by the Uusikaupunki Treaty in 1721. At the same time, a free and unhindered spread of Orthodoxy was also taking place in the Baltic lands. Regarding the Lutheran Church, the Swedish church law applied in Estonia until 1832. Although the dominion of the Lutheran Church was restricted by several provisions enacted by the Tsarist government in order to protect the interests of Orthodoxy, it remained remote to the Lutheran peasantry, who were mostly under the influence of German landlords, until the massive conversion of Lutherans to Orthodoxy in southern Estonia that took place in the 1840s. Until then, Orthodoxy was mainly the religion of the Russians living in the Estonian and Livonian provinces, and over time it also became more and more the religion of the members of the Seto population who had remained within the borders of the Pskov (Russia) Province. At the same time, the influence of the Orthodox Church grew in the larger communities of Estonia, and scores of new churches and chapels were built even before the conversion movement that began in 1845.<sup>35</sup>

When the Great Northern War started, the number of Orthodox sanctuaries began to increase in connection with the arrival of Russian forces. At first, the invading Russians took over the Lutheran (formerly Catholic) churches and re-designed them as Orthodox churches (e.g. in **Narva, Tartu, Pärnu** and **Tallinn**) or established temporary premises for Orthodox services. In Tartu, the Jaani (St. John's) Church was taken over by the military after the capture of the town in 1704, and Orthodox services were held there (Aleksius II 2009: 114). In Narva, Orthodox services were held from 1704 to 1708 in the Dome Church, which was transformed into the Orthodox Church of Alexander Nevsky, but had formerly belonged to the Swedish congregation.<sup>36</sup> Tsar Peter the Great attended the sanctification of the Jaani (St. John's) Church as the Church of the Transfiguration of the Lord in 1708; the Jaani Church, built in the 15th century, had belonged to the German congregation until the Russian conquest in 1704. The church was active as an Orthodox main church until its demolition in the bombing of 1944.<sup>37</sup>

Soon some new churches were built as well. In 1704, a wooden Church of the Mother of God was built in **Tartu** on the site of the former Church of Nikolai (St. Nicholas), as well as the Georgy (St. George's) hospital church, the fate of which is not known (Berens 1974: 394).

After the end of the war in the Estonian territory, when Estonia was incorporated into the Russian Empire in 1710, Orthodox congregations were formed and churches were built in the Estonian and Livonian provinces, but mainly for the Russians living in the towns. In addition to the **Tallinn**-based Nikolai (St. Nicholas') Church<sup>38</sup>, which had survived the Lutheran Swedish reign, Orthodox services were also held in other (former) Lutheran churches of Tallinn: from 1710 to 1716, in the Mihkli (St. Michael's) Church in Rütli Street and, starting from 1716, in the medieval main church of the former Roman Catholic (Cistercian) Convent (in Suur-Kloostri Street), which had been the St. Michael's Church for the Swedish military forces during the Swedish rule. The latter was sanctified as the Church of the Transformation of the Lord, after renovation in 1734, and served as the main Orthodox church until 1900, when this status was given to the newly-built cathedral of St. Alexander Nevsky. The iconostasis of the Church of the Transformation of the Lord (by I. P. Zarudnyi) was made in 1718–1719<sup>39</sup>; the tower was erected in 1776, and the present-day windows, main entrance and cupola were completed during 1827–1830.

There were new churches built as well, at first mostly for the military. The garrison church of the Nativity of the Mother of God (Kazan Icon) in Tallinn was constructed and sanctified in 1721. The wooden church in present-day Liivalaia Street is the oldest preserved Orthodox church in Estonia (not counting the sanctuaries in Setomaa) and the oldest wooden sacral building in Tallinn.

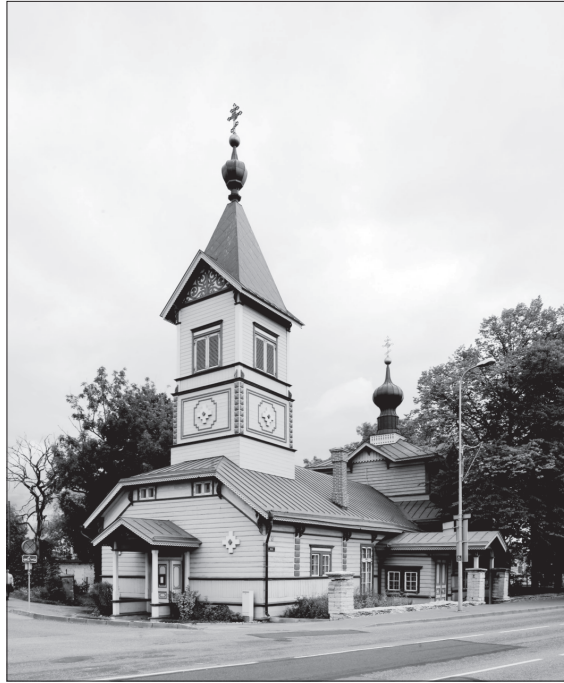


**Photo 5.** *The Church of the Nativity of the Mother of God (Kazan Icon) in Tallinn (consecrated in 1721). Photo by Arne Maasik 2009.*

The church was reconstructed in the first half of the 19th century: the building was covered with wood boards and both the interior and the exterior were given a period-specific Neo-classicist appearance.<sup>40</sup> By 1734, the Church of Teodoros (St. Theodore) the Commander was built in Tallinn and existed until 1842 (EÕK 2007: 26, 40; Berens 1974: 351, 369).

The second oldest building in Tallinn, specifically built as an Orthodox church, was erected near the port by Russian naval forces during 1752–1755, on the ruins of a sunken ship, according to the relevant inscription. The Church of St. Simeon and the Prophetess Hanna, initially used as a naval church, was repeatedly reconstructed and remodelled; the building obtained its present-day size, cross-shaped ground plan and Historicist façade with wooden décor in 1870. The later history of this church is one of the most interesting among the Orthodox churches in Estonia – it was damaged and turned into a gym during the Soviet era, but reconstructed again as an Orthodox church at the beginning of the 21st century. This church, situated in Ahtri Street, was sanctified in 2007 as the main church of the Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church.<sup>41</sup>

Several Orthodox sanctuaries were also built in Tallinn in the second half of the 18th century and in the first half of the 19th century.<sup>42</sup> Among them is the Church of Nikolai (St. Nicholas) the Bishop and Miracle-Worker, which was sanctified in 1827 and is still standing. It was built in Vene (Russian) Street



**Photo 6.** *The Church of St. Simeon and the Prophetess Hanna in Tallinn (completed in 1755). Photo by Arne Maasik 2009.*

to replace the Nikolai (St. Nicholas') Orthodox Church, which dates back to the Medieval period and was falling apart by the beginning of the 19th century. There was a desire to build a new church as early as 1804, but it was not built until 1822–1827; the construction was drawn out due to lack of funds. The domed church, with some Neo-classicist features, was built according to the design of L. Rusca from St. Petersburg, who was Swiss by origin (Berens 1974: 364–365; Pantelejev *et al.* 2002: 26–36; Tallinna 2009: 43).

The wooden church, built in **Tartu** by the Russian military forces in 1704, was almost in ruins by 1749. In 1752, the construction of a new church was initiated and the Church of the Ascension of Mary (according to other records, the Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God) was sanctified in 1754. Another church was built next to it in 1771, but both burned down in the fire of 1775. The new, Neo-classicist Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God (Uspensky), which is still standing, was built, according to the design of the Novgorodian architect P. Spekle, from 1776 to 1783<sup>43</sup>; in the meantime, services were held in a school building that belonged to the military forces (Berens 1974: 395; EAÕK piiskopkonnad).

In addition to Tallinn and Tartu, new Orthodox congregations and churches were established in other towns and settlements of Estonia before the middle of the 19th century, mainly in order to serve the local Russian population (soldiers, civil servants and their families). Of the churches built in the 18th century and at the beginning of the 19th century, the ones in Pärnu, Paldiski, Kuressaare and Võru have been preserved, whereas all the churches that were built in Narva and Ivangorod around that time have been destroyed.

In **Pärnu**, the Jaani (St. John's) Church, which belonged to the Estonian Lutheran congregation, was taken over in 1710 to hold Orthodox services and sanctified as the Uspensky Church. This congregation was later reformed as the Katariina (St. Catherine's) congregation. Probably shortly after that, in 1710, a new Alexander Nevsky garrison church was built. In the 1740s, this wooden church was replaced with a new wooden one, which stood from 1749 to 1791.



**Photo 7.** *The Church of St. Catherine the Great Martyr in Pärnu (consecrated in 1769). Photo by Arne Maasik 2009.*



The building of an Orthodox stone church, which is still standing, was commissioned and funded by Tsarina Catherine II, who visited Pärnu in 1764. The church, designed by architect P. Yegorov (1764–1768) and sanctified as the Church of St. Catherine the Great Martyr in 1769, was built in the Baroque style and, according to the opinion of many art historians, is the most stylish and lavish Baroque church in Estonia. It was the first Orthodox church to be built in the Baroque style in the Baltic area (Pärnumaa 2001: 17; Berens 1974: 305–306; EÕK 2007: 54; Aleksius II 1999: 143).

In 1721, a tent church was erected in **Paldiski**, in the settlement at the port established by Peter the Great, for Russian soldiers and workers (including convicts) sent from Russia to work on the building of the port and its fortifications. In 1728, a wooden church was built for them and, from 1784 to 1787, the new Church of St. George, after the design of J. Moor, was also built. The exterior of this stone church was clearly European. The Orthodox congregation of Paldiski is one of the most intriguing in the history of Estonian Orthodoxy, considering its national composition (Old Believers, or *starovers*, and other descendants of convicts, as well as Estonian Swedish inhabitants) and historical background.<sup>44</sup>

Following the incorporation of the island of Saaremaa into the Russian Empire in 1710, an Orthodox community of Russians also formed on Saaremaa,



**Photo 8.** *The Church of St. George the Great Martyr in Paldiski (consecrated in 1787).  
Photo by Arne Maasik 2009.*

which was later to become the main centre of Estonian Orthodoxy.<sup>45</sup> Prevalingly, the Orthodox community comprised soldiers from the Russian garrison in **Kuressaare** and Russian officials, tradesmen, craftsmen and their families. Until the middle of the 18th century, there was neither a resident Orthodox clergyman on Saaremaa nor a congregation. Orthodox believers had their children baptised and their weddings carried out by a Lutheran pastor. The Orthodox tradition of anointing children was probably carried out later, when an Orthodox priest visited the island. Lutheran pastors also held Orthodox services elsewhere in Livonia and Estonia (Aleksius II 1999: 148–149), due to the lack of Orthodox priests.

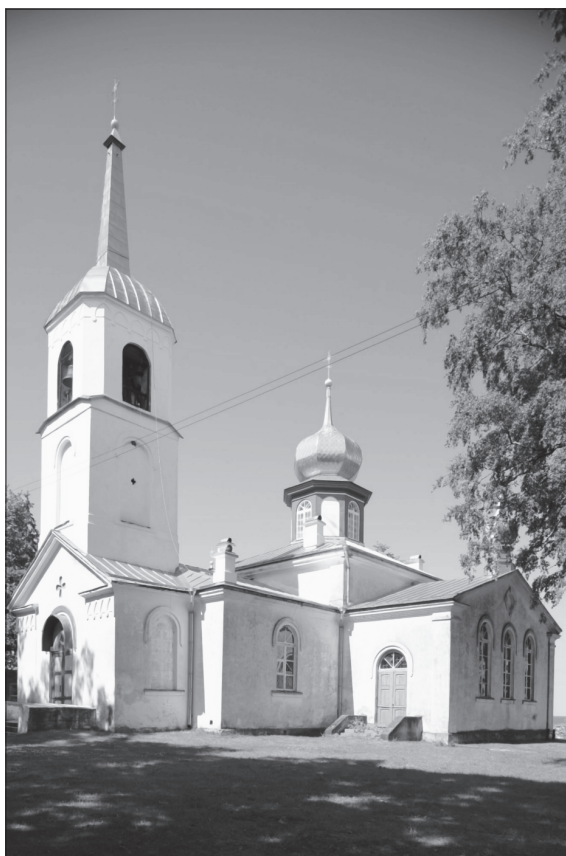
It was only in 1747 when a congregation was established in Kuressaare (Arensburg), after an urgent plea from the local Orthodox believers and pursuant to the order of Tsarina Yelizaveta, when a resident priest was allotted to them. At first, they used a military field church, but in 1749 the wooden Church of Nikolai (St. Nicholas) was built in the stronghold of Kuressaare, where services were held until the completion of the current stone Church of St. Nicholas in 1789.<sup>46</sup>

In **Narva** and in **Ivangorod**, the latter of which is situated on the east bank of the Narva River, four Orthodox churches were built during the 18th century, three of them in Ivangorod (Jaanilinn). Three were initially regiment churches and one a garrison church (Ivask & Sinjakova 2005: 14–15). New congregations were established, in addition to the aforementioned Narva congregation of the Transfiguration of the Lord. All of these churches have been destroyed.<sup>47</sup>

In the town of **Võru**, a congregation consisting of Russians was established in 1793. The stone Church of St. Catherine the Great Martyr, built from 1793 to 1804 (with intervals),<sup>48</sup> was in early Neo-classicist style, with some Baroque elements, and probably designed by Matthias Schons, the province architect of Livonia; the master builder was a local inhabitant, Johann Karl Otto. The building is a fine example of early Russian provincial Neo-classicism, following the Western European examples built in St. Petersburg (Berens 1974: 95–96; Aleksius II 1999: 149; EAÕKi piiskopkonnad).

Prior to the 1840s, Orthodox churches were also built for Russians living in smaller country settlements of Estonia – the ones in Nina and Räpina have survived, but the wooden church in Vasknarva and the first Orthodox church of Mustvee have been destroyed.<sup>49</sup> These churches, built in the Russian-inhabited areas on the shores of Lake Peipsi, were probably also meant to act as counterweights to the local Old Believers' chapels erected in these areas during the 18th and 19th centuries.

The Church of the Protection of the Holiest Mother of God was built in the village of **Nina**, the main population centre of the Old Believers, situated on the shore of Lake Peipsi. The village of Nina is the also oldest surviving village of Orthodox Russians on the western shore of Lake Peipsi, and was probably founded in the 17th century (Moora 1964: 60). By the time the church was built, Nina was the only almost exclusively Orthodox village in the region predominantly inhabited by Old Believers. Previously, the sparse Orthodox population had been without a church of their own. The congregation of Nina was established in 1824 and the church was designed by G. F. W. Geist, a master builder from Tartu (Tohvri 2004: 56). Construction work took place from 1824 to 1828, and the church was erected on a plot bestowed by Baron Stackelberg. The construction was funded by the state with the help of private donations, including those from local Lutheran landlords.<sup>50</sup>



**Photo 9.** *The Church of the Protection of the Holiest Mother of God in Nina (consecrated in 1828). Photo by Arne Maasik 2008.*



In the manor of **Räpina**, an Orthodox church was built, by order of Tsarina Yelizaveta, in 1752. The wooden church served the Russian workers brought in from Russia to work in the local paper mill. It burned down in 1813 and the congregation moved into a wooden house of prayer. In 1827, Tsar Nikolai I ordered a new stone church to be built and granted 20,000 roubles for that purpose. The independent congregation was re-established in 1828. The Church of St. Sakarias and St. Elizabeth was constructed after a design by G. F. W. Geist in 1829–1833.<sup>51</sup>

Of the churches that have not been preserved, the wooden church of **Vasknarva**<sup>52</sup> was probably built in the period of 1817–1818; the miraculous icon of the Dormition of the Mother of God was brought to the church in 1818. Previously, the icon was kept in the **Pühtitsa** chapel, built at the site of the icon's discovery. Pühtitsa was one of the most important sanctuaries for Orthodox Russians living in Estonia and farther away. Metropolitan Kornelius has written: "For safety, the holy icon was sometimes kept in Narva as well, but when a church was built in Vasknarva, the chapel of the Dormition of the Mother of God was affiliated with it and the miraculous icon was transferred to the church."<sup>53</sup> The tradition to hold an annual procession on the Day of the Dormition of the Mother of God, in order to take the icon from the Ilya/Eelija (St. Elijah) Church in Vasknarva to the Pühtitsa chapel some 30km away, commenced after 1818.<sup>54</sup> Metropolitan Kornelius has reflected the memories of the participants who attended the procession in the 19th century: "The procession was onerous. There was no proper road from the village of Vasknarva to Pühtitsa, only a narrow path that went through marshes and forests. The locals said that people went in single-file and waded through mud up to their knees. They took turns carrying the icon, pressing it to their chests."<sup>55</sup>

In addition to the renowned Pühtitsa chapel, the Russians of **Virumaa** have apparently had numerous other village chapels. There are references to former chapels in the contemporary East Viru County, found in the legends collected by Otu Liiv. There were altogether three chapels in the village of Imatu, Illuka rural municipality, Iisaku parish – two to honour Georgi (St. George) and one for Nikolai (St. Nicholas). One of them was demolished in the middle of the 19th century. According to O. Liiv, the old Orthodox chapel of the village of Sompä (Pühtitsa) was still erect in the 1920s. Liiv also noted the abundance of Tsarist era chapels for the Russians in Virumaa and admitted the possibility of there being multiple chapels in one village (see Liiv 1926: 72).

In addition to the chapels and churches in Narva/Ivangorod, there was also an Orthodox church and congregation in **Rakvere** in 1839 – a two-storied dwelling house was reconstructed as the Church of the Nativity of the Mother of God. The church was thoroughly remodelled and virtually built anew in 1898–1900 (Berens 1974: 313).

The first Orthodox church in **Mustvee** was established in the house of a local resident, P. Boltov, in 1830. The first purpose-built wooden sanctuary was completed with the aid of volunteer donations in 1839 and was sanctified to honour the icon of the Mother of God “Joy to All Sorrowful”. This sanctuary was situated in the graveyard and was demolished in 1948.<sup>56</sup>

Some congregations were also formed without building a dedicated church. For example, in **Haapsalu**, an independent congregation was established in 1836, but the cornerstone of the church was only laid in 1847 and the church was sanctified in 1852. Until the completion of the church, the congregation, which consisted of Russians, gathered in a state-owned building where some rooms on the second floor were adapted for religious use. However, a wooden Orthodox church for the military forces of Haapsalu had already been built in 1756, and was dilapidated by the middle of the 1830s (Berens 1974: 444; EÕK 2007: 52).

Most of the congregations established as a result of the conversion movement in the 1840s also had to make do with temporary premises at first. Unlike in previous centuries, these congregations mostly consisted of Estonians who had converted from Lutheranism to Orthodoxy. By building new churches for those congregations, a new period of Orthodox sacral buildings began in Estonia.

Congregations established in Estonia and the Estonian parts of Livonia (southern Estonia), before the conversion movement of the 1840s, were affiliated with the Pskovian Bishopric from 1725. Permits to build new churches were issued by the Holy Synod of Russia, founded in 1721. Congregations of northern Estonia were transferred to the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg in 1764. Those congregations mainly consisted of Russians. Before the 1840s, Orthodox Estonians were mostly to be found in East Viru County, around lakes Peipsi and Pihkva/Pskov, as well as in the then Oudova County on the eastern (Russian) shore of Lake Peipsi, and in the Setomaa area (see also Klaas 1998: 18–27; Laur 2000: 95–96).

Congregations in the **Petseri (Seto) area** were part of the Novgorod Archbishopric during the Middle Ages, together with other churches in the Pihkva/Pskov region. In 1589, an independent Bishopric of Pskov and Izborsk was founded, in the course of establishing the Patriarchate of Moscow. The Bishopric of Pskov continued to exist, bearing different names, under the management of the Pskov Consistory until 1919.<sup>57</sup>

Of the churches that were built in the 18th century until the middle of the 19th century and which are in the territory that is currently part of Russia and have been preserved, the church of St. Sergi (Sergius) in Irboska (Izborsk in Russian) was constructed probably during the 1750s, the Church of the Holy Great Martyr Varvara (Barbara) in Petseri (Pechory) was completed in 1779,



**Photo 10.** *The Church of the Holy Great Martyr Varvara (Barbara) in Petseri/Pechory (completed in 1779). Photo by Arne Maasik 2008.*



**Photo 11.** *The Church of St. Paraskeva the Great Martyr in Saatse (consecrated in 1801). Photo by Arne Maasik 2008.*

the Trinity Church in Saalesja (Zalesye) was built during the 1790s, and the Church of the 40 Holy Martyrs in Petseri was completed in 1817. These churches were built of stone, except the church of Varvara, which is the oldest of the preserved wooden churches of the Petseri area, and is now the only church in the Russian part of Setomaa where, in addition to the Russian language, services in the Seto dialect of Estonian were held on a regular basis even at the beginning of the 21st century.<sup>58</sup>

Of the Orthodox churches in the Estonian part of Setomaa, the stone church of St. Paraskeva the Great Martyr in Saatse was completed in 1801; it is the oldest surviving stone church in the Estonian part of Setomaa, and it still has an active Seto-Russian mixed congregation.<sup>59</sup>

*Tsässons* in Setomaa were mostly built during the 18th and 19th centuries and there are more *tsässons* than churches surviving in the Estonian part of Setomaa. In addition to the Mikitamäe and Uusvada *tsässons*, which were built during the last decade of the 17th century, those in Võõpsu, Rokina and Matsuri (Säpina) have survived; according to the dendro-chronological dating method, they were completed in 1710–1711.

According to dendro-chronology, of the *tsässons* still existing in the Estonian part, the ones in Meldova (1753), Podmotsa (built approximately in 1760 – the oldest date on the *tsässon* wall) and Serga (1784) were built during the 18th century, and possibly there were some others (see Läänelaid & Raal & Valk 2005). In the 19th century, the building of Seto *tsässons* continued and there have been several built in the 20th and 21st centuries.<sup>60</sup>

In addition to these wooden chapels in Setomaa, the prayer houses of the Russian Old Believers on the western shore of Lake Peipsi are also examples of the wooden sacral architecture of 18th–19th century Estonia.

## **SUMMARY**

Until the conversion movement in southern Estonia, which began in 1845, Orthodoxy in Estonia was mostly the religion of the local Orthodox Russians and Setos, as well as of the Russians living in eastern Estonia, who were officially Lutheran but followed many Orthodox rites (including partially Estonianised Russians, the so-called *poluverniks*). The Russian Old Believers who settled in Estonia starting at the end of the 17th century can also be counted as Orthodox. The article gives an overview of the spread of Orthodoxy in the current Estonian territory and in Setomaa from the 11th century until 1845, focusing on the establishment of different Russian Orthodox churches and chapels (including the Seto *tsässons*) in the current territory of Estonia.



Of the several historical events and Orthodox buildings, which some Estonian church and art historians have so far neglected or underestimated, the following statements or speculations and examples of sacral architecture should be highlighted. Orthodoxy is probably the most ancient form of Christianity to arrive in Estonia, in the 11th century. Some of the local Finno-Ugric people were baptised into Orthodoxy during the 11th–12th centuries, before the crusades of the Roman Catholic Church; it is also possible that the first Christian church in Estonia was founded by the Russian conquerors in Tartu (Yuryev) in the 11th century. The oldest surviving, although extensively reconstructed, Orthodox churches are to be found in Setomaa dating back to the 14th century. The oldest wooden buildings in mainland Estonia also stand in Setomaa: those are the Mikitamäe and Uusvada *tsässons* (Seto village chapels), built in the last decade of the 17th century. The Orthodox sacral buildings also include the oldest surviving wooden church in Tallinn – the Kazan Church (1721) and the oldest surviving wooden church in Setomaa – the Church of St. Varvara in Petseri (1779). The latter has been attended by Setos (and Estonians) for centuries, and they have also attended some older churches with Seto-Russian mixed congregations.

From the Setos, the Old Believers and the Russians of present-day eastern Estonia, Orthodoxy might well have spread among Estonians, to some extent. This is attested to by the gatherings near the Pühtitsa chapel and other Orthodox chapels that took place since the 16th–17th centuries and which were attended by Lutheran Estonians as well as Orthodox Russians. Orthodoxy in Estonian towns and eastern Estonia has been promoted by Russian military campaigns and conquests, especially during the Livonian War in 1558–1583 (with the help of the mission of the Petseri (Pechory) Monastery), when dozens of Orthodox churches were erected in Estonia, plus at least one convent in Tartu. Following the Russian defeat in the Livonian War, some Russian-founded Orthodox churches continued to function for some time under the Polish and Swedish reigns.

The notion of the Church of St. Nikolai in Tallinn being the only more or less active Orthodox sacral building in Estonia (excluding Setomaa) by the end of the Swedish period is not accurate, considering the chapels in present-day East Viru County – some of them were also vandalised during that period.

After the Great Northern War, which was won by the Russians, the Lutheran Church maintained its privileges and Orthodox churches were built mostly for Russians until the 1840s. Following Estonia's incorporation into Russia, new Orthodox churches were erected in all the bigger towns and settlements, from Narva to Kuressaare (from east to west) and from Võru to Paldiski (from south to north), as well as in many smaller places in eastern

Estonia (e.g. Rāpina, Nina, Mustvee and Vasknarva), to accommodate the local Russian Orthodox believers and in part as a counterweight to the prayer houses of the Old Believers near Lake Peipsi. With the churches and clerics present in towns, a certain readiness was created for the conversion movement of the Estonians in the 1840s. However, many Estonians had had contacts with Orthodoxy for centuries before the 1840s, particularly in eastern Estonia and in some larger towns.

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## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> A substantial monograph on the history of Estonian Orthodoxy (since the 11th century) has been written by the previous Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, Aleksius II (*Pravoslavie v Estonii* 1999, in Estonian 2009). The Orthodox priests Vladimir Berens and August Kaljukosk have made remarkable contributions to the studies of the history of the Estonian Orthodox congregations and churches, but their work has not yet been published (Berens 1974; Kaljukosk 1998). Orthodoxy in Old Livonia has been dealt with in the publications of the historian Anti Selart, who has also written about Medieval Orthodox churches (see Selart 1998a, 1998b, 2006, 2009). Orthodoxy in Setomaa and the Seto *tsässons* have been dealt by Heiki Valk and many other authors (see Valk 2003; Setumaa 1928; Setumaa 2009).
- <sup>2</sup> The history of the Old Believers in Estonia has been expanded upon in several publications. See, e.g., Moora 1964; Richter 1976; Pentikäinen & Raudalainen 1999; Ocherki 2004, 2008; Plaat 2005, 2010; Ponomarjova & Šor 2006.
- <sup>3</sup> The first *skeet* was active in the territory of the Rāpina manor in 1710–1722, and the first house of prayer was set up on the western shore of Lake Peipsi in the 1740s, at the village of Kükita (see Richter 1976: 16; Ponomarjova & Šor 2006: 84–85; Kivistik 2009).
- <sup>4</sup> The only Edinovertsy congregation in Estonia was established in Mustvee in 1848 (see Plaat 2010: 75–76; Ponomarjova & Šor 2006: 68–70).
- <sup>5</sup> Applies to work by Aleksius II, V. Berens, and other Orthodox authors (e.g. Raag 1938; EÕK 2007).
- <sup>6</sup> Almost all the currently known Orthodox churches, their ruins, chapels (including the Seto *tsässons*) and monasteries in Estonia and within the Russian territory of Pechory District (Setomaa) as well as the chapels of Old Believers were photographically recorded. The project and this article were supported by the Estonian Science Foundation (grant No. 7264).
- <sup>7</sup> See Povest 1849: 3; Drevniaia 1788: 29; Berens 1974: 393; Õigeusu hingekarjased 2002: 11; Phidas 2002: 267; EÕK 2007: 22, 58; Aim 2007: 16; Sild 1931/32: 106, 112–113.
- <sup>8</sup> Oral data by the archeologist Ain Mäesalu (2009).

- <sup>9</sup> The churches of Nikolai and Georgi are also known as the Church of St. Nikolaos the Miracle Maker, or the St. Nikolaus Church, and the Church of St. Georgios the Great Martyr, or the Church of Georgius or Jüri, respectively.
- <sup>10</sup> Data by the archaeologist Heiki Valk (2010).
- <sup>11</sup> These churches and the few Orthodox people in the town were first mentioned in a Russian travelogue about the journey of the Metropolitan Issidor (Selart 2009: 283; Sõtšov 2004: 14).
- <sup>12</sup> Several authors among the Orthodox priests claim that these two churches were founded in Yuryev in the 11th century. When Tartu was invaded by crusaders in 1224, the Georgi (St. George's) church was badly damaged. The Grand Duke Svyatoslav had it rebuilt in ten years time, according to the agreement with the municipality (Berens 1974: 393; EÕK 2007: 58; Aim 2007: 18). In general, Estonian historians do not consider these claims to be valid. Some authors even suggest that the Russian merchants in Tallinn might have had their own Orthodox church in the 11th–12th centuries (see Kleinenberg 1962: 242).
- <sup>13</sup> According to V. Berens, the wooden Nikolai (St. Nicholas') Church had been restored (after the fire in 1433) by 1437 at the latest, at a new location, near the present Nikolai Church in Vene street (Berens 1974: 363).
- <sup>14</sup> The new iconostasis of the Nikolai Church was made in 1685–1686 and part of it has survived up to today, some other icons were added later (see Ikonnikov 1889: 20–67; Berens 1974: 363–365; Tallinna 2009: 43; Pantelejev *et al.* 2002: 13–15, 28–30; Kormashov 2005: 430; <http://www.orthodox.ee/indexest.php?d=ajalugu/usk> (henceforth: Õigeusk Eestimaal).
- <sup>15</sup> According to V. Berens, the new Nikolai Church was mentioned for the first time in 1341, when the altar was consecrated (1974: 76–77). According to Nikolai Raag, the limestone church was completed in 1349 (1938: 26). The Church of St. Nikolai (St. Nicholas) in Irboska belonged to the monastery, which was abolished in 1764 by a decree issued by Catherine II of Russia. After that, the church was converted into a congregational church (Setomaa 2009: 329). By 1934, the mixed congregation of the church included 341 Estonians-Setos and 5,297 Russians (Raag 1938: 32).
- <sup>16</sup> By 1934, the Kulkna congregation included 444 Estonians-Setos and 988 Russians, the Mõla congregation included, accordingly, 1,055 and 922, and the Tailova mixed congregation included 1,733 Estonians-Setos and 1,158 Russians (Raag 1938: 32–33).
- <sup>17</sup> Thus, the Church of St Nikolai (St. Nicholas) in Irboska has been repeatedly rebuilt and renovated over the centuries (Setomaa 2009: 240, 258; Raag 1938: 26). The Kulkna (Kolpino) Church of the Transfiguration of Our Lord on Kolpino Island located in Lake Pskov is probably the second oldest of the preserved Russian-Seto mixed congregation churches, and it has been rebuilt four times in the 19th century alone (1847, 1857, 1874, 1897). The Kulkna Church is quite possibly the same church as the Church of the Nativity, established in the 16th century by Kornelius, Igumen of the Pskovo-Pechersky Monastery on Kolpino Island. The inscription on the church bell indicates that the church on the island dates back to 1558 (Raag 1938: 27). Several other churches in Pechory have been rebuilt many times, especially until the beginning of the 20th century, altering their appearance to a great degree.

- <sup>18</sup> Later, the monastery was re-established, but closed by the reforms made by Catherine II of Russia in 1764, when the Mõla congregation was founded (Setomaa 2009: 214, 240, 329). The beginning of the 21st century saw the renovation of the bell tower, dating back to the 16th century (Tihhon 2007: 597).
- <sup>19</sup> The current stone Church of St. George (Jüri) in Väraska, which was completed in 1907, was built on the same site that the wooden church, established in 1877 (Raag 1938: 30–31).
- <sup>20</sup> Traces of ancient beliefs and world-views can be found in the Seto traditions and beliefs to this day, although their heyday stayed well in the period before the beginning of the 20th century (Setomaa 2009: 334).
- <sup>21</sup> Most often, the Seto *tsässons* are named after a saint. Rarer are the cases when a *tsässon* has been named after a church holiday: for example, the *tsässons* in Mikitamäe.
- <sup>22</sup> By way of exception, the village holiday of Uusvada is not celebrated on a *tsässon* holiday but on St. Peter's Day (*Piitrepäiv* in the Seto language), i.e. the commemoration day of Apostles Peter and Paul. Hence, the *tsässon* is sometimes also called St. Peter's Day *tsässon* that is obviously not correct.
- <sup>23</sup> According to several Orthodox authors, Kornelius founded the Trinity Church near Aheru Lake (in present-day Valga County) at a place called Agavere (Kase 1999; EÕK 2007: 58–60; Tihhon 2007: 20), which no longer appears on maps. The founding of Ahero church by Kornelius in Valgamaa, on the shore of Suure-Ahero Lake, was confirmed in the publication *Setumaa* in 1928, which claims the location of the church (which had probably been destroyed after the Livonian War) had been forested until 1860. When the trees were uprooted, walls and stone tiles, fragments of a chandelier and a Greek-Catholic cross were found. But the objects have been lost through the years (Setumaa 1928: 356–357).
- <sup>24</sup> Icons and church implements were taken along by the retreating Russian troops also from other Orthodox churches built during the Livonian War. Part of the treasure reached the Pechersky Monastery (Selart 1998b: 24).
- <sup>25</sup> The first bishop was a namesake of the Pechersky Igumen Kornelius. He was followed by at least two more bishops, probably before 1582 (Selart 2006: 16).
- <sup>26</sup> A monastery known by its name is the Monastery of the Resurrection of Christ in Tartu. Its buildings, probably built of wood, were possibly constructed after establishing the monastery between the years 1558 and 1570. Services were held immediately after the invasion in “our own church”, which was probably the medieval church of Nikolai (St. Nicholas), which was once used and is now being used again. The building of a new church was initiated at once. It was probably not the only one, as Russian churches were built on the northern bank of the River Emajõgi, where a new Russian suburb emerged. The Church of the Transformation of the Lord is also known by its name. It was probably a wooden church that was taken down for building materials or heating wood when Tartu was under the Polish reign after the Russian troops and most of the Russian inhabitants had left. In the 1580s, the Russian chapel built during the Livonian War in the mercantile premises on the opposite bank of the river was still there (see Selart 2006: 10–15, 18, 20–21).



- <sup>27</sup> A revision made by the Polish authorities lists among the churches of the town: “a small wooden church of Moscovites where nowadays Catholic services are held ... Russian church next to the parish church of Jaani (St. John’s) in the marketplace, where Lutheran Germans gather for their service.” (Viljandi 1999: 14)
- <sup>28</sup> After the Swedes had conquered the Ivangorod stronghold in the Livonian War (1581), the church was transformed into a Lutheran church. It was reclaimed by the Orthodox congregation during the 1740s (Ivask & Sinjakova 2005: 9–10, 25). The churches of Ivangorod, which have mostly been part of the Russian state, will not be discussed further in this article (for information regarding them, see Ivask & Sinjakova 2005).
- <sup>29</sup> <http://www.orthodox.ee/indexest.php?d=kuremae/kloos>.
- <sup>30</sup> Annual gatherings around the Pühtitsa chapel have been reported since the second half of the 17th century. There was supposedly a great gathering of people in Kuremäe every year, against which the efforts and threats made by the local Lutheran pastors and the prohibitions of the province government were powerless. In 1699, the Jõhvi pastor reported that people came to the great heretical party, held in August, from several parishes and even from Russia (Liiv 1928: 81–92).
- <sup>31</sup> In the 1738 visitation of the church in Jõhvi, one Russian chapel was mentioned, among others, which was supposedly erected without the permission of the Governor General and where an Orthodox priest and a lot of Russians gathered once a year, together with many (Estonian) Lutherans. The latter were prohibited from attending in the future (Liiv 1928: 81–82). The chapel in question was probably that of Kuremäe, which was supposedly held sacred by the local Estonian peasantry even before the revelations in the 16th century, after which it became sacred for the local Russians as well.
- <sup>32</sup> Russian peasants in Vasknarva had built a new wooden chapel next to the small wooden one by 1876. In 1885, it became the church for the local congregation (Pjuhtitskii 1991: 3–4).
- <sup>33</sup> For details about Russians, in East Viru County, who were officially Lutheran, but in practice followed the Orthodox (and pagan) rites, see Liiv 1928: 68ff.
- <sup>34</sup> According to the estimates of Jüri Truusmann, the Russians who were the forefathers of *poluverniks* wandered there from Russia during the 16th and 17th centuries (2002: 179). According to Ott Kurs, the Orthodox Russians appeared there even earlier, from the 13th to 16th centuries (2006: 102).
- <sup>35</sup> In the author’s opinion, the massive conversion of Lutherans to Orthodoxy that took place in the 1840s actually denoted their transfer to another church, not a change of religion. Most of the converts did not know much about Orthodoxy and many continued to attend Lutheran churches or Hernhutian congregations and followed the Lutheran rites. The principles of Orthodoxy started to take hold only during the following decades.
- <sup>36</sup> This church, which was built during the 17th century and had been closed for a while, was given to the German congregation in 1733. It was wrecked during the bombing in 1944, and the ruins were finally demolished during the 1950s (Ivask & Sinjakova 2005: 11, 13, 18).

- <sup>37</sup> The oldest known stone church of Narva was first mentioned in 1442. The church, which had been active as a Catholic and also Lutheran church, as well as an Orthodox one, from 1708 to 1944, was badly damaged in the 1944 bombing and its ruins were finally removed in the 1950s (Ivask & Sinjakova 2005: 11, 26; EÕK 2007: 82).
- <sup>38</sup> The Nikolai (St. Nicholas') Church of Tallinn in Vene street was the hospital for the Swedish military forces during the Great Northern War, but was reopened as the church after the Russian conquest in 1710 (Ikonnikov 1889: 20–67).
- <sup>39</sup> The iconostasis of the church was completed, but its erection began only in 1726, after the old church had been renovated and reconstructed. It was finished only in 1732 (Kaljundi 2005: 439). See Tiisik 1896 for details of the church.
- <sup>40</sup> According to another version, the church was finished in 1721 and brought to its present location in 1749 (Tallinna 2009: 71).
- <sup>41</sup> Tallinna 2009: 75–76; Berens 1974: 371, see also [www.eoc.ee/est/esileht/piiskopkonnad](http://www.eoc.ee/est/esileht/piiskopkonnad), (bishops of the Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church).
- <sup>42</sup> See Aleksius II 1999: 144–145. There were two churches with congregations, and four military churches in Tallinn by 1799 (Berens 1974: 352).
- <sup>43</sup> According to other records, this church, which is situated in Magasini Street, was designed by the Rigan architect A. Pavlos. Side wings were added in the 1840s (architect A. Adamson), and there were other reconstructions and annexes added later (Eesti Arhitektuur 4... 1999: 37; Raid 1981: 52–53).
- <sup>44</sup> In 1888, the Swedes from the isles of Suur-Pakri and Väike-Pakri joined the Paldiski congregation, as well as Estonians who had converted to Orthodoxy in the 1880s. According to V. Berens, they held services in Swedish and Estonian, and in 1886, an Orthodox auxiliary school was established in Suur-Pakri (1974: 268–269). The connection of Estonian Swedes (incl. the Swedes from the island of Vormsi – see Plaat 1999 for details) with the Orthodox church is one of the most interesting chapters in the history of Estonian Orthodoxy, as well as one of the most peculiar ones.
- <sup>45</sup> About Orthodoxy in Saaremaa, see Plaat 2003.
- <sup>46</sup> Berens 1974: 165–166; Toon 1997: 4–6; Aleksius II 1999: 148–149. The Russian community was small in number until the middle of the 19th century. It is also worth mentioning that, by the 19th century at the latest, some *Dukhobors* and other Russian Orthodox denominations were located in Saaremaa: these were deported from Russia by the authorities (Aleksius II 1999: 601).
- <sup>47</sup> About the churches in Narva and Ivangorod, see Berens 1974: 229–248; Ivask & Sinjakova 2005; EÕK 2007: 82–91.
- <sup>48</sup> According to other records, the Võru church, with its Neo-classicist silhouette and details, was completed in 1806 (Eesti Arhitektuur 4... 1999: 147; Võrumaa 1926: 461).
- <sup>49</sup> Mustvee was declared a town in 1938, and Räpina in 1993.
- <sup>50</sup> In the 20th century, the church was expanded by adding an annex for side altars (Berens 1974: 255–256; EÕK 2007: 76–78).

- <sup>51</sup> In the period of 1752–1844, the Rāpina congregation had about 400 to 600 Russian members. However, after the movement to convert Estonians, which started in 1845, the congregation had 2,057 members in 1847 (Hindo 1937: 22–24; Berens 1974: 323–327; Aleksius II 1999: 149; Tohvri 2004: 56).
- <sup>52</sup> Berens 1974: 82; EÕK 2007: 68. The new stone church in Vasknarva was completed in 1873.
- <sup>53</sup> <http://www.orthodox.ee/indexest.php?d=kuremae/kloos>. After the Kuremäe Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God was established in Pühtitsa in 1891, the miraculous icon was transferred there.
- <sup>54</sup> The tradition of a procession from Vasknarva to Pühtitsa on the Day of the Dormition of the Mother of God (Aug 28) is still followed (Interview with Mother Prokopi, in Vasknarva, 09/14/2009).
- <sup>55</sup> <http://www.orthodox.ee/indexest.php?d=kuremae/kloos>.
- <sup>56</sup> The current stone church of St. Nikolai the Holy Bishop and Miracle Worker was built in Mustvee during 1861–1864, designed by A. Edelson, the architect to the Rigan Bishopric (Berens 1974: 205; EÕK 2007: 74).
- <sup>57</sup> On 17 June 1919, the council of the Bishopric of Estonia assigned a provost to Petseri County, giving him orders to organise a deanery from the 16 existing Orthodox congregations (Setomaa 2009: 326–327).
- <sup>58</sup> As of 2008, Russian-only services have been held in the mixed congregations of Tailova, Zalesye, Pankjavitsa and Mõla. The church of Laura was mostly attended by Russians and Latvians. The other Orthodox Estonian Setos living in Petseri (in Vana-Irboska and elsewhere) attended purely Russian congregations. (Interview with Yevgeni Peleshev, the priest of the Varvara congregation of Petseri, 30 June 2008, in Petseri).
- <sup>59</sup> About the churches in Setomaa, see Raag 1938; Berens 1974; Setomaa 2009.
- <sup>60</sup> There are 23 *tsüssons* and 6 Orthodox churches located within the Estonian territory of Setomaa in 2011.

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# NAME SIGNS FOR HEARING PEOPLE<sup>1</sup>

*Liina Paales*

**Abstract:** The article will discuss personal name signs given by members of the Deaf community to hearing people. The main categories of Estonian personal name signs' formation will be introduced. There are four categories of personal name signs in Estonian Sign Language: 1) arbitrary (initialised) name signs; 2) descriptive name signs; 3) initialised-descriptive name signs or 4) loan/borrowed name signs.

The nature of personal name signs has been considered in the context of onomastics and folkloristics. Here the issue is about defining personal name signs as nicknames or as official names. In the context of sign language inter-course personal name signs have an official status and are applied in formal situations in Deaf communities.

In the present article, name signs of Deaf-related and Deaf community non-related public figures of the dominant hearing culture have been explored. Three key sources have been exploited for this research: 1) publications (international personal name signs studies; printed and electronic media); 2) oral (signed) and written information from Deaf people, sign language interpreters and name signs researchers; 3) manuscripts.

A large number of name signs of hearing people have been collected by the author from different sign languages – Estonian Sign Language, Russian Sign Language, Finnish Sign Language and German Sign Language, etc. A set of personal name signs of Deaf school teachers, sign language interpreters, sign language researchers, politicians, athletes, and other public figures has been represented, and several name signs of religious figures.

There is no linguistic difference in forming name signs for Deaf or hearing people, however, there is a cultural difference between Deaf communities and dominant hearing societies revealed in name signs' heritage and perception.

**Key words:** American Sign Language, Chinese Sign Language, culture contacts, Deaf cultures, Estonian Deaf community, Estonian Sign Language, Finnish Sign Language, French Sign Language, German Sign Language, hearing people, New Zealand Sign Language, nicknames, personal name, personal name signs, Philippine Sign Language, Russian Sign Language, Thai Sign Language

## INTRODUCTION

Estonian Sign Language (ESL) is a visual-gestural language. The core community of ESL users consists of approximately 1400–1500 inherent or pre-speech Deaf people (Hollman 2010: 28). One aspect of Deaf communication, finger

spelling of the alphabet of spoken language<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 1) was already introduced by Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald (1803–1882), a public figure of the Estonian national awakening period, writer and physician, to local people approximately two decades before our first school for Deaf was established. In the popular science picture magazine *Ma-ilm ja mõnda, mis seal sees leida on* ('The world and something of what it contains') published in 1849 he referred to hand configurations of manual alphabet as "sõrmekeele-pookstavid" (letters of finger-language). The illustration added to the text resembles the British two-handed manual alphabet.<sup>3</sup> Kreutzwald emphasised that a hearing person should not think of the manual alphabet as a joke as it helps when communicating with Deaf people (Kreutzwald 1849: 123–125).

Lutheran pastor Ernst Sokolovski established the first Estonian school for the Deaf in Vändra in 1866. According to some references Deaf individuals were taught in Estonia as early as the 17th century (Kotsar & Kotsar 1996: 8). Currently, hearing impaired children are educated in Tartu Hiie School and Tallinn Helen School by using various teaching methods. Estonian Deaf people have their own wide network of organisations, with the umbrella organisation being the Estonian Association of the Deaf, which has regional representations across the republic. In addition, there is the Estonian Deaf Sport Union



Figure 1. Contemporary Estonian finger alphabet (Illustration: I. Kaunissaar).

with its regional divisions and the Estonian Deaf Organization for Youth. Deaf people are also involved in the activities of relevant work groups of several Christian denominations.

In recent decades the hearing and Deaf communities in Estonia have shown signs of convergence. During the 1980s–1990s, new fields emerged in the research of Estonian social and cultural sciences: Estonian Sign Language, Deaf history, Deaf culture and Deaf folklore. In addition to defining Deaf people as a group of people with hearing impairment and special needs, they are also defined as a language minority. The world of sign-language users attracts more and more interest from those outside the Deaf community, i.e. people who have no direct personal or family contact with Deaf people.

In the last decades of the 20th century both the opinion of the majority society towards Estonian Sign Language, as well as Estonian Sign Language itself, have undergone major changes. The former (predominant) view of signing as a primitive means of communication has, due to cooperation between the hearing society and the Deaf community, been transformed into national recognition of sign language.<sup>4</sup>

Estonian Television produced sign language programmes intended especially for Deaf people in the late 1980s and the first half of the 1990s. Sign language interpretation of the news became available on TV as of 1998. In 2009, interpretation on TV was discontinued and broadcasting of sign language news was resumed on Channel 2 of Estonian Television, with news prepared and reported by Deaf journalists.

Sign language interpretation services have been developed in Estonia based on the need to improve communication between Deaf and hearing people. Since 2006 the University of Tartu has provided training of sign language interpreters. The professional association of Estonian Sign Language interpreters is a member of the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (EFSLI).<sup>5</sup>

## **SOURCES OF RESEARCH**

This article focuses on cultural contacts between the Deaf community and the hearing community in a broader sense and more specifically concerns the language heritage of Deaf people, onomastics, and the study of personal name signs. The purpose is to introduce, by example of particular personal name signs, the general features of a Deaf heritage, world view and language formation. The object of this study encompasses name signs attributed to hearing people by the Deaf community. The author discusses the following issues: 1) study of name signs at the international level and in Estonia; 2) categories

of name signs; 3) definitions of person-denoting signs in an onomastic context (personal name sign/ nickname/ personal name); 4) methods of formation of Estonian person-denoting signs; 5) name signs of hearing people in Estonian and other national Deaf communities. The collection of name signs allows access to the name heritage of Deaf people.

The overview provided in this article is based on the research on national personal name signs and the author's previous works regarding Estonian personal name signs. Name signs of hearing people are divided into three groups: 1) name signs of people related to the Deaf community; 2) name signs of public figures in the hearing society; 3) name signs of religious figures. The subdivisions of the first two groups are based either on the field of activity of the person in question, or his or her specific relationship with Deaf people, and the third group reviews ten name signs related to Christianity and one name sign related to Buddhism.

The name signs indicated in the article were selected in a way that they would represent different groups of people and name-forming methods. The article draws on a total of 112 name signs attributed to 103 people (see Appendix 1<sup>6</sup>). There were 7 people with two or more name signs<sup>7</sup>. There was one so-called personal family name sign, where the same name sign was used for the entire family. Family members were distinguished by using attributive signs (e.g. WIFE, DAUGHTER). In addition to the Estonian Sign Language this article provides examples from Finnish, Russian, German, French, American, Chinese, Philippine, Thai and New Zealand Sign Languages.

The name signs included in this article originate from various sources: 1) publications (international research on person-denoting signs, electronic and printed media); 2) oral and written information (obtained from Estonian Deaf people and sign language interpreters, information received by e-mail and drawings by German ethnographer Anne Uhlig and French ethnologist Yves Delaporte); 3) manuscripts (written notes in possession of the author, made on the basis of information collected from the Estonian Deaf community since 1995<sup>8</sup>, materials of the Deaf and hearing sign language interpreters' work group of the Estonian Bible Society).

A more critical approach is required when using the examples taken from foreign media, because the author had no opportunity to verify the use of these person-denoting signs in relevant sign languages. Estonian translations of such name signs (which represent more of an interpretation by the author) are presented in a gloss system. Estonian glosses are written in capital letters.



## TERMINOLOGY, CLASSIFICATION AND RESEARCH HISTORY OF NAME SIGNS

Name category is universal in linguistic terms. Different national sign languages have developed their own name systems. The terms used to denote names in Estonian Sign Language, are called *viipenimi* or synonymously, *nime-märk* ‘name sign’. In other spoken languages the general terms include *viittomanimi* (in Finnish), *name sign* (in English), *Namensgebärde* (in German), and *nom-signé* (in French).

Name signs represent a viable language and heritage tradition, their formation and perception is based on visual information, historic cultural space, cultural beliefs of the group, and linguistic means of expression. The practice of using and forming name signs varies by communities.

This article focuses on personal name signs (*isikuviiipenimed* or *isikumärgid* in Estonian, *henkilöviittoma* in Finnish, and *persontecken* in Swedish). In Estonian Sign Language the personal name sign is denoted by a simple sign VIIPLEMA+PILT [TO SIGN + PICTURE].

The pioneer of name sign research, Deaf linguist Samuel J. Supalla studied the person-denoting signs of American Deaf people (Supalla 1992). Personal name signs have been most frequently studied with regard to national sign language name systems, for instance, studies have been carried out in the field of person-denoting signs in Finnish (Rainò 2000, 2004, 2005), Swedish (Hedberg 1994), French (Delaporte 2002), and other sign languages. Less attention has been paid to place name signs and other name signs (e.g. ethnonyms), however, both personal name signs and place name signs have been studied in Estonia (Paales 2004, 2008, 2010).

## PERSON-DENOTING SIGNS IN THE CONTEXT OF ONOMASTICS

The research regarding sign language name systems has mostly emphasised the formation methods of personal name signs and their role in shaping the cultural identity of Deaf people. Name signs have also been defined as part of Deaf folklore, a type of playful language creation or sign-lore of Deaf people (Klima & Bellugi 1979: 319–339; Rutherford 1993: 129–135; Carmel 1996: 197–200). In the context of onomastics the essence of person-denoting name signs has been analysed to a lesser extent.

When considering name signs in terms of onomastics, we have to ask which name category they belong to – thus, person-denoting signs are proper names;

proper names are official names denoting people or personal names, and nicknames. In her article on the essence of different names, Kristin Vaik refers to the works of Sven Kala on Estonian nicknames, referring to the latter as all names that denote a particular person and differ from an official personal name (Vaik 2006).

Do personal name signs represent personal names or nicknames? Their classification into one or the other category is determined by various features. In the context of spoken language the name sign as visual-gestural differs from reference to a person's verbal name form (official, phonetic/written personal name) and this substantial fact provides a basis for defining name signs as nicknames.

Name researcher Peter McClure states in his work that nicknames refer to a person's character, appearance, behaviour or a certain event related to that person (McClure 1981: 65). Kathryn P. Meadow, who studied American name signs, relies on the research on children's linguistic humour and refers, among other authors, to D. J. Winslow, who divides children's nicknames into four groups: 1) physical peculiarities (such as spectacles, braces, racial features, etc.); 2) actual or assumed mental peculiarities; 3) nicknames based on social relations; 4) parody of the actual name of the child (Meadow 1977: 242).

These features are also characteristic of descriptive personal name signs – one of the name sign categories – which contain elements that are common to nicknames and sometimes perceived as derogatory (e.g. indications of the appearance, character of the person denoted), and they are almost always translated into spoken languages as a nickname. At the same time, in signing communities, any type of personal name sign functions as proper name, i.e. assumes the role of an official name. It is possible that certain Deaf people are only known in the community by their personal name signs and the written name form is unknown. Deaf people use sign names both in daily communication and for public presentations (Rainò 2004: 10).

This essential problem has come to the attention of other name sign researchers as well: according to K. P. Meadow, the name signs can, in a way, be compared to nicknames, although their functions do not fully overlap (Meadow 1977: 243). Chinese name sign researchers Yau Shunchiu and He Jinxian ask a rhetorical question: if the name sign was defined as a nickname then should the reference person be tolerant of the derogatory name sign attributed to him or her? They claim that Chinese personal name signs undergo morphological changes, losing their originally transparent (derogatory) meaning (Yau & He 1990: 249, 251–252).

In numerous Deaf communities, including Estonia, the process of name sign formation involves reference to a person's notable visible features (a mole,

scar, missing limb, freckles, etc.). As a hearing person, a name researcher should not be prejudicial and judgmental or decide, based on such personal name signs, that Deaf people are insensitive and rude. Personal connotations embedded in name signs derive from the peculiarity of the world perception of a Deaf person and do not necessarily mean that they should be interpreted as negative or mean (McKee & McKee 2000: 26).

If you ask whether a Deaf person “prefers” the official (written) name or name sign, then the preference is undoubtedly given to the name sign as it is a symbol of his/her own culture. Classification of personal name signs as a name category in terms of onomastics is an intriguing subject for further discussion.

### **PERSONAL NAME SIGNS, PERSONAL NAMES AND NICKNAMES**

A personal name sign, personal name and nickname can be used to identify and differentiate proper names, but personal name signs and nicknames have an additional function to emphasise the feeling of togetherness. For instance, personal name signs reflect whether one belongs to the Deaf community or is related to it, and hearing people can also have their own name signs. Or, according to French ethnologist Yves Delaporte: even if Deaf people do not exist for you, you exist in their name system (Delaporte 2002: 207).

Thus, on the one hand, the moment of attributing a personal name sign signifies the entry of that person into the sign language community, by creating a connection with the history and language of the group. On the other hand, a name sign is a linguistically efficient personal denotation; a cultural anchor for coping both in the sign language community and hearing society. A person may have several different name signs with different social functions.

In comparison to a phonetic name the personal name does not function as a call sign. Deaf people have several other methods to attract the attention of their conversation partner (e.g. by waving or tapping the partner’s shoulder or arm). When communicating, the name sign is used for denoting a third person. Signing of personal name signs may be accompanied by articulation of the phonetic name or mouth patterns motivated thereof. Personal name signs are mostly signed near the head, face, or chest; if a particular name sign has not yet been developed, finger spelling of the given name and/ or surname is used.<sup>9</sup>

Just like any other child, the children of Deaf people are also named by their parents after birth (in verbal/written form). As researchers of name signs

from New Zealand have pointed out, phonetic names are not accessible in the signed discourse: it is difficult to teach their social and linguistic significance to Deaf children, as they cannot hear the pronunciation of these names (McKee & McKee 2000: 9).

Usually Deaf children are given their personal name sign by their Deaf contemporaries at school. For example, Chinese researchers describe a situation, where the newcomers are given a name sign by older co-students at the school for Deaf (Yau & He 1990: 245). When communicating with the members of Estonian Deaf community, it appears that most of them received their name sign while living in the boarding school – many name sign traditions are started at the Deaf school.

Based on the aforementioned we may say that nicknames and personal name signs are created on the same basis. They are generated in cooperation, interaction, and dialogue between the reference person and the denoting person (Vaik 2006: 88). K. Meadow, referring to the American Deaf community, points out three periods when a Deaf person is most likely to obtain a personal name sign: 1) in childhood (Deaf children of Deaf parents); 2) at a special school for Deaf (contemporaries); 3) in high school (Deaf co-students) (Meadow 1977: 240).

K. Vaik shows that although personal names can be changed, e.g. taking the spouse's surname when getting married, the main quality and requirement of a personal name is its constancy. Nicknames, being less constant than personal names, disappear or are replaced with new ones after their function is lost (Vaik 2006: 88).

There are different opinions with regard to changing the name sign in Deaf communities. Thus it is rather complicated for Chinese Deaf people to change their name sign and in most cases the personal name sign obtained at school will accompany a Deaf person throughout his or her life (Yau & He 1990: 249–250). Changing of name signs is not common in the Palestinian Deaf community either (Strauss-Samaneh 2001: 595). However, European (incl. Estonian) and American (U.S.) Deaf communities are more flexible and personal name signs can be changed more easily.

Problems arise with regard to changing a personal name sign that is unacceptable for a reference person. According to the general rule, personal name signs should not be offensive for a reference person. For example, in the Deaf community of New Zealand there have been cases where an unpleasant personal name sign was reportedly substituted with a new one, but in fact the old (unpleasant) name sign was still used (McKee & McKee 2000: 26). Use of different name signs to denote the same person is also common among Estonian Deaf people.

It is common to change a personal name sign in connection with a reference person's different stages of life. A new name sign indicates a change in the status of that person, for example, in the case of women the name sign may change when getting married. New name sign may also be introduced due to a new job. The change of a person's Deaf community (such as moving from Estonia to another country or *vice versa*) may also be a reason for getting a new personal name sign. The fact is that one person may have several name signs simultaneously, or according to an Estonian proverb: *a good child has many names*.

## **METHODS OF FORMING PERSONAL NAME SIGNS**

Estonian Sign Language has four main categories of personal name signs (see Table 1) (Paales 2004: 202–205) and five categories of place name signs (Paales 2008: 17–18). In other national sign languages there are other methods for forming personal name signs besides those described in this article.

Firstly, arbitrary or initialised personal name signs are created on the basis of the written form of the reference person's official personal name. Such personal name signs contain the initials of the given name and/or surname, represented by hand shapes. For example, Andrus Ansip, current Prime Minister of the Republic of Estonia, is denoted by a two-part double-initialised name sign. The personal name sign is performed by using the A-hand shape corresponding to the initials of given name and surname (A+A) (see Fig. 1).

The second category is formed by descriptive (metonymic and metaphoric) name signs. The formation of a metonymic name sign is based on the reference person's appearance, behaviour, clothing, peculiarity, special characteristic, etc. Such descriptive name signs employ both the principle of metonymy – using a part instead of the whole – and the principle behind metaphor, i.e. comparison. For example, the personal name sign of the politician Siim Kallas refers to his moustache (MISTER VUNTS [MISTER MOUSTACHE]) or, according to another explanation, to the dimple.

The third group consists of initialised descriptive personal name signs, where the hand shape, corresponding to the initial of the name, is associated with some attribute of the reference person, such as hairstyle. These personal name signs combine both initials and description. Several name sign researchers consider these name signs to be untraditional, hybrid, and a result of cultural contact between hearing people and Deaf people (Delaporte 2002: 214; Mindess 1990: 14–15). It is possible that one of the factors behind the formation of this mixed type comes from the opinion of hearing people that a “proper” name

sign should be depictive or imitative: it blends the association of some exterior feature of the reference person with the initial of the reference person's given name or surname. E.g. in American Sign Language, the current President Barack Obama is referred to by using a personal name sign which combines both the initials of his surname and given name as well as indication to his logo dating back to his election campaign (O+B+logo), which depicts the American flag and the initial of the surname Obama (see Fig. 2). The letter B (which is both the initial of his given name and the second letter in his surname) has undergone a morphological change and American B-hand shape denotes a flag in the name sign (Grigg-Langton 2009).



*Figure 2. The sources of forming the name sign of Obama.*

The fourth type of personal name signs includes loan/borrowed name signs and in this case the name sign is formed on the basis of the meaning of the reference person's official personal name. Such name signs are either total or partial homonyms in terms of written form of personal name, for example, in Russian Sign Language the personal name sign of Dmitri Medvedev, current President of Russia, is KARU [BEAR] (МЕДВЕД – медвед, 'bear' in Russian). The same name sign is used in Estonia as well and is probably a loan from the Russian Sign Language. For a Deaf person the meaning of the written form of a personal name speaks volumes – it gives a visual impulse, for which a suitable sign language translation is then searched.

## **ATTRIBUTING PERSONAL NAME SIGNS TO HEARING PEOPLE**

Attributing personal name signs to hearing people is an interesting subject. Group-based classification of name signs is related to the concepts of *Deaf* and *hearing person*, which represent different communities, language and culture. Y. Delaporte has defined them as ethnonyms, names of different groups of people – Deaf and hearing people (Delaporte 2002: 52–55).



**Table 1.** Categories and formation sources of Estonian personal name signs.

Categories of personal name signs	Types	Sources of forming personal name sign	
arbitrary personal name sign (A)	one-initial A1	written personal name	initial of given name
	two-initial A2	written personal name	initials of given name and surname
	finger spelled A3	written personal name	given name
descriptive personal name sign (D)	D1	appearance	hairstyle
			face
			other part of the body
			attributes (clothing, jewellery, spectacles, etc.)
	D2	hobby, field of activity, mode of conduct	hobby behaviour
D3	other feature of the person	social status	
D4	unspecified feature	forwarded or inherited personal name sign modification of conveyed personal name sign	
Initialised descriptive personal name sign (AD)	A1/D1	appearance and initial of given name	initial of given name and hairstyle
Loan/borrowed personal name sign (L)	L 1 total homonym	written personal name	surname
	L 2 partial homonym	written personal name	surname
	L 2 partial homonym	written personal name	given name

Considering that Deaf communities lived in relative isolation for a long time and did not have as much contact with the hearing community as today, there was no actual need to attribute name signs to hearing people. Anna Mindess also states that, e.g., in the American Deaf community it is a more recent tendency to attribute name signs to hearing people (Mindess 1990: 13–14). Nowadays, the attribution of personal name signs to hearing people has become common practice.

In this sense the acceptance of a hearing person or their involvement in the life of the community is irrelevant. Instead it is important that reference person is known in the Deaf community. In other words, people, who have been subject to discussion in the Deaf community, receive their own personal name sign (McKee & McKee 2000: 21).

Deaf people began to give name signs to hearing people for various reasons and one of these was growing contact with the hearing society and the increase in popularity of sign languages. At first, name signs were attributed to

people with close connections with Deaf people, but as the communication between the Deaf community and the dominant hearing society became more frequent, name signs were also given to people who were not so closely related to Deaf community.

Throughout history, teachers at the school for the Deaf have been treated as an exception, as they were attributed a name sign by the students. Personal name signs were also given to sign language interpreters who played a significant role in the Deaf community life. Nowadays it is common to attribute name signs to well-known public officials, and an interesting problem worth studying is whether and how Deaf people attribute name signs to their hearing children or relatives.

Deaf people consider a hearing person, who uses a self-created personal name sign to denote himself or herself, as culturally ignorant or as an intruder. This problem occurred along with the increasing popularity of studying sign language. According to the observations made with regard to the American Deaf community, a personal name sign becomes a source of humour when incompetently used by a hearing person, who lacks knowledge of Deaf heritage or has insufficient language proficiency. Such a hearing person may become a laughing-stock (Rutherford 1993: 126). Deaf people themselves, however, may also manipulate name signs in order to make a joke or to satirise.

## **A SELECTION OF NAME SIGNS ATTRIBUTED TO HEARING PEOPLE**

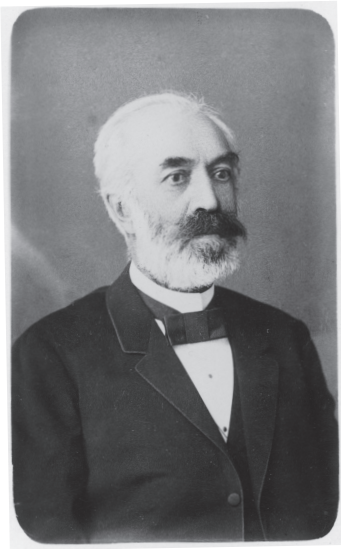
Below is given a selection of personal name signs attributed to hearing people, starting from those having closer connections with the Deaf community (e.g. teachers, sign language interpreters, hearing children of Deaf parents) and moving on to the name signs of public figures (e.g. public officials, athletes, singers, etc.). Last but not least, the author discusses religious personal name signs. The examples are taken mostly from Estonian Sign Language, but also from other sign languages.

### **People related to the Deaf community**

**Teachers of Deaf schools.** Conversations with older generations of Deaf people revealed descriptive personal name signs of two people who have played a significant role in the educational history of the Estonian Deaf community. The name sign attributed to Ernst Sokolovski (1833–1899), Lutheran pastor and founder of the first school for Deaf in Estonia, refers to his sideburns (see

Photo 1). E. Sokolovski taught Deaf children by applying the German method.<sup>10</sup> Transfer of the School for Deaf from Vändra to Porkuni in 1924–1925 was organised by the school manager and renowned teacher of the Deaf, Volmer Univer (1865–1941), whose name sign refers to chin whiskers (see Photo 2). These are most likely among the oldest personal name signs in Estonian Sign Language attributed to hearing people and preserved to this day. The Finnish researcher of name signs, Päivi Rainò, points out that only a few name signs survive after the death of the reference person (Rainò 2005: 7).

Similar examples, of personal name signs for hearing teachers of Deaf people, are also found in other national sign languages. For instance, Charles-Michel de l'Épée, a Frenchman, who in 1755 founded the first public school for the Deaf in the world, has a two-part descriptive name sign. The first part of the name sign refers to a formerly worn clerical collar, and the second part is a translation from the French word *épée* (SWORD) (Supalla 1992: 23). The Reverend Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet (1787–1851) was a well-known hearing American, who established a school for the Deaf in Hartford, U.S. in cooperation with a French teacher, Laurent Clerc (Deaf). The personal name sign of Gallaudet, which also denotes Gallaudet University for the Deaf in Washington D.C., refers to his spectacles. The name sign of Gallaudet has obviously been attributed by the French Deaf community, as he stayed in Paris for a long time, to master the so-called French method<sup>11</sup> (Supalla 1992: 25–26).



**Photo 1.** Ernst Sokolovski  
(EKLA A-37: 5051)



**Photo 2.** Volmer Univer  
(EKLA A-1: 1762)

Personal name signs, attributed to the teachers who worked at Porkuni School for the Deaf during the Soviet period, are mostly descriptive, referring to various external characteristics of the reference person ETTEULATUV LÕUG [LANTERN-JAWED], LÕUALOTT [DOUBLE CHIN], HÕRE JUUKSETUTT LAUBAL [THIN WISP OF HAIR ON THE FOREHEAD], RAHULIK [CALM], SALE FIGUUR [SLIM], LAIAPUUSALINE [WIDE HIPS]). There are also borrowed personal name signs, such as SAAR [ISLE] (abbreviated from surname *Ojasaar*). The name signs of teachers are often clearly derogatory (cf. also McKee & McKee 2000: 21). This may be due to seeing the teachers as enactors of the power of hearing society, as they were the ones who provided education by using the oral method, which was arduous for Deaf people.

The name signs of teachers of the school for the Deaf have been subject to linguistic games. For instance, the students of Porkuni School modified the name sign of the reference person according to reference person's behaviour. In a normal situation the name sign RAHU(LIK) [CALM] was used, which referred to generally composed behaviour and the level-headed personality of the reference person. But when that teacher was upset, the name sign RAHU(LIK) [CALM] was replaced with the name sign KONGUS NINA [HOOK-NOSED]. A teacher's name sign was also altered if the students did not want the teacher to know that he or she was being talked about. Students often had to modify a teacher's name sign after he or she understood sign language and recognised his or her name sign.

**Sign language interpreters.** Sign language interpreters represent another group of people who are closely related to the Deaf community and are always given personal name signs. Two name signs were simultaneously used in the Deaf community for Helvi Tõnurist (1942–2004), a renowned interpreter, trainer of interpreters, founder and the first chairwoman of the Association of Estonian Sign Language Interpreters. Both personal name signs were loans – the first one was based on her maiden name *Lepp* (personal name sign LEPP [ALDER]) and the second on *rist*, the final component of her surname which is a compound word *Tõnurist* (name sign RIST [CROSS]).

Loan name signs have also been attributed to the experienced sign language interpreters Liivi Hollman and Ulvi Saks, who have interpreted the news for the Deaf and hearing impaired people on Estonian Television for years. The first one of them carries a personal name sign LIIV [SAND], derived from the word *liiv* ('sand') which bears resemblance to her given name *Liivi*, and the second one has name sign SAKSA [GERMAN], derived from the word *Saksamaa* ('Germany') (or *sakslane* ('German')) which bears resemblance to her surname *Saks*. Both name signs are partial homonyms with regard to their official names.

An interpreter with the surname Kroon bears the personal name sign KROON [CROWN], which is a total homonym. The name sign with partial homonym KUKK [ROOSTER] has been attributed to a sign language interpreter whose surname is Kukkela. The sign language interpreter Helle Sass bears a name sign, where similar to the previous example, the sign name has been created on the basis of the resemblance of her surname to another word (Sass – *sassis* [SHAGGY]).

**Deaf culture and sign language researchers.** Name signs are also given to the researchers of Deaf culture and sign language who communicate with the Deaf community. The name sign of the pioneer of linguistic study of sign languages, American Sign Language researcher William C. Stokoe (1919–2000) is performed with open and bent fingers like the American B-hand shape (see Fig. 2). The hand with palm facing downwards is placed on the top of one's head, so that the bent fingers touch the forehead. This name sign refers to Stokoe's exceptionally thick hair which he wore in a bowl-like, almost medieval style (Maher 2002: 133). The personal name sign of Vahur Laiapea, a researcher of Estonian Sign Language, indicates the position of the reference person's ears. French ethnologist Yves Delaporte has a name sign CELUI QUI PREND DES NOTES [THE ONE WHO TAKES NOTES] (see Fig. 3).<sup>12</sup> This name sign refers to the reference person's habit of carrying along a small notebook for making notes. The Finnish name sign researcher Päivi Rainò (Pimiä)<sup>13</sup> has two loan name signs associated with the translation equivalents of her given name and surname in Finnish Sign Language. The first personal name sign is performed with two hands "PÄIVÄ (Päivi) + YÖ/PIMEÄ (Pimiä) ('day + night/dark'), the second one with one hand – PIMEÄ ('dark') (Rainò 2004: 46–47). A name sign SPORT of a German Deaf community researcher, Anne Uhlig, indicates her athletic lifestyle (Fig. 4).<sup>14</sup> According to her, she was given this name sign by a Deaf person who frequently saw her coming to work by bicycle. The name sign of the author incorporates both the initial of her given name – L-hand shape – and former hairstyle (see Fig. 5).



**Figure 3.** THE ONE WHO TAKES NOTES



**Figure 4.** SPORT



**Figure 5.** L+KAARJAS-TUKK [L+CURVED FORELOCK]

**Hearing children of Deaf parents.** New Zealand name sign researchers believe that as a rule, local Deaf parents do not attribute name signs to their hearing children, although the latter take part in community life. They may get their name sign after obtaining a significant social role in the community. One of the reasons seems to be the fact that hearing children tend to define themselves as members of the hearing society. David and Rachel L. McKee argue that even more important may be the fact that they do not enter the Deaf peer group (i.e. they do not learn at the school for Deaf), where students communicate in sign language and attribute each other personal name signs (McKee & McKee 2000: 21).

According to A. Mindess, American Deaf parents used not to give name signs to their hearing children, although they were inherent signers and grew up by communicating with their parents and Deaf friends (Mindess 1990: 13). While studying the origin of Finnish name signs (home, school, etc.), P. Rainò observed that over the decades there has been an increase in giving name signs to hearing children (see Rainò 2004: 83).

Attribution of name signs to hearing children by their Deaf parents has not been studied in Estonia, but based on initial observations we may say that it does occur to some extent. In a signing family the hearing children have been granted their name sign at birth; let us, for example, view the name sign based on surname Toom. The name sign TOOM [DOME] is extended to the entire family, and the signing is accompanied with the mouth pattern of the surname. The name sign is a two-handed sign performed as an upside down E-hand shape. The passive hand is stationary, and the dominant hand moves upwards above the passive hand. Estonian Sign Language contains other lexical signs, where the first part is signed in the same way as the aforementioned name sign (e.g. TOOM+KIRIK [TOOM+CHURCH] (Dome church), place name sign TOOM[PEA] (TOOM[HEAD]) (Cathedral Hill – a limestone hill in the central part of the city of Tallinn, the capital of Estonia). The reference person interprets this personal name sign as a visualisation of the double vocal 'oo', which takes the form of a pipe or a cylinder when signed. Family members were distinguished as follows: TOOM+MEES [TOOM+MAN] (father), TOOM+NAIN [TOOM+WOMAN] (mother), TOOM+TÜTAR [TOOM+DAUGHTER] and TOOM+POEG [TOOM+SON]. The daughter has obtained a significant role as a sign language interpreter and active participant in the life of the Deaf community for decades and therefore her name sign is deeply rooted and has remained in constant use, unaltered.<sup>15</sup> The son has less intense contact with the Deaf community, but despite that his personal name sign TOOM+POEG [TOOM+SON] is still used.

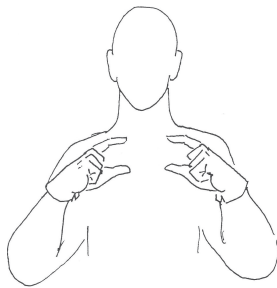


A similar example has been described in New Zealand Sign Language (McKee & McKee 2000: 31). P. Rainò refers to an analogous case in a Finnish Deaf family, where a hearing child was given her own personal name sign outside the family. At home she was denoted by her parents by the sign TYTTÖ [DAUGHTER] and in the local Deaf community she was denoted as NIEMELÄ-TYTTÖ [NIEMELÄ-DAUGHTER] whereas the Niemelä-sign was her father's personal name sign (Rainò 2004: 81).

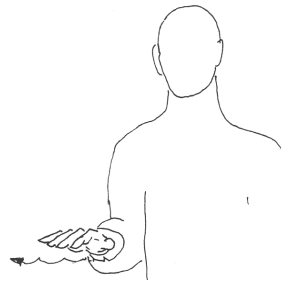
## **Public figures**

**Estonian public officials.** The Deaf community has attributed its own name signs to heads of state and politicians, however, personal name signs have also been given to other public figures, such as athletes, writers, and even singers, although the latter are not very popular in Deaf culture.

The personal name sign KIKILIPS [BOW-TIE] of Toomas-Hendrik Ilves, current President of the Republic of Estonia, refers to his passion for wearing a bow-tie (see Fig. 6; EFA I 47, 116). The personal name sign of Lennart Meri, the first President of Estonia after restoration of independence is a loan sign (MERI [SEA]), derived from the meaning of his surname (see Fig. 7; EFA I 47, 116). The name sign of former President Arnold Rüütel (ARNOLD AURAHHA [ARNOLD BADGE OF HONOUR]) refers to badges of honour worn on the chest (see Fig. 8; Püve 2002). The name sign of Siiri Oviir, a member of the European Parliament, is associated with her spectacles (PROUA PRILL [MISSIS SPECTACLES]). The personal name sign of politician Mart Laar (MART HABE [MART BEARD]) indicates his sideburns (see Fig. 9; Püve 2002). The name sign of Ivi Eenmaa, Estonian politician and librarianship-related figure, is associated with her beloved accessory, a hat – PROUA KÜBAR [MISSIS HAT] (Püve 2002). The personal name sign of Laine Jänes, former Minister of Culture (JÄNES [RABBIT]) is the translation equivalent to her surname (see Fig. 10).



**Figure 6.** KIKILIPS [BOW-TIE]



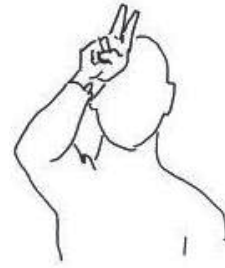
**Figure 7.** MERI [SEA]



**Figure 8.** *ARNOLD AURAHA* [ARNOLD BADGE OF HONOUR]



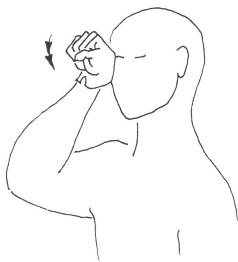
**Figure 9.** *MART HABE* [MART BEARD]



**Figure 10.** *JÄNES* [RABBIT]

**Finnish public officials.** In Finnish Sign Language, the name sign of Tarja Halonen, current President of Finland, refers to the big nose of the reference person. The name sign of former President Martti Ahtisaari indicates his overweight state and his resulting way of walking. The personal name sign of politician Paavo Lipponen refers to his swivel-eyed look (Venemäki 2005).

**Russian heads of state.** The heads of state and politicians of former Soviet Union have been denoted in Estonian Sign Language (and most likely in Russian Sign Language as well) by descriptive metonymic personal name signs, which refer to the physical features of the reference person. The personal name sign of Vladimir Lenin indicates his chin whiskers (TUTTHABE [TUFT BEARD]), Joseph Stalin's refers to his luxuriant moustache and the personal name sign of Nikita Khrushchev is associated with the wart on his nose (PUNNININA [WART NOSE]). Leonid Brezhnev's name sign indicates his thick eyebrows (HÄRRA KOHEVKULM [MISTER RUFFLED BROW]) (see Fig. 11; EFA I 47, 115), and the personal name sign of Mikhail Gorbachev is associated with the striking pigmentation on the top of his head – PIGMENDIPEA [PIGMENT HEAD] (see Fig. 12). With regard to Boris Yeltsin, the first President of the Russian Federation, there are two known name signs in the Estonian Sign



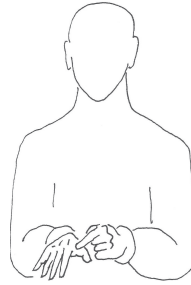
**Figure 11.** *KOHEVKULM* [RUFFLED BROW]



**Figure 12.** *PIGMENDIPEA* [PIGMENT HEAD]



**Figure 13.** PAKSTUKK  
[THICK FORELOCK]



**Figure 14.** PUUDUV  
PÖIAL [MISSING THUMB]

Language – the first one, the so-called official version, refers to his ruffled hairstyle (HÄRRA PAKSTUKK [MISTER THICK FORELOCK]) (see Fig. 13; EFA I 47, 115), and the second, more familiar one indicates his missing thumb (see Fig. 14; EFA I 47, 115); in Russian Sign Language another name sign for Yeltsin has been reported, indicating the red nose of the alcohol-loving president.

One of the name signs attributed to Vladimir Putin refers to his nose (TERAVNINA [POINTY NOSE])<sup>16</sup> or, alternatively, his surname is finger-spelled<sup>17</sup> (P-U-T-I-N). In Russian Sign Language, Emperor Peter I has been attributed a special name sign, consisting of two parts: the first sign indicates his moustache and the second refers to number I (ESIMENE VUNTS [THE FIRST MOUSTACHE]).<sup>18</sup>

**German heads of state.** The name sign of Adolf Hitler in Estonian Sign Language consists of two parts: the first sign refers to the moustache under his nose and the second to the Nazi salute that involved a certain gesture. Chancellor Angela Merkel has a sign, in German Sign Language, referring to the down-pointing corners of her mouth; the personal name sign of Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the former German Minister of Foreign Affairs, indicates



**Figure 15.** SPECTACLES



**Figure 16.** BIG TEETH/  
GRIN

his big ears (Colmenares 2005). The name sign of Erich Honecker, the last head of state of East-Germany (see Fig. 15) apparently refers to his spectacles, and that of Egon Krenz, another politician of former East-Germany (see Fig. 16), is associated with his big teeth and grin.<sup>19</sup>

**France.** François Mitterrand, who was elected the President of France twice, is attributed several personal name signs in French Sign Language (Delaporte 2002: 223). His initial personal name sign, performed by the French M-hand shape, derives from the first letter of his surname. In a caricatured version, both M-hand shape and place of sign formation are modified – the personal name sign is performed in front of the mouth (see Fig. 17<sup>20</sup>). This name sign refers to Mitterrand’s bad dental occlusion and to his vampire-like incisors MITTERRAND LE VAMPIRE [MITTERRAND-VAMPIRE].<sup>21</sup> Another modification of the aforementioned name sign results in a new version MITTERRAND LE VAMPIRE AUX DENTS ÉLIMÉES [MITTERRAND – A VAMPIRE WITH TEETH REMOVED] (see Fig. 18; Delaporte 2002: 223). This name sign refers to the election campaign at the time when F. Mitterrand was running as a candidate for the third term of office and had his incisors removed to create a more pleasant impression for his constituents (Tiersky 2003: 298).

The name sign of Nicolas Sarkozy, current President of France, refers to his pointy ears (OREILLES POINTUES).<sup>22</sup> The personal name sign of Jacques Chirac, former President of France, indicates his pointy nose (NEZ POINTU), whereas the name sign of French politician Michel Rocard implies bags under his eyes (POCHES SOUS LES YEUX) (Delaporte 2002: 206–207). Speaking of historical figures, Estonian Sign Language contains a name sign for Napoleon, indicating the typical pose of the French emperor (with his hand slipped into his coat).



**Figure 17.** MITTERRAND-VAMPIRE



**Figure 18.** MITTERRAND-VAMPIRE WITH TEETH REMOVED

**Presidents of the United States.** American Deaf people have come up with personal name signs for their former heads of state: Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford, and Ronald Reagan (Carmel 1996: 199). It is remarkable how personal name signs have been altered to correspond to the changes that took place in the lives of these public officials, which reflects the linguistic humour of Deaf people.<sup>23</sup> In case of more popular people, the American Deaf community has used several different personal name signs.

For example, formerly the personal name sign of President Nixon was performed by the American N-hand shape next to the nose and it referred to Nixon's long nose bridge. After the Watergate scandal his name sign was altered – now the same hand shape was moved across the chin, referring to a liar. According to the interpretation of Edward S. Klima and Ursula Bellugi the English equivalent of this name sign could be (in terms of its effect, not form) *Mr. Trixon*, which combines his name with word *tricks*. The personal name sign of Carter was performed with two hands, as the C-hand shape imitated his famous smile (GRIN) (Klima & Bellugi 1979: 331). When signing the personal name sign of President Ford, the F-hand shape was formed on the forehead, which signified the head bandage that he wore after an unfortunate fall.

One of the personal name signs of Ronald Reagan was performed by using an R-hand shape, while moving the hand over the head, indicating the imposing hairstyle of the president. The name sign was changed after Reagan was wounded in an attack on him: the tip of R-hand shape pointed to the place of wound (Carmel 1996: 199). The name sign of Bill Clinton underwent a similar change (American C-hand shape) in connection with the so-called Lewinsky affair (Püve 2002).

**Leaders of other countries.** The Estonian name sign of Tony Blair, former Prime Minister of Great Britain, indicates the distant position of his ears from his head. In Chinese Sign Language, the name sign of the Chinese communist leader Mao Zedong refers to the wart on his chin (Delaporte 2002: 206). Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the President of the Republic of Philippines, has a sign referring to a mole on her left cheek while that of former President Joseph Estrada refers to his permanent attribute – an armband. The name sign of President Fidel Ramos is associated with his weakness for cigars (What's in Sign Name?). Robert Muldoon, one of the former Prime Ministers of New Zealand, had a descriptive personal name sign, indicating his peculiar left cheekbone while former Prime Minister Jenny Shipley had an initialised loan name sign J+SHIP, derived from the initial of her given name and the meaning of her surname (McKee, McKee 2000: 21). In German Sign Language the name sign of Osama bin Laden, the notorious international terrorist and leader of

the terrorist network Al-Qaeda, is associated with his long beard and is performed by using the German S-hand shape, moving downward from the chin, accompanied by an “evil” facial expression (Colmenares 2005).

As seen from the examples above, a name sign is a multi-layered object of linguistic play with merged meaning and form. Play with name signs combines content and form into one single element whereby unexpected meanings are compressed in a minimum sign form. This can be achieved in many ways. Sometimes it is done by changing internal parameters of the sign<sup>24</sup>, sometimes by performing two different signs simultaneously with both hands, and in other times the signs are combined or one sign is merged with the other (Klima & Bellugi 1979: 320).

Do the prominent figures of the majority society have any awareness of and interest in how they are denoted in a minority language? In the context of the cultural standards of the hearing society, most descriptive personal name signs are politically incorrect. Without knowing the origin and etymology of their name signs, the hearing people may falsely interpret their name sign as, for instance, Samak Sundaravej, the Prime Minister of Thailand, was upset by the name sign attributed to him – in the local sign language the prime minister is denoted by grabbing one’s nose with two fingers, referring to his particularly big nose. The name sign is generally known among local Deaf community members and local signers understand instantly whom they are talking about. As a Member of Parliament, Sundaravej was not frequently mentioned in sign language news. The only reasons for him to be noticed were his corruption scandals. As soon as he became Prime Minister, he suddenly became a daily topic and the sign language interpreters are forced to grab their nose about 300 times a day. In Sundaravej’s opinion this name sign – grabbing one’s nose – depicts him as a person with double standards and indicates poor hygiene (Thailand Prime Minister upset by sign language).

**Athletes, singers, actors.** Sport is a significant sphere in Deaf communities and a popular subject of discussion. As for hearing athletes, Estonian decathlete and Olympic winner Erki Nool has been attributed his own personal name sign, which is associated either with his main event pole-vault (TEIVASHÜPE [POLE-VAULT]) or with the meaning of his surname (NOOL [ARROW]). The name sign of Estonian weight-lifter Jaan Talts (KANGI-JAAN [BARBELL JAAN]) represents a caricature of weight-lifting (Püve 2002).

In Finnish Sign Language, the personal name sign of former well-known ski jumper Matti Nykänen is still SKI-JUMP, although he left the sport a long time ago. The Finnish name sign of footballer David Beckham refers to his former punk-style hairdo (Venemäki 2005). The personal name sign of legen-



dary German racing driver Michael Schumacher, in German Sign Language, is a translation equivalent of his surname (*Schumacher* – ‘shoemaker’). The name sign imitates knocking on shoes, and in order to distinguish the reference person from his younger brother Ralf, who is also engaged in motor racing, this name sign is accompanied by an articulated mouth pattern ‘Michael’ (Colmenares 2005).

In Estonian Sign Language, the film director and actor Charlie Chaplin is denoted by two-part name sign: the first refers to moustache and the second part to his signature walk (VURRUD+PARDIKÕNNAK [MOUSTACHE+DUCK WALK]). Even some singers have found their place in the sign language name system. Thus, the name sign of the king of rock’n’roll, Elvis Presley, in Finnish Sign Language is derived from his extravagant hairstyle. Michael Jackson’s name sign indicates a lock of hair falling on his face (Venemäki 2005). In Russian Sign Language, the name sign of Alla Pugacheva refers to the bushy hair of the singer.

In German Sign Language the name sign attributed to Madonna imitates the corset with conical breasts made for her by French fashion designer Jean-Paul Gaultier, and Marilyn Monroe’s name sign refers to a mole near her lips. The name sign of popular German folk singer Heino is signed with two hands: one hand imitates holding a microphone and the other hand imitates reference person’s spectacles with thick glasses. Supermodel Claudia Schiffer’s name sign is performed with the German C-hand shape, and the movement imitates shaking a perfume bottle (Colmenares 2005).

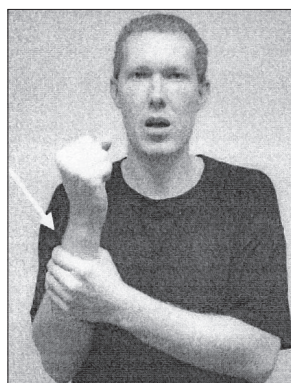
## **RELIGIOUS PERSONAL NAME SIGNS**

Name signs of religious figures, as a specific name group in local sign languages, represent an interesting research subject, but according to the author’s knowledge it has not yet been studied.

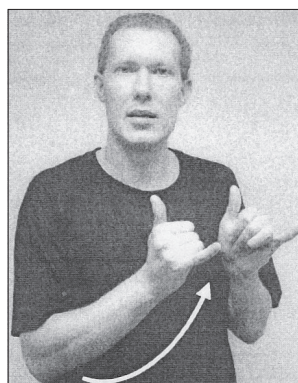
**Christianity.** In the course of translating biblical texts the personal names occurring in the Bible have been given translation equivalents in the context of local sign languages.<sup>25</sup> There are different records of personal name signs of biblical figures (e.g. see Vuorijärvi 2008: 4). For instance, in Estonian Sign Language the personal name sign of Abraham (‘Aabraham’ in Estonian) from the Old Testament (TAKISTATUD NOAHOOP [BLOCKED STABBING]) refers to the story of the sacrifice of Isaac (‘Isak’ in Estonian) in Chapter 22 of the First Book of Moses (Fig. 19). The personal name sign of Moses (‘Mooses’ in Estonian) indicates the reference person’s big beard (HABE [BEARD]), shown

on several works of art depicting the leader of the people of Israel. The name sign attributed to Aaron, the brother of Moses, is KEPP [ROD], which refers to his rod endowed with miraculous power (The Second Book of Moses, 7:9), and the well-known Old Testament prophet Elijah ('Eelija' in Estonian) (TAEVASSE SÕITMA [ASCEND TO HEAVEN], Fig. 20) has one indicating the ascension of the prophet to heaven in a whirlwind and chariots of fire (The Second Book of Kings, 2:11).

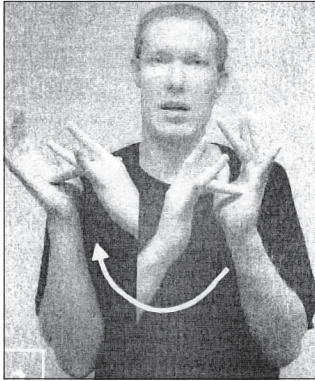
The personal name sign of Jesus Christ ('Jeesus Kristus' in Estonian) signed with two hands (Fig. 21) refers to the crucifixion both in Estonian and other (e.g. Finnish, French) sign languages (NAELAAHVAD KÄTES [NAIL WOUNDS IN HANDS]) (cf. Delaporte 2002: 313; Suvi). Apostle Thomas ('Toomas' in Estonian) has a sign (OMA SILM ON KUNINGAS [SEEING IS BELIEVING]) referring to a story where the follower of Jesus wishes to see the nail wounds of his teacher, before believing his resurrection from the dead (John 20:24–29). The name sign of King Herod ('Herodes' in Estonian) contains reference to the initial H and royal headwear (Figs. 1, 27). The name sign for Andrew ('Andreas' in Estonian), the brother of Apostle Peter, contains an A-hand shape (Figs. 1, 23). As a reference to a brotherly relationship this name sign is performed in the same region of the body as the personal name sign of Peter. The name sign of Bartholomew ('Bartolomeus' in Estonian), the follower of Jesus, contains the initial of his given name B (see Figs. 1, 24), and that of Philip ('Filippus' in Estonian), another follower of Christ, his initial, F (see Figs. 1, 25). Signing of name signs is accompanied by articulation of phonetic names.



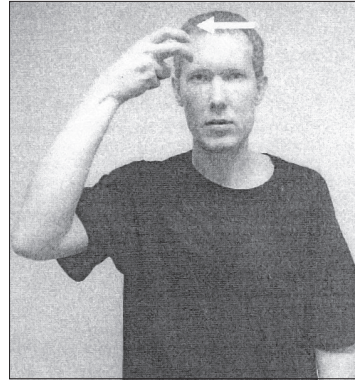
**Figure 19.** TAKISTATUD NOAHOOP [BLOCKED STABBING]



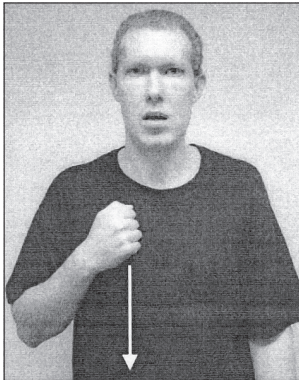
**Figure 20.** TAEVASSE SÕITMA [ASCEND TO HEAVEN]



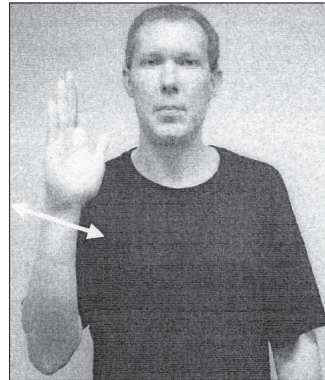
**Figure 21.** NAELAHAAVAD  
KÄTES [NAIL WOUNDS IN  
HANDS]



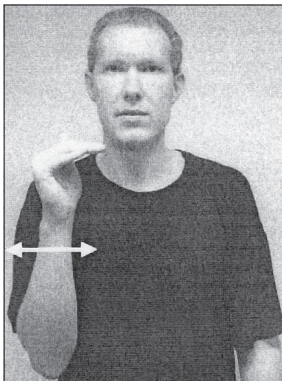
**Figure 22.** H (Herodes)  
[H (Herod)]



**Figure 23.** A (Andreas)  
[Andrew]



**Figure 24.** B (Bartolomeus)  
[Bartholomew]



**Figure 25.** F (Filippus)  
[Philip]

**Buddhism.** Buddha Śākyamuni, the founder of Buddhism, and also Buddhism itself are denoted by the O-hand shape (see Fig. 1). The two-handed personal name sign in the Estonian Sign Language refers to the particular position of hands when meditating.

## **SUMMARY**

For centuries Deaf communities have been relatively isolated. Now, signing people have integrated or are about to integrate with the majority society in many countries. Increased attribution of name signs to those outside the community is also a result of cultural contact.

On the one hand, naming traditions are something generally common to Deaf communities, but on the other hand name signs are considered to be a multi-layered and versatile manifestation both linguistically, socially and with regard to heritage.

Personal name signs are used for denoting a third person in a conversation, not as call signs. In an onomastic context the name signs denoting people are considered proper names; they have features common to nicknames, as well as segments of official personal names, which are manifested in the context of communication within the Deaf community.

The factors that affect the formation of name signs include spoken language and the dominant hearing culture. Written forms of given names and surnames provide one possible source for name sign formation. The name system of the Deaf is also affected by cultural understanding of sign language by hearing people. According to the assumption voiced by researchers, hearing people think that every sign is supposed to depict/ imitate something, and this understanding has forced Deaf people to create hybrid, mixed type personal name signs which combine the initial of a given name and/or surname and reference to a person's personal features. On the other hand, it is believed that these "hearing-based" personal name signs are created purposefully, in order to signify the hearing people as outsiders from the Deaf community. Today, such a practice of forming the above-mentioned name signs is prevalent: personal name signs of these mixed types are given to both Deaf and hearing people.

Various groups of the hearing society are represented in the name heritage of Deaf communities. At first, personal name signs were attributed to people closely related to the community, mainly teachers, sign language interpreters, and hearing family members. Nowadays, name signs are also given to people who are talked about in the community or who are important for some other

reason, whereas direct relation and contact of such a person with the Deaf community is irrelevant. Personal name signs are given to heads of state, politicians, athletes, actors, and representatives of other professions. Name systems of Deaf people also include historical and religious figures. More popular figures have more than one name sign.

Personal name signs of hearing people are created and developed in the context of a local national Deaf community and sign language. Name signs given to internationally known figures vary by communities, but some personal name signs may transfer from one sign language to another. From the name formation aspect, in general, there is no difference between personal name signs of the Deaf and hearing people.

Descriptive name signs contain coded information about a reference person's life, appearance, habits, character and other typical features. Changes in the circumstances relating to this person are also reflected in personal name signs. Likewise, name signs may be subject to linguistic games.

There are certain socio-linguistic restrictions to be applied when attributing personal name signs. According to the general rule, name signs should not be offensive for the reference person. Members of the dominant hearing society see descriptive personal name signs as mocking, but in fact that judgmental connotation is not primary – description serves first and foremost the purpose of identification.

Personal name signs of hearing people represent an interesting lexical group in terms of cultural history and traditions. As the keeper of the signing community memory, reflection of attitudes and beliefs, name signs embody contacts, tensions and the different world view of the two communities. In the context of onomastics name signs, as a name category, give rise to theoretical discussions about their essence and classification.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Index of Name Signs**

<i>Aabraham</i> (Estonian SL)	<i>Bonaparte, Napoleon</i> (Estonian SL)
<i>Aaron</i> (Estonian SL)	<i>Bin Laden, Osama</i> (German SL)
<i>Ahtisaari, Martti</i> (Finnish SL)	<i>Blair, Tony</i> (Estonian SL)
<i>Andreas</i> (Estonian SL)	<i>Brezhnev, Leonid</i> (Estonian SL)
<i>Ansip, Andrus</i> (Estonian SL)	<i>Buddha</i> (Estonian SL)
<i>Bartolomeus</i> (Estonian SL)	<i>Carter, Jimmy</i> (American SL)
<i>Beckham, David</i> (Finnish SL)	<i>Chaplin, Charlie</i> (Estonian SL)



- Chirac, Jacques* (French SL)  
*Clinton, Bill* (Estonian SL)  
*Delaporte, Yves* (French SL)  
*Epée, Abbé Charles-Michel (de l')*  
(French SL)  
*Eelija* (Estonian SL)  
*Eenmaa, Ivi* (Estonian SL)  
*Estrada, Joseph* (Philippine SL)  
*Filippus* (Estonian SL)  
*Ford, Gerald* (American SL)  
*Gallaudet, Thomas Hopkins*  
(American SL)  
*Genscher, Hans-Dietrich* (German SL)  
*Gorbachev, Mikhail* (Estonian SL)  
*Halonen, Tarja* (Finnish SL)  
*Heino* (German SL)  
*Herodes* (Estonian SL)  
*Hitler, Adolf* (Estonian SL)  
*Hollman, Liivi* (Estonian SL)  
*Honecker, Erich* (German SL)  
*Ilves, Toomas-Hendrik* (Estonian SL)  
*Jackson, Michael* (Finnish SL)  
*Jeesus Kristus*  
(Estonian/Finnish/French SL)  
*Jänes, Laine* (Estonian SL)  
*Kallas, Siim* (Estonian SL)  
*Krenz, Egon* (German SL)  
*Kroon, Monika* (Estonian SL)  
*Khrushchev, Nikita* (Estonian SL)  
*Kukkela, Tiiu* (Estonian SL)  
*Laar, Mart* (Estonian SL)  
*Laiapea, Vahur* (Estonian SL)  
*Lenin, Vladimir* (Estonian SL)  
*Lipponen, Paavo* (Finnish SL)  
*Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria* (Philippine SL)  
*Madonna* (German SL)  
*Mao Zedong* (Chinese SL)  
*Medvedev, Dmitri* (Estonian/Russian SL)  
*Meri, Lennart* (Estonian SL)  
*Merkel, Angela* (German SL)  
*Mitterrand, François* (French SL)  
*Monroe, Marilyn* (German SL)  
*Mooses* (Estonian SL)  
*Muldoon, Robert* (New Zealand SL)  
*Nestor, Eiki* (Estonian SL)  
*Nikolai II* (Japanese SL)  
*Nixon, Richard* (American SL)  
*Nool, Erki* (Estonian SL)  
*Nykänen, Matti* (Finnish SL)  
*Obama, Barack* (American SL)  
*Oviir, Siiri* (Estonian SL)  
*Paabo (Toom), Regina* (Estonian SL)  
*Paales, Liina* (Estonian SL)  
*Peeter I* (Estonian SL)  
*Presley, Elvis* (Finnish SL)  
*Pugacheva, Alla* (Russian SL)  
*Putin, Vladimir* (Estonian SL)  
*Rainò (Pimiä), Päivi* (Finnish SL)  
*Ramos, Fidel* (Philippine SL)  
*Reagan, Ronald* (American SL)  
*Rocard, Michel* (French SL)  
*Rüütel, Arnold* (Estonian SL)  
*Saks, Ulvi* (Estonian SL)  
*Sarkozy, Nicolas* (French SL)  
*Sass, Helle* (Estonian SL)  
*Schiffer, Claudia* (German SL)  
*Shiple, Jenny* (New Zealand SL)  
*Schumacher, Michael* (German SL)  
*Sokolovski, Ernst* (Estonian SL)  
*Stalin, Jossif* (Estonian SL)  
*Stokoe, William C.* (American SL)  
*Sundaravej, Samak* (Thai SL)  
*Talts, Jaan* (Estonian SL)  
*Toomas* (Estonian SL)  
*Tõnurist (Lepp), Helvi* (Estonian SL)  
*Uhlig, Anne* (German SL)  
*Univer, Volmer* (Estonian SL)  
*Yeltsin, Boris* (Estonian/Russian SL)



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## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> This article is based on a presentation made at the 1317th meeting of the Learned Estonian Society on 27.05.2009. This present translation has been made on the basis of Estonian article *Kuuljate isikute viipenimed* ('Name signs for hearing people') published in the 2009 Yearbook of the Learned Estonian Society on pp. 118–155 (issued in 2010). This translation was supported by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (Centre of Excellence CECT).
- <sup>2</sup> Finger spelling, also known as manual or finger or hand alphabet, is a visualisation of the letters of spoken language by hand configurations. Each letter corresponds to a fixed hand configuration. Finger alphabets vary by sign languages (see Carmel 1982 for different finger alphabets worldwide). In some (e.g. Estonian) sign language finger spelling is one-handed, in others (e.g. British, New-Zealand, and Turkish) two-handed. Several Estonian hand configurations have changed over the decades.
- <sup>3</sup> Fr. R. Kreutzwald printed this publication using the example of similar picture magazines *Das Pfennig Magazine* in Germany, *The Penny Magazine* in England, and *Le Magazine Pittoresque* in France. In the Estonian publication Kreutzwald used wood engravings of mostly German, but also of English origin (Hain 2006: 3). This may be the reason why the British finger alphabet ended up in an Estonian picture magazine.
- <sup>4</sup> Estonian Sign Language was officially acknowledged on 1 March 2007, after the relevant amendment to the Language Act (see Language Act) came into force.
- <sup>5</sup> In cooperation with EFSLI, the Estonian Association of Sign Language Interpreters organised an annual ESFLI conference in Tallinn in September 2009.
- <sup>6</sup> Appendix contains a list of well-known public figures, educators related to the Deaf, Estonian Sign Language interpreters and biblical figures, whose personal name signs have been examined in this article. The author does not disclose the verbal name form of 14 reference people.
- <sup>7</sup> This accounts for different name forms of a person in the same (e.g. Estonian) sign language. If some people have a similar name form in different sign languages, it will be considered as one name sign.

- <sup>8</sup> The manuscript contains verbal descriptions of particular name signs, and the origin of the name sign, where possible. Some of the descriptions and figures with regard to personal name signs used in this article (author Deaf illustrator Jüri Laumets) are preserved in the folklore collection of Estonian Deaf folklore (EFA I 47, 93/120) in the Estonian Folklore Archives of the Estonian Literary Museum.
- <sup>9</sup> This applies to European communities, because e.g. American Deaf people prefer arbitrary initialised name signs. In sign languages with dominant descriptive name systems, Deaf people consider initialised name signs as preliminary forms of descriptive personal name signs. American Deaf people tend to associate descriptive personal name signs with childish nicknames (see also McKee & McKee 2000: 27).
- <sup>10</sup> The German method (also known as the oral method) was used in the schools for the Deaf in Germany and England. This method was based on lip-reading and teaching oral speech. E. Sokolovski followed the example of German Deaf education.
- <sup>11</sup> The French method (also known as the manual method) involved both finger spelling and methodical or systemised signs when teaching Deaf children in the classroom. This was not a natural means of communication for Deaf children, but rather a visualisation of French language spoken at that time (*signed old French*).
- <sup>12</sup> Yves Delaporte (born in 1944) is a French ethnologist. He was Research Director at the *Centre national de la recherche scientifique* (CNRS), and member of the Laboratory of Urban Anthropology (*Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Urbaine*). He spent almost twenty years studying the Lapps, mostly their clothing. Today he is focused on the studies of French Deaf community, and etymology of French and American Sign Language. Y. Delaporte has published substantial discussions on Lapps as well as on French Deaf culture and sign language. The illustration of the name sign of Y. Delaporte was received from him by e-mail on 18.10.2009.
- <sup>13</sup> Päivi Rainò (Pimiä) (born in 1957) has graduated from the University of Helsinki. She has worked as a lecturer in a training programme for sign language interpreters and as a researcher of Finnish Sign Language (*Kotimaisten kielten tutkimuskeskus*). P. Rainò defended her Doctoral Thesis on Finnish personal name signs in 2004.
- <sup>14</sup> Anne Uhlig (born in 1974) is a German ethnographer. She has worked at the *State Ethnographic Collections of Saxony* (SECS) in Leipzig, where she initiated and participated in a project, the objective of which was to provide Deaf and blind people with access to the permanent exhibition. After having studied American native people, she became interested in Deaf people as a language and cultural minority. In 2010 she defended her Doctoral Thesis *Ethnographie der Gehörlosen. Kultur – Kommunikation – Gemeinschaft* (Universität Leipzig). The drawing of name sign for A. Uhlig was received from her by e-mail on 26.01.2010.
- <sup>15</sup> Regina Paabo (Toom) (born in 1957), a long-term sign language interpreter, is the founder and current Chairwoman of the Estonian Association of Sign Language Interpreters. The topic of her Master's Thesis was the *Development of the profession of sign language interpreter in Estonia*. R. Paabo has compiled thematic sign glossaries, published written works on Estonian Sign Language, the Deaf community, and ethics of inner ear implantation. She started the training of Estonian Sign Language interpreters at the University of Tartu.
- <sup>16</sup> The same signing is used by Russian Deaf people. This is apparently a loan from Russian Sign Language. Russian signing Deaf people represent a minority in the Estonian Deaf community (cf. Swedish signing Deaf in Finland, etc.). In Estonian

Sign Language an identical name sign referring to a pointy nose has been used for Estonian politician Eiki Nestor.

- <sup>17</sup> In an official context, such as the TV news, two tendencies have been observed in terms of denoting people (both by Deaf people and by sign language interpreters): 1) finger-spelling of a personal name; 2) using a name sign. Finger-spelling of personal names on air seems more neutral, name signs are more colourful and represent more powerful reflections on Deaf culture.
- <sup>18</sup> Interesting examples are found in Japanese Sign Language, where a personal name sign has the function of a toponym. Thus Japanese Deaf people denote Russia with place name sign RED SCAR (on the forehead). The place name sign has two parts: first the signer points to lips (i.e. red) and then brings a finger across the forehead (signifies a scar). The etymological explanation of this aforementioned toponym dates back to the times of Russian-Japanese War (1904–1905). According to a legend emperor Nikolai II was walking on the shore of a lake one day before the war. Suddenly a Japanese samurai drew his sword to kill the emperor. The attacker's hand slipped and he only scratched the forehead of the emperor. The story is well-known in Japanese oral history. Similarly, the personal name sign of Napoleon stands for France in Japanese Sign Language (Nuust 1989: 3).
- <sup>19</sup> Illustrations of name signs of E. Honecker and E. Krenz were received from A. Uhlig by e-mail on 26.01.2010.
- <sup>20</sup> This drawing (author Anne-Catherine Dufour) was published in the journal *Revue du Collège de Psychanalyse*, 1993, pp. 46–47. Illustration was received from Y. Delaporte by e-mail on 18.01.2010.
- <sup>21</sup> Modification of the name sign of F. Mitterrand represents a colourful example of a name sign being a reflection of the course of life of the person. Mitterrand was given his first name sign (initial M as neutral, unoriginal name sign), when he became known among the Deaf as one particular politician among hundreds of others. The second version of the name sign was shaped after Mitterrand was elected president for the first time in 1974, and the Deaf people learned more about his character, personality and life. The name sign changed: initial M was brought in front of the mouth, referring to his incisors (MITTERRAND-VAMPIRE). Even hearing people reach the same association when noticing strikingly sharp incisors. The third name sign was created before he was elected president for the second time in 1981, when he had his incisors removed in the interest of a successful election campaign. Y. Delaporte notes that in the case of these three last sign names it is impossible to say that one of them would be “more official” than others. For example, the third personal name sign of Mitterrand, which was apparently ironic and mocking, was used not only by the Deaf, but also by sign language interpreters who interpreted the news into French Sign Language on TV. (Personal e-mail correspondence with Yves Delaporte on 18.01.2010.)
- <sup>22</sup> From personal e-mail correspondence with Yves Delaporte on 13.01.2010.
- <sup>23</sup> Cf. e.g. the formation mechanism of nicknames for Estonian politicians (see EPPSS).
- <sup>24</sup> Personal name signs are subject to play with name forming elements. Similar to other national sign languages, the phonological system of Estonian Sign Language is formed by hand shape, movement, place of performance or articulation of the sign and position of fingers and palm of hand. Meaning is given to the sign also by non-manual components, such as: body position, facial expression, movement of head,

body and eyes. The meaning of a sign is changed upon modification of one of the aforementioned parameters.

<sup>25</sup> In 2000, the sign language working group at the Estonian Bible Society, comprising Deaf people and sign language interpreters belonging to different Christian denominations, commenced the translation of the Gospel of Mark into Estonian Sign Language. In the course of translation it was considered reasonable to find appropriate personal name signs for Biblical figures, in addition to finger spelling their names. Different parts of the Bible have been translated into local sign language in many countries (e.g. in Finland, Sweden, Norway, Germany, etc.). The photographs of Biblical names used in this article originate from the manuscripts of the Estonian Sign Language working group on translation of the Gospel of Mark at the Estonian Bible Society.

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# FROM CONVERSATION TO PROVERBS: ESTONIAN *IKKA*- AND *IKS*-CONSTRUCTIONS

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**Abstract:** The article provides an overview of the use of the Estonian particle *ikka* 'sure, still' in spoken Estonian and makes an attempt to explain why this particle is so common in proverbs and South Estonian folk songs. Etymologically, *ikka* is associated with a temporal meaning and stems from the word *iga* 'time, lifetime, full time'. In contemporary Estonian *ikka* refers to the typicality and recurrence of an action, but it also points to an interruption in the continuity of an action after which the previous situation is restored. As such it marks (re-)validity in fixed expressions and folklore; however, it could also serve as a means of showing continuity of narrative discourse. The article focuses on the occurrence of *ikka* in contemporary spoken language and proverbs (both in the database and in the contemporary media language) and on a special usage of the expletive *iks/õks* in Setu/Seto South Estonian folk songs. In folklore, as well in contemporary informal speech, the use of *ikka* is motivated both by lexical meaning on the syntactic level and the general structure of discourse.

**Key words:** conversation, Estonian, narrative, proverbs, semantics, temporal constructions

## INTRODUCTION

The emphatic particle *ikka* or *iks* 'sure, yes, again, still', etc. is among the most frequent words in Estonian. In Estonian dialects *ikka* together with its phonetic variants is among the ten most frequent words – *ikke* in the north-eastern dialect occupies the 6th place, and its South Estonian equivalent *iks* occupies the 10th place in the Võru South Estonian (Lindström *et al.* 2001).

The most important meanings of *ikka* are 'always' and 'contrary to what was thought in the meanwhile'. These two meanings, which seem to be opposites at first glance, can nevertheless be regarded as a whole if one regards the meaning 'always' as continuity of a situation. The continuity is revealed both in the meaning and in the tendency of *ikka* to occur repeatedly in informal conversations and folk songs by forming *ikka* chains, which express iconic continuity. Depending on its specific meaning, *ikka* or *iks* also occur in a number of Estonian proverbs. In proverbs *ikka* emphasises typicality of the statement and shows that the content of the utterance is generally valid.

An exciting feature of *ikka* – *iks* in spontaneous language and folk poetry is its grammaticalisation and even morphologisation – as a clitic *ikka* can become the structural nucleus of certain morphosyntactic constructions. For example, in Setu South Estonian folk songs *iks* ~ *õks* is known as the most common and typical enclitic, which appears on the foot boundaries of compounds.

The article will at first provide a semantic description of the particles *ikka* and *iks* and thereafter focus on their function in proverbs. We attempt to present not only the usage regularities of a single word but also show the interrelations between different spheres of language use through them.

The discussion, on meanings of *ikka* in Standard Estonian, is based on the corpora of written and spoken Estonian at the University of Tartu; the use of the South-Estonian *iks* in dialect narratives and dialogues is described on the basis of the corpus of Estonian dialects. The analysis of proverbs is based on the electronic database of proverbs at the Estonian Literary Museum.

## **IKS AND IKKA IN ESTONIAN – A GENERAL SEMANTIC DESCRIPTION**

Etymologically, *ikka* is derived from the noun *\*ikä* ‘time, lifetime, full time’. The same Finno-Ugric word stem gave rise to the Sami *jákke* and Hungarian *év*, which both denote a year (cf. Estonian *aasta* ‘year’ < *\*ajastaeg*, i.e. ‘full time’). Julius Mägiste (EEW: 498) claimed that *ikka* proceeds from the illative form *\*ikähen*, where the shortening of unstressed non-initial syllables and secondary gemination resulted in the corresponding adverb form (cf. the phonetic form of the Estonian *tuppa*, which was derived from the illative form *\*tupahen* of *\*tupa* ‘room’). In the old written language and in South-Estonian dialects the corresponding form ends in *-s*, as in *ikkas*, *ikas*, *ikis*, the South-Estonian *iks* and its back-vowel equivalent *õks* are related forms. Mägiste linked *-s* with the translative ending (in South Estonian *-ks* > *-s*); however, it is more likely that it could be linked to the possessive suffix of the third person *\*(n)sa*; thus, *ikka* would be the Estonian equivalent to the Finnish *ikään*, and *iks* would correspond to the Finnish *ikänsä*.

It seems that *ikka* was at first used as a temporal adverb in the meaning ‘always’, i.e. anytime. The same meaning is also known in other Finnic languages, for example, Ingrian *ikkää* ‘always’ (SSA 1: 223).

According to the Explanatory Dictionary of Estonian (EKSS 1: 582–583), *ikka* is an adverb with five main meanings:

1. all the time, always, including in the fixed expressions *ikka ja alati* ‘again and again’, *ikka ja jälle* ‘again and again’:  
*Ikka kordus sama lugu.* ‘The same story happened again and again.’
2. still:  
*Poiss on ikka alles haige.* ‘The boy is still ill.’
3. continuously, usually in combination with the comparative:  
*Tee läheb ikka kitsamaks.* ‘The road is getting narrower and narrower.’
4. concessively, nevertheless with emphasis:  
*Kuhu tal ikka minna on.* ‘In fact, there is no place where he could go.’
5. sure with affirmation:  
*Lähed jalgsi? – Jalgsi ikka.* ‘Are you going to walk? – Sure.’

The description of the semantics of the word could be summarised as follows: *ikka* means ‘always’ or ‘permanently, lastingly’; in addition, it has particle-like uses that are associated with emphasis and affirmation.

The Estonian academic grammar (Erelt *et al.* 1993: 101) lists *ikka* among connective extensions; it has either an adversative or a concessive-adversative meaning. The uses of *ikka* can be divided into two large groups: as an adverbial of time in the meaning ‘always, permanently’ and as a particle (or a particle-like adverb) ‘(despite everything) yes’.

Both the Explanatory Dictionary and the Estonian grammar reflect, first and foremost, written language. However, the same semantic groups can be found in spoken informal language. There are some situations where *ikka* in the meaning ‘always’ or ‘permanently’ occurs in sentences that provide background information of the narrative to the effect the way it always, or usually is. For instance, see example (1), where a narrative about specific events includes a generic statement about trains in general *nagu ikka on, et tahad...* ‘the way it is that you want to’:

(1)

*jah järgmisse vagunisse minema nigu ikka on et tahad restorani minna sis pead mitmest läbi käima.* ‘yes, to go to the next carriage that’s the way it is that if you wish to go to the dining car, then you have to go through several of them.’

Leelo Keevallik (2009: 45–46) has studied the functioning of the particle *ikka* as an answer to yes-no-questions in spoken Estonian and found that *ikka* conveys an affirmative answer and, at the same time, some kind of problem with the question itself, mainly something like ‘you shouldn’t ask such an obvious

thing'. This finding fits with previously described fifth meaning of *ikka* in the Explanatory Dictionary of Estonian. According to our data, in spoken informal communication *ikka* is mostly associated with those contexts where a previous claim or presumed claim or situation requires reaffirmation because of some counterclaim. This coincides with Keevallik's result concerning *ikka* as a non-preferred affirmative answer (2009: 46). In example (2), A asks a somewhat weird question whether Americans wear socks. B replies probably in jest that they don't. Then a number of participants affirm that 'Americans do wear socks'.

(2)

A: [jah, (.) aga huvitav: kas nad 'sukke kannavad=võ. (.) näe.

B: @ 'Amerikas 'sokke ei 'kanta. @

A: ei 'kanta=võ. (.) a mis neil 'on sis=õ. (.) [(-) (...)] **ikka** sokid.]

B: ['on='on, on=on, jah, **ikka**] 'valged=**ikka** need jah. (.) ee noh: mis.

E: minu=arust 'armastavad **ikka** sokke [(kanda).]

B: [**ikka**]=**ikka**. noh botaste all on ['**ikka**] jah.

E: [mhmh]

A: yes, but I wonder whether they wear socks

B: in America they do not wear socks.

A: I see, or what do they wear then, in fact, socks.

B: sure, sure, yes, in fact, white ones they do, well, what.

E: in my opinion, they do like to wear socks.

B: sure, sure, well, under trainers they wear, sure, yes.

E: uh huh.

In some contexts *ikka* shows that the speaker thinks that some conflict has emerged by comparison with what he/she had thought earlier. In example (3), A asks how much the bill is because he/she fears it to be a much larger sum than it actually is. He/she explains it by *ma kartsin ikka et tuleb 78 krooni* 'I was, in fact, afraid that it might total 78 kroons'.

(3)

A: noh no: oli=siis nii 'suur arve=võ.

M: nii 'suur arve=võe.

A: no mis see 'oli siis [ütle.]

M: [{}] kakskend=üks kroo[ni.]

A: [o:h?] ma=ka=ka=kartsin **ikka** et tuleb

{-}: {--}

A: seitsend='kaheksa krooni. (.) nigu 'eelmine nädal. (3.0)

A: well, was the bill that big then or.

M: such a huge bill, or.

A: well, how much was it then, tell me.

M: twenty-one kroons.

A: I see, in fact, I was afraid that it might total

A: seventy-eight kroons, as for the previous week.

In questions *ikka* may also occur as doubt, again by highlighting some earlier conflicting point of view. In example (4), A wonders by asking *aga lasid siis ikka pildistada?* ‘did they really give permission to be photographed’ that B had managed to photograph some well-known people. Soon he explains his view by inserting *ikka* in the conversation *muidu ei lasta ligidalegi* ‘usually they even don’t allow you to get close to them’. Thus, in examples (3) and (4) *ikka* occurs in contexts where an earlier claim of the speaker contrasts with another claim.

(4)

A: [*aga lasid siis ikka pildistada.*] *muidu öö noh ei lasta: ligidalegi. e*  
*’antagi sulle [ültse ’võimalust.]*

B: ((*näitab fotole*)) [*ei tänava=päl*] *näed sõidab ’mööda, nemad on jah siin*  
*’tänavapeal (ikka.)=*

A: *=ah tänava pääl?*

B: *jajah. jah.*

A: but they then allowed you to take pictures, well, usually they don’t, you even cannot get close to them.

B: (pointing at a photo) on the street, you can see him driving by, well, they are yes here on the street.

A: on the street?

B: yes, yes.

In addition, in informal conversations *ikka* may have the meaning of emotional intensification. In example (5), people have just discussed how simple it is in Germany to call abroad. The conversation dates from the time when it was not that easy in Estonia as yet, and A expresses wonder by *jõle vägev ikka* ‘that’s cool, indeed’, followed by K’s *vinge on kohe tead ikka* ‘that’s cool, indeed’.

(5)

A: *ei=no=ku=sa ’Saksamaale elistasid. (1.5)*

K: *ei=pea ei=’pea ootama [numbrit. (.) mkmm]*

M: [*ei=no=ma=üt-*] *Reenile täna ’ütles seal=et*

A: *’jõlep vägev ikka. (.)*

K: *ku=tead=täitsa* 'vinge on kohe tead **ikka** [*tunduvalt, tead* 'teine kvaliteet on **ikka**] täiesti.=

A: [*ei=no ikka* (...)] 'parem on olla.'

A: no, well, when you made a phone call to Germany.

K: no, you don't have to wait for the number.

M: no, well I, told Reen today there that

A: that's cool, indeed.

K. you know, that's cool indeed, the quality is totally different, you know.

A: no, well, it's better to be.'

The fact that *ikka* means 'always' and that it also occurs in the context of conflicting opinions is far from accidental. One can depict the meaning 'always', which is historically clearly primary, as a chain of situations (see Fig. 1), where the same situation is recurrent.



Figure 1.

On the other hand, once doubt or a counterclaim emerges in the chain, which is refuted as in example (2) with regard to whether Americans wear socks, the full picture is depicted in Figure 2, where the dotted frame denotes an opposite situation. The grammaticalisation lexicon by Bernt Heine and Tania Kuteva (2002: 259–260) includes the development chain RETURN > ITERATIVE, which can be found in several languages. *ikka* seems to reveal an opposite semantic chain ITERATIVE > RETURN.



Figure 2.

As a further development of this situation, *ikka* can occur in contexts with only two competing opinions. In example (3), the competing opinions are that the bill is large and actually it was not that large, and in example (4), the fact that celebrities do not give permission to be photographed yet in a real situation it was still possible. As Figure 3 shows, in those situations only part of the chain of the situations is prominent (cf. Fig. 2). Here *ikka* carries the meaning 'yes, although in the meantime some doubt has arisen'.





Figure 3.

In some contexts the affirmation that dispels the doubt may become an especially strong affirmation, as in the example *Tulen ikka* ‘in fact, I’ll come’ illustrating sense 5 in the Explanatory Dictionary.

The second development of the chain of situations in Figure 1 is in the direction where iteration gives rise to an intensive meaning (see Fig. 4). This development is suitable for the purpose of explaining the intensification of an emotion, as showed in example (5).



Figure 4.

This is how a grammaticalisation chain comes into being where the temporal meaning ‘always’ has changed into ‘yes’ in the semantic chain:

(full) time > always > sure (despite of doubt) > definitely yes  
> very

Our spoken language data also clearly shows that *ikka* tends to form chains. In example (2) *ikka* occurs seven times in the turns of two different speakers; in example (5) it occurs four times. Thus, the meaning of ‘always, as before’ of *ikka* is often supported by iconic continuity in informal conversations, which is similar to folk songs.

The same chain of semantic change can also be observed in South Estonian dialects where the *iks* may have finally become cliticised together with the emergence of a back-vowel variant, e.g. *tulõ-õks* ‘do come’, *anna-(a)ks* ‘do give’.

## IKKA IN ESTONIAN PROVERBS

In the electronic database of proverbs at the Estonian Literary Museum, *ikka* can be found in various proverbs with different shades of meaning.

(a) In proverbs *ikka* ~ *ike* ~ *iki* ~ *iks* usually marks typicality of the situation, that is, it adds the meaning ‘always’ to the utterance:

(6) *Hüvvel ike üks viga.* ‘Always a good thing is accompanied by a bad thing.’

(7) *Armal iks au häitses.* ‘Always one’s darling is held in great honour.’

(b) Likewise, the particle has a similar function in proverbs that refer to universality of a feature:

(8) *Veri iki veri, vesi vesi.* ‘Blood is always blood, water is water.’

(9) *Suure iks suurtega, väikese väikestege.* ‘Big ones keep the company of big ones, small ones associate with small ones.’

The stability of such a feature can be expressed rather productively by means of the construction ‘X is *ikka* X’. Here *ikka* denotes stability, generality, but its shade of contrast also signals that X is used pragmatically in two different ways: by reference to a specific referent at the beginning of the construction (such as *laps* ‘child’ in the example (10) or *sõda* ‘war’ in the example (11)) and non-referentially by referring to typical properties of the class of referents (same examples (10) and (11) in a generic context)<sup>1</sup>.

(10) *Laps on ikka laps.* ‘A child will always be a child.’

(11) *Sõda on ikka sõda* ‘War will always be war.’

(c) In addition to the meaning ‘always’, one can also observe an affirmative shade of meaning:

(12) *Naesele iks nõo piät, mis sa mehele tiit.* ‘You can indeed give some advice to a woman, but what can you do in the case of a man.’

(13) *Maias iks mao palutas.* ‘A sweet tooth will indeed burn his stomach.’

(d) The previous meanings are associated with a more general emphatic meaning:

(14) *Emal nisa iks latse suun.* ‘Mother’s nipple is, as a rule, in the child’s mouth.’

(15) *Sulasel iki suur kõht.* ‘A farm hand has, as a rule, a big belly.’

The previous examples show that in proverbs *ikka* ~ *iks* commonly occurs in place of the present form of the verb *olema* ‘be’ and that a verb is formally absent from these predicative clauses, which is uncommon for Estonian (unlike Russian, for example) and is possible in figurative speech together with syntactic parallelism, e.g. *Mis kallis, see ikka kaunis* ‘the thing that is expensive’.

sive is beautiful' (Erelt *et al.* 1993: 55). In proverbs *ikka* seems to be sufficient to replace the verb *olema* even when there is no syntactic parallelism.

Proverbs are by their nature texts without context; however, when one thinks how and in what kind of situations a proverb is typically used, it appears that in most cases a specific occasion represents a general situation (cf. Krikmann 1997: 22, 38). It could well be that all the proverbs including the particle *ikka* could also occur without it. *ikka* adds to the meaning of the proverb the affirmation that once again everything has turned out as usual.

Occurrence of *ikka* in modern uses of proverbs calls for a comprehensive study. However, preliminary observations by means of the Google search engine<sup>2</sup> show that *ikka* is usually added to common affirmative proverbs that are well integrated into the conclusive mechanism of the rest of the text. For example, the proverb *Veri on (ikka) paksem kui vesi* 'blood is thicker than water' is highly common in newspaper language, and it occurs both with and without *ikka*.

Examples (16–18) show a few uses of this proverb in newspapers and chat rooms. What is shared by all of them is that the proverb states the situation ((16) – a biological child is dearer than a foster child; (17) – investors of the same nationality stick together; (18) – people belonging to the same nationality understand each other better even when they do not share the same political views), which is not expressly stated but is implicitly presented to the reader. In all the cases the verb *olema* 'be' is part of the proverb, and the proverb is integrated into the same complex sentence with the non-proverb component.

(16)

[Jututoas: üks vestleja on kurtnud, et oma lapse ja kasulapse koos kasvatamine on raske.

Vastusteksti algus:]

*Püüad olla erapooletu, aga veri on **ikka** paksem kui vesi.*

[Chat room: a speaker has complained that it is difficult to bring up one's own child and a foster child at the same time. Reply:]

'You try to be impartial, but *blood is always thicker than water.*'

(17)

*Savisaar muidugi ütleb nüüd, et Äripäev ei saagi muud teha, kui kiita Rootsi pankasid, sest kuulub ka ise rootslastele ning veri on **ikka** paksem kui vesi. (Äripäev weekly 3.02.10)*

'Savisaar will of course say now that *Äripäev* cannot help but praise the Swedish banks because it [the newspaper] belongs to the Swedes as well, and *blood is always thicker than water.*'

(18)

*Hõõguvatele sütele oleks võinud ju tuha peale kraapida, kuid tuld see enam ei kustutanud. Väikeste eranditega mõistis seda kogu Eesti NSV juhtkond ja partei eestimeelne osa. Ja et veri on **ikka** paksem kui vesi, mõistsid eestlastest juhid üsna hästi, mis oma rahva seas ja inimeste südames toimub. Õnneks oli Eesti juhtkond, erinevalt paljude teiste liiduvabariikide omast, lõplikult venestamata jätetud. (Õhtuleht newspaper)*  
'One could scrape some ash over the smouldering coal, but it would not put out the fire. With minor exceptions the entire leadership of the Estonian SSR and the pro-Estonian members of the party understood it. And because *blood is always thicker than water*, the Estonian leaders understood rather well what was taking place among their own people and in their hearts. Fortunately, the Estonian leadership, unlike many other republics, had not been completely Russianised.'

Other proverbs occurring both with and without the particle *ikka* are, for example, *Hirmul on (ikka) suured silmad* 'fear imagines many things' or *Pill tuleb (ikka) pika ilu peale* 'the joy won't last forever'. Usually they occur without *ikka* as a headline as in example (19) or as an introduction that places the following article into a wider context (20). However, *ikka* tends to occur in modern proverbs when it is a conclusion and is more closely associated with the previous text (sometimes as a clause as in (21)).

(19)

*Hirmul on suured silmad? Mõnikord tõesti!*

*Hirm muudab seda, kuidas me maailma näeme, võimendades meie suutlikkust tuvastada häguste piirjoontega kujundeid, kuid pärssides samas peenemate üksikasjade tajumise võimet.*

'Fear imagines many things? Sometimes, yes!

Fear changes the way we see the world; it enhances our ability to detect shapes with fuzzy contours while inhibiting the ability to perceive finer details.'

(20)

*Istusime, ootasime aga midagi ei juhtunud. Mõne aja pärast keerasime magama ära ja oligi kõik. Hirmul on **ikka** suured silmad.*

'We were sitting and waiting, but nothing happened. After some time we went to bed and that's it. *Fear always imagines many things.*'

(21)

*Aga las naerab, pill tuleb ikka pika ilu peale.*

‘But let him enjoy his laughs, *the joy would never last forever.*’

For comparison, we studied the proverb *rääkimine hõbe, vaikimine kuld* ‘speech is silver, but silence is golden’, which is also common, however, it never occurs with the particle *ikka*. Rather, this utterance is used as a headline or with a special reference that it is a proverb. Thus, it is not integrated into the rest of the text in the same way as previously discussed examples (16–18 and 20–21). One might presume that *ikka* functions in proverbs both in the meaning ‘always’ and as a link with a more general discourse.

Nor does *ikka* occur in such proverbs that include some generalising component, e.g. *igaiüks* ‘everybody’ in *Igaiüks on oma õnne sepp* ‘every man is the architect of his own fortune’. Similarly, one cannot add *ikka* to a negative proverb, e.g. *Veereva kivi alla sammal ei kasva* ‘a rolling stone gathers no moss’. Syntactically, it would be possible to add *kunagi* ‘never’; however, its occurrence calls for further research.

Nevertheless, the meaning that emphasises the recurrence and typicality of the situation remains central in the word *ikka* and its variants. On the other hand, one can notice that *ikka* and *iks* are also used for formal purposes in order to achieve euphony.

Typically, *ikka*, *ike*, *iks*, etc. occur in proverbs between the first and the second feet, for example, for the purpose of linking the same words, as in the pattern

(A) Xikka X: (8) *veri iki veri* (10) *laps on ikka laps*

or for linking metrical feet with beginning rhyme, for example,

(B) X1ikka X2: (13) *maias iks mao palutas* (15) *sulasel iki suur kõht*

Sometimes the particle *ikka* may occur after the second metrical foot, linking the semantically coordinated halves; usually in such cases we can also observe some techniques of achieving euphony, for example, an equal number of metrical feet on both sides of the particle, as in

(C) X1Y1ikka X2Y2: (14) *Emä nisa iks latse suun*. ‘Mother’s nipple is always in the child’s mouth.’ (cf. *ema – latse, nisa – suu*)

or

(D) X1Yikka X2+and: (22) *Hea jääb ikka heaks ja paha pahaks*. ‘The good will always remain good and the evil will remain evil.’

Similar formal techniques, even breaking the boundaries of a compound, can also be found in South Estonian folk poetry, for example in the Setu epic *Peko* (Vabarna 1995). In South Estonian runic songs the *iks*-form is used as a line extension, which is typically inserted after the first metrical foot. In this case *iks* is an expletive that can be inserted into a multi-foot word as well, e.g. *imä-iks-kõnõ* ‘oh mother, always dear one’. The insertion is subject to certain phonological rules which are in principle in line with the insertion rules for English expletives suggested by Paul McCarthy (1982).

In South Estonian folk poetry the inserted *iks* often adds universality to the contrast, the meaning ‘always taking place under normal circumstances’, as in the previously analysed proverbs. The main function of *iks* as an expletive is to add prominence and to extend the metre, its motivation is poetic rather than semantic. Nevertheless, the poetic expansion is often accompanied by semantic prominence, which shows that the described situations and actions exceed the limiting temporal and situational conditions.

## CONCLUSION

The article dealt with the adverb-particle *ikka* in various contexts and meanings. *ikka* is a polysemous word that realises its different meanings in different usage contexts. The original meaning of *ikka* is temporal; however, during the grammaticalisation process it has also acquired some non-temporal meanings.

The original meaning ‘always, repeatedly, permanently’ is also common in Estonian proverbs where it emphasises timeless validity of the presented information. The same meaning occurs also in contemporary spoken and written language but this usage context does not have the highest frequency.

The meanings ‘yes, definitely (differently from what was thought)’ and ‘especially, very’ are characteristic of contemporary informal conversations. This use of *ikka* plays an important role in making the conversation a coherent whole, both by highlighting several opinions concurrently (the temporary negative and the final affirmative ones) and its frequent occurrence as chains. One can witness the same in the use of proverbs as part of contemporary text – *ikka* serves as a means of linking a claim to discourse and general background knowledge.

One can see that in each text variety the use of *ikka* is motivated by different factors. Although each usage realises one or another lexical meaning (‘always’, ‘still’, ‘sure’, etc.), it is common that some additional motivation is involved. The latter could be sometimes phonological-metrical (in proverbs and in Setu folk songs), sometimes it makes the text a coherent whole by means of



iteration (in informal speech and folk songs), and at other times it links an utterance to its cultural background (as in the use of proverbs in the contemporary media language). Domains of language usage that may seem remote on the surface could be actually closely interrelated, as it was shown in the article by the analysis of proverbs, runic songs, and informal conversation.

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## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Stephen Levinson claimed that sentences of the type *X is X* represent an implicature arising from intentional violation of Grice’s cooperative principle (Levinson 1983: 110–111). Because the hearer knows that the speaker has some communicative function in mind when producing a speech act, even a formally meaningless utterance is regarded as a meaningful one, and for this reason the same lexeme is assigned different interpretations at the beginning and end of an utterance.
- <sup>2</sup> Proverbs in Estonian newspapers have been studied, for example, by Risto Järv (2009). He used Google as well, but searched for contexts where it was explicitly written that the sentence is a proverb or belongs to “folk wisdom”. Our technique for searching is different: we chose some well-known proverbs and searched for them to find out usages with and without *ikka*.

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# THE RITUAL YEAR OF THE ICON OF THE ANNUNCIATION ON THE ISLAND OF TINOS, GREECE

*Evvy Johanne Håland*

**Abstract:** After several mystical visions of the nun, Pelagia, the holy *icon* of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin (*Panagia*) was found in 1823. According to tradition, Pelagia repeatedly witnessed the Panagia in her visions where she received orders from her to find the Virgin's icon and also to build her church. The icon was unearthed in the field where it had remained since the church, built on the ruins of a pagan temple, was destroyed in the 10th century. Two years before the icon was found, the Greek War of Independence broke out. The finding of the icon, the construction of the Church of the Panagia, *Euangelistria*, the enormous crowds of pilgrims and all the miracles worked by the icon, contributed to the outcome that the island was declared a sacred island, and Pelagia became sanctified.

The ritual year of the miraculous icon on Tinos starts on 30 January with the festival dedicated to the Finding of the Icon. The next festival is dedicated to the Day of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary. This day has both a religious and a national ideological significance, since 25 March is celebrated as Independence Day. July 23 is dedicated to the "Vision" of Saint Pelagia. The most important festival, the Dormition of the Panagia, is celebrated on 15 August.

During the festivals official processions, carrying the icon in its midst, are important, but also popular customs related to the importance of fetching holy water and earth as well as the other symbols which have a long tradition within Greek religions.

Accordingly, the article aims to present the ritual year of the miraculous icon on Tinos, thus exploring the relation between official and popular religion. Since several of the rituals and symbols recur across many religious groupings in the Middle East and Mediterranean, they might be studied from a comparative perspective, thus transcending European heritages: liberating the ethnological imagination.<sup>1</sup>

**Key words:** death-cult, earth, fertility-cult, festivals, Greece, healing, icon, Mediterranean, official and popular religion, saint, water

## INTRODUCTION

In 1823, after several mystical visions by one of the islanders, a pious nun named Pelagia, there was found the Miraculous holy *icon* (image) of the Annunciation (*Euangelismos*) of the Virgin Mary (*Megalochari*, *megalo*: 'great',



**Figure 1.** *Agia (Saint) Pelagia in the Monastery of Kechrovounios, Tinos island.  
Photo by Evy Johanne Håland.*

*charē*: ‘grace’, i.e. the Blessed Virgin). According to the tradition, Pelagia repeatedly saw, in her visions, the *Panagia* (i.e. the ‘All-Holy one’), who ordered her to inform the elders to start digging with an aim to find Panagia’s icon, buried many years ago in an uncultivated field, and to build her “house” (i.e. her church) on that place. On 30 January 1823, the icon was unearthed in the field where it had remained for about 850 years, since the church, built on the ruins of the pagan temple of Dionysos, was destroyed and burned down by the Saracens in the 10th century AD. Two years before the icon was found, the great Greek War of Independence (1821) broke out and the finding of the icon, the construction of the Church of the Annunciation, the enormous crowds of pilgrims and all the miracles worked by the icon, contributed to the result that in 1971, the island was declared a sacred place by governmental decree. Pelagia also became sanctified (Fig. 1) on 11 September 1970.

### **30 JANUARY: ANNIVERSARY OF THE FINDING OF THE HOLY ICON**

All religious festivals, within the orthodox liturgical year, are of course celebrated on Tinos, but resulting from the history of the island, some festivals are more important than others. Thus, though the ritual year on Tinos follows the agricultural calendar normally celebrated within the Orthodox Church and begins around autumn, by the end of the dead period of the grains' cycle, as I have illustrated elsewhere (Håland 2005, 2006a, 2007a), the ritual year of the miraculous icon on Tinos starts on 30 January with the Anniversary of the Finding of the Holy Icon.

This festival is dedicated to *Euresēs*, i.e. the Finding (of the Holy Icon), and during the festival the finding of the icon is re-enacted.<sup>2</sup> The festival starts in the afternoon on the eve of the anniversary, when the icon is carried from the main church to the minor church or chapel below, which is called *Zōodochos Pēgē*, i.e. the 'Life-giving Spring', or the 'Life-giving Well'. The inhabitants of Tinos however, call the chapel, *Euresēs* ('Finding'). Here, the icon is placed at the site where it lay buried for hundreds of years. A special service is held, dedicated to the Finding of the Holy Icon.

On 30 January, an official liturgy is celebrated in the main church in the afternoon and afterwards the icon is carried in procession through the decorated streets of the town. After a ceremony in the harbour, the icon is carried back to the church, where a ceremony is held in memory of the builders of the church, whose tombs are situated at the east side of the building. Prayers are also said in memory of those who lost their lives and fortunes for the construction of the church. After vespers, the president of the church committee delivers the panegyric of the day, provides a report of the activities of the holy foundation during the past year and those that are planned for the following year.

In the evening, children holding multicoloured lighted lamps, follow the church musicians through the streets of Tinos, singing various hymns commemorating the finding of the holy icon. Several pilgrims participate in the festival as well, although more visitors arrive for the next festival during the ritual year of the miraculous icon on Tinos.

### **25 MARCH: THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE VIRGIN MARY**

The next festival is dedicated to the Day of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, on 25 March. This day has both a religious and a national (political) ideological significance, since 25 March is celebrated as Independence Day,

marking the liberation of Greece from Turkish rule. This festival, celebrating the anniversary of the Greek revolution, was the most important festival on Tinos in the 19th century, whereas at the beginning of the 20th century, many pilgrims came from Asia Minor, i.e. modern Turkey.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, government officials always participate in this event. The festival is particularly related to the important and dominant symbol of the island, the Miraculous Icon of the Annunciation of the Virgin. The icon is attributed to the apostle and evangelist Luke, who is believed to have painted it during Mary's lifetime, with her as a living model, thus, tying it to the very origins of Christianity and the image directly to Mary herself. It shows Gabriel appearing before Mary with the announcement of Christ's birth, i.e. the icon announces fertility. Today, the icon is covered with offerings of gold and precious stones, and it is not possible to see what it portrays. The miracles worked by the holy icon have made Tinos a centre of Pan-Orthodox worship, some them are more famous than others, and several miracles are said to have happened during the *olonychtia*, 'the all-night-service' or all night long prayers of 25 March. As generally happens within the Orthodox Church, the festival starts on the eve of the celebration when vespers are performed and the church remains open all night, permitting people to stay for an all-night prayer vigil. On the day of the festival a liturgy is celebrated, afterwards the icon is carried in procession to the harbour and back to the church. The Annunciation is also the name of the church of the Panagia and the street by which most of pilgrims descend after completing their *proskynēma* (i.e. to perform the set of devotions a pilgrim does upon entering the church).

### **23 JULY: ANNIVERSARY OF THE VISION OF AGIA PELAGIA**

The third important festival is celebrated in July and is dedicated to one of the most recent Orthodox saints, the aforementioned, *Agia* (Saint) Pelagia. "Her Vision" is celebrated on 23 July. During the festival the ritual connection between the Monastery of Kechrovounios, where she lived, and the Church of the Annunciation in the city of Tinos, is marked by way of a procession with the miraculous icon (Fig. 2).

On the eve of the festival a liturgy is celebrated in the Church of the Annunciation, which is crowded by the islanders, and all those coming home to Tinos for their summer holidays. The icon of Pelagia is decorated with flowers and burning candles, and plays a main role during the liturgy together with the miraculous icon. Pelagia also has a chapel dedicated to her below the main church. Her icon is situated in front of the stones from earlier sanctuaries





**Figure 2.** *The miraculous icon of the Annunciation is carried in procession from the Monastery of Kechrovounios, Tinos island, 23 July. Photo by Evy Johanne Håland.*

which were removed when the miraculous icon was unearthed. Although the Church of the Annunciation wanted to have her bones when these were disinterred three years after her death (as is the general rule within the Orthodox Church), her remains however, i.e. her head, are still in the Monastery of Kechrovounios, where she had her visions in 1822 (Kardamitsē 1992; Karita s.a.).

Early the next morning, headed by the church musicians, the miraculous icon is carried in procession, accompanied by the nuns of the monastery and islanders to the harbour and then taken by taxi to the Monastery of Kechrovounios, dedicated to the Dormition of the Panagia, where it remains all day. A mass is celebrated, followed by a lunch “served by the abbess” to all the participants, the most significant visitors receiving the most elaborate meals. Most people stay in the monastery all day, taking the opportunity to visit the cell of Agia Pelagia, seeing her humble belongings and her ascetic bed. Three years after her death, when she was disinterred, the nuns hid her remains since they did not want them to be buried outside the monastery. At a later date her head was found buried in a chapel dedicated to John the Baptist. After lunch several women perform their own liturgy in this church, when a group of women join in singing hymns to Pelagia in front of the iconostasis where



**Figure 3.** *The holy head of Pelagia in her church in the Monastery of Kechrovounios, Tinos island. Photo by Evy Johanne Håland.*

her skull was found. Today, her holy head is seen in the church next to her cell where a liturgy is celebrated in the afternoon (Fig. 3). Later, during a nine kilometre procession taking several hours and consisting of the clergy and many faithful, the holy icon is returned to the Church of the Annunciation in the town of Tinos. Arriving late at night, the icon and the whole procession are welcomed by fireworks, torches and ships' bells, sirens and buses' horns. The miraculous icon is returned to the church after sermons and speeches, on a podium positioned by the waterfront, thus bringing to an end this very picturesque local festival.

### **15 AUGUST: THE DORMITION OF THE VIRGIN MARY**

The most important festival on modern Tinos is also the most significant Pan-Hellenic festival – dedicated to the Dormition of the Panagia, the Bearer or Mother of God (i.e. *Ē Koimēsis tēs Theotokou*), which is celebrated on 15 August, marking the end of the fifteen-day fast in honour of the Panagia. The feast of the Dormition began in the seventh century, and in Greek Orthodoxy it still retains the name.

**Figure 4.** Pilgrims on their knees are making their way up to the Church of the Annunciation on the top of the hill, Tinos island. Photo by Evy Johanne Håland.

All year pilgrims come to Tinos, but the enormous crowd of devotees is greatest during the days of the August-festival (Fig. 4). The Dormition of the Panagia is also an important ideological festival, combining the celebration of the Dormition with the day of the armed forces. This is illustrated through several ceremonies during the festival: The service is followed by a procession at 11 a.m. when the miraculous icon is carried down the main street. Government top cabinet members and the head of the Greek Orthodox Church, followed by clergy and notables, are present, accompanied by a military escort and lesser officials. A detachment of sailors marches at the tail of the procession; the national Hellenic Navy always sends warships to Tinos on 15 August, because the Panagia represents the intimate and hazardous relations of the Greeks towards the sea. The Navy is honoured because it is “under the protection of the Virgin”. The national ideology is also manifested through the speeches given by the authorities, and by the posters displayed in the town, announcing the festival. The Panagia is, for example, hovering over the na-



**Figure 5.** A poster proclaiming 15 August as the “Day of the Armed Forces”, Tinos island. Photo by Evy Johanne Håland.



tional symbol, the Acropolis of Athens. Another poster may depict a mixing of modern and ancient symbols (Fig. 5). The message is always the same: 15 August is proclaimed as the “Day of the Armed Forces”, and the symbols of the navy, the air force and the army are illustrated. We meet the double nature of the occasion as both a national and religious holiday, in agreement with the traditional close connection between the official Orthodox Church and the nation-state, in a patriotic sense.

Her icon is carried in procession, and is also passed over the sick and women wanting to conceive (Fig. 6). Several hours before the service is finished, a long queue of pilgrims forms in the street waiting for the icon, and as the icon is carried down the street they stand, bending down in its path, so that the icon may pass over them. It is important to touch and kiss the icon. In addition to the crowd of followers, thousands of onlookers watch the procession, several on their knees, some holding incense burners or lit candles. Several sick pilgrims lie down, as the custom was earlier, but today they are in danger of being trampled over. During the procession jets are regularly flying over the island, accompanied by the salutes fired by the warships and the cannon at the memorial in the harbour, which was inaugurated in 2002.



**Figure 6.** During the festival celebrating the Dormition of the Panagia (the Virgin Mary), on 15 August, her icon is carried in procession, and also over the sick and women wanting to conceive. Photo by Evy Johanne Håland.

**Figure 7.** *Saluting sailors in uniform, holding the icon depicting the Annunciation of the Virgin, during the ceremony at the harbour. Photo by Evy Johanne Håland.*

Arriving at the harbour (Fig. 7) a service is followed by a speech given by the attending member of the Government, for example, the Foreign Affairs Minister, in 1993. The ceremony officially ends when the clergy and the officials go aboard a warship carrying them to the point where the Greek destroyer Elli was sunk by an Italian submarine as it was anchored off the Tinos harbour on 15 August 1940. Here, a religious service is held, and the priest and the president (i.e. in 1995) throw laurel crowns on the watery tomb of the ship and its crew. Meanwhile, the ships are sounding their horns, the jets are on a fly-past and people throng the coastline. “We came to pay honour to Panagia, who helped us to beat the fascists,” said one of the survivors of the Elli crew in 1993. The importance of the Panagia and the Greek nation is also emphasized during the service, and she is begged in prayer to take care of the Greek nation as she has always done.

After the patriotic ceremony, the procession returns to the church at one o’clock. Mothers try to defy the police lines, to bring their sick children as close as possible to the icon. The aim of the procession is that the



**Figure 8.** *The “9th day’s ritual of the Panagia” starts on the eve of 23 August, Tinos island. Photo by Evy Johanne Håland.*

miraculous icon may pass over the pilgrims, to purify them for another year, and the Greek nation is also purified. In short, 15 August is a special day for Hellenism, combining religion with patriotism, and the Dormition on Tinos is a profound social event.

Panagia's death or Dormition is followed by her burial or the "9th day's ritual of Panagia" on 23 August (Fig. 8), thus, reflecting ordinary death-rituals and the following memorial service. The 15 August cycle ends with this memorial service taking place nine days after her death.

## THE MIRACULOUS ICON AND OTHER IMPORTANT SYMBOLS AND RITUALS

The important symbol of the island, the Miraculous Icon of the Annunciation of the Virgin, said to have been made by St. Luke, belongs to all the festivals. During the festivals official processions carrying the icon in its midst are important, but there are also popular customs related to the importance of fetching holy water and earth, as well as other symbols which have a very long tradition within Greek religion, modern and ancient.

Accordingly, the ritual year of the miraculous icon on Tinos offers an interesting possibility to explore the relationship between official and popular religion.



Holy water, *agiasma*, is found in most Greek sanctuaries, and some sanctuaries offer particular miracle-working water with its own legend attached to it. The sanctuary on Tinos has a chapel dedicated to the "Life-giving Spring", and rituals connected with water are just as important as in all Greek churches. Below the main church at Tinos there are several smaller churches or chapels formed like caves, such as the aforementioned chapel dedicated to Pelagia

**Figure 9.** Pilgrims fetch holy, wonder-working water from "the Life-giving Spring" (Zōodochos Pēgē). Photo by Evvy Johanne Håland.



which is the second one. In the first chapel, however, is a holy spring, where the pilgrims fetch water, which has fertile power and cures sickness (Fig. 9). According to the tradition, the well was discovered in 1823, during the first excavations made in search of the holy icon, when the ruins of the foundations of the Byzantine Church were brought to light. The well was deep, but completely dry and useless. As no other well existed in the vicinity of the building site, on the day of the laying of the corner-stone of the church, the bishop sent a little boy to bring some water from the town for the celebration of the hallowing of the waters. Shortly afterwards, the child was back and told the bishop that the well next to the foundations was full of water. Having heard this, the bishop, accompanied by the notables went to the actual site and they saw with great surprise that the dry well was now filled to the brink with water. They made the sign of the cross for this miracle and afterwards took from the well the water necessary for the celebration of the hallowing. From that time, the water of the well has been used by the pilgrims as sacred water and everybody takes some along with her or him in special vials and keeps it at home as a talisman. Thus, the source is seen as a miracle and the chapel of holy water is called *Zōodochos Pēgē*, i.e. the 'Life-giving Spring'.

The pilgrims arrive in Tinos particularly after 1 August, the day on which the fifteen-day fast starts. People, mostly women, make their way up to the church barefoot, on their knees, or on their stomachs, and they bring with them various offerings, sometimes tied on their backs: candles as tall as the donor, icons, or wax. They may also bring incense, silver candlesticks, censers, bread, wine, sheep (particularly the gypsies). The most common offering is a silver or gold-plated ex-voto (*tama/tamata*) representing the person who has been miraculously cured by the icon, or the cured limb itself or the person or limb wanting to be cured, or a ship. The street, named *Megalocharēs* leads directly from the harbour to the church. *Megalocharēs* is a wide avenue about a kilometre in length, lined with shops and booths, particularly at its lower end. As soon as the pilgrims disembark from the ships and begin to make their way up the hill, they are assailed with the cries of the shopkeepers who stand outside their stores, hawking the items necessary for a successful pilgrimage: "*Lampades! Tamata! Mpoukalakia gia agiasma! Edō Lampades!*" ('Large candles! Tamata! Little bottles for holy water! Here [are] large candles!').

At the top of the hill, when arriving at the doorway of the church, the pilgrims offer their large candles. Afterwards, they line up on the steps at the Church of the Annunciation, waiting their turn to enter the main chapel, to *proskynēma*. Of particular importance are their devotions in front of the miraculous icon, being a microcosm since it is made of all substances of the world. It is especially important to kiss the icon itself, and one might also touch the



**Figure 10.** A pilgrim touches the icon with cotton wool, which afterwards is considered as an important amulet. Photo by Evy Johanne Håland.

icon with ex-votos to make them holy, or cotton wool, which afterwards is considered an important amulet (Fig. 10). Most of the pilgrims stay for a service, but even during services many pilgrims continue to move around, engaging in their own rituals.

Afterwards they descend to the chapel of holy water and earth beneath the church, since most pilgrims confine their attention to the main sanctuary and to the chapel of holy water below the church: “Where do we go for holy water?” pilgrims ask each other, and other more knowledgeable pilgrims

direct them downstairs, to the chapel beneath the main church where they will find the holy water font. The pilgrims drop some money in a carved, slotted wooden counter, pick up candles to be lit, and inside the first chapel they kiss the icons, before they take some earth from the hole where the miracu-



**Figure 11.** A pilgrim takes some holy earth from the hole where the miraculous icon was found. Photo by Evy Johanne Håland.

lous icon was found (Fig. 11). Afterwards, they queue up to obtain holy water in small bottles or they drink directly from the tap. Many pilgrims only carry out the most important rituals and obtain the holy symbols before they return to the harbour.

On the eve of the feasts, the church is beautifully decorated and the icon might be placed on a blue and golden embroidered carpet as on the 14th of August 1990. During “the all-night-services” of the festivals many pilgrims spend the night inside the church, while the priests and cantors sing invocations. Simultaneously, many are occupied by fetching earth and water in the chapel below, both seen as important fertility and healing-remedies. During the festivals the earth and the water are considered to be particularly holy, when Panagia is so near. Accordingly, they are more powerful, and on the eve of her *panēgyrikos*, the Dormition of the Panagia, many children are baptised in the chapel of holy water, in the “Life-giving Spring” (Håland 2007a: Fig. 15).

Particularly marriageable girls or newly married young women, fetch earth and holy water, to assure their own fertility and health.

The singing children, walking in procession with multicoloured lit lamps, are a general Greek custom during many winter-festivals (cf. Michaël-Dede 1989). The July festival also presents several customs that are found in other summer-festivals, such as the outdoor lunch and the icon being carried between two sanctuaries, thus defining a sacred space. In particular, the Annunciation and the Dormition of the Panagia are important ideological festivals for the “New Greek nation-state of 1821”, as illustrated through several ceremonies during the festivals, especially the processions when the icon is carried from the church to the harbour and the following ceremonies. In short, the days are special days for Hellenism, combining religion with patriotism.

## **FROM THE RITUAL YEAR OF THE MIRACULOUS ICON ON TINOS TO THE WIDER MEDITERRANEAN AND BEYOND**

Many of the actual rituals and symbols, particularly the importance of fetching water and earth, as well as the pilgrimages and processions connected with deceased holy persons recur across several civilizations and religious groupings in the Middle East and Mediterranean areas. They might therefore be studied from a comparative civilizational perspective, thus transcending European heritages and liberating the ethnological imagination of Europe.

## **Death-cult**

The Orthodox Easter festival, dedicated to the Death and Resurrection of Christ, and the Dormition of the Panagia are the most important Pan-Hellenic death-festivals. The Greek name of the Virgin is Παναγία (*Panagia*), i.e. the “All-Holy one”, and reminds us that she is considered the most important intercessor and saint in the Greek tradition which emphasizes her maternal role as the Mother of God, rather than her Virginity. In the Orthodox Church, Mary is not seen as immaculately conceived and bodily assumed into heaven. Thus, the Orthodox Church celebrates her Dormition, rather than her Assumption, and she does not become a semi-deified human as in Catholicism (cf. Dubisch 1995; Economides 1986).

The festivals of Christian saints are also dedicated to dead persons who have the same mystical powers as the ancient mediators, heroes and heroines.

In the Greek cultural environment death-cult is the cult of dead family-members and “great persons” through dedications of offerings and the performance of prayers on their tombs. Both the cult of newly deceased persons, and formerly dead heroes or heroines, bears witness of death-cult (Fig. 12).

We meet this phenomenon both in ancient and modern Greek society. The cult for holy men and women, who are dead, reveals itself through the ancient cult of the heroes, and the modern practice of sainthood in Christian areas. Ancestor-worship is the worship or propitiation of the ancestors. The cult of



**Figure 12.** Memorial service performed for a deceased person with offerings of food at the tomb on the second of the three psychosabbata (i.e. psychosabbato, psychē ‘soul’, sabbato ‘Saturday’), i.e. All Souls’ Day, during Carnival and Lent, at the end of the winter, Serres (Greek Macedonia). Photo by Evy Johanne Håland.

heros, heroines, and later, that of saints is the worship or propitiation of an important deceased person, man or woman. The phenomenon called death-cult is an important key in connection with most of the religious festivals. The reason is that the festivals very often are yearly memorials and celebrations dedicated to a deceased guardian of society. This guardian is a mediator between human beings and the supernatural within the hierarchical building that constitute the polytheistic-polydaemonistic society, in the same way as he or she often functioned when still alive, within human society.

The cult of the bones of dead mediators has a long tradition in Greek culture, such as the ancient heroes Orestes or Theseus (Herodotus 1.67–68; Plutarch *Theseus* 35–36; cf. also Pausanias 3.3.7),<sup>4</sup> or the modern Agios Nektarios whose body – and especially his head – is particularly venerated on the island of Aegina on 9 November. On Tinos we also meet the death-cult in connection with the holy head of Pelagia, which resides in an ornate stand near the main entrance of her church, and through the glass top of the stand the dome of her skull can be seen (cf. Fig. 3). Pilgrims pay the same devotion to her head as to the miraculous icon, touching the glass top with similar votive offerings or objects they want to make holy, such as cotton, flowers, green leaves, candles, bread or cloth. Particularly during the festival, flower buds from the wreath of flowers decorating the stand are considered to be effective amulets after being crossed three times over her head. The same procedure is carried out in front of the figure depicting the Panagia on her deathbed (*epitaphios*) during the “9th day’s ritual of the Panagia” (Håland 2007a: Fig. 26).

We meet the importance of death-cult in non-Christian areas as well, for example, in connection with the Turkish Mevlāna, and the *marabouts* (holy men) in North-Africa (Eickelman 1981), which means that this is related to fundamental rules, or long lasting *mentalities* in the Mediterranean. On its southern shore, one might mention the continuous fights over the tombs of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob and Leah in the Cave of Machpelah in Hebron, the resting place of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs. Rachel’s tomb and the Milk Grotto of Mary, formerly dedicated to the vegetation god, Adonis (Håland 2007a: ch. 5), illustrate two women’s shrines in Bethlehem. There are several shared saints and festivals in the area (Cuffel 2005, 2009).

The most important festival of the Shī‘a is centred on the death of Husain, grandson of the Prophet. During this festival it is of greatest importance to make a pilgrimage to Husain’s tomb in Kerbela, in Iraq (Grunebaum 1981). Saddam Hussein did not permit them to do this. His ban, however, was not new, since already several centuries earlier, people were forbidden to make pilgrimages to Husain’s tomb, so one may ask if Saddam Hussein’s move illustrates lack of historical knowledge: as early as in 850, the Caliph found it



politically necessary to level Husain's tomb and to prohibit pilgrimages to Kerbela. Such an intervention by the government proved of little effect and the rebuilt grave has remained to this day the devotional centre for pilgrims from all over the Shī'a world. It is of particular popularity to be buried by the sanctuary, since they will surely enter Paradise. In the neighbouring country, the anniversary of Khomeini's death still draws huge crowds. After the fall of Saddam Hussein, the Shī'a citizens were permitted to again make pilgrimages to Kerbela, as we could observe on television in 2003 (Håland 2004). When watching the pilgrims crawling and rolling up to the sanctuary of Kerbela, I started to think of my own fieldwork experiences from my time in Tinos, where the pilgrims arrive in the same way (Håland 2007a: Figs. 18–20), and where the builders of the church have their tombs in the church's courtyard. Below the main sanctuary of the church on Tinos there is also a mausoleum commemorating the sinking of the Elli. Every year, wreaths are placed to honour the heroes of the Elli and a service is given in front of the mausoleum on 13 August (Håland 2007a: Figs. 13–14). The principal and most important festival of the Shī'a is celebrated toward the end of the Muslim year, built around the death of Husain, thus paralleling the Dormition of the Panagia, when the greatest crowd of pilgrims arrive on the island to assure their fertility and health at the death of the Panagia by fetching holy earth and water, two important symbols in other places in the Mediterranean and Middle East as well.

### **Water and Earth**

As already mentioned, the cultic importance of water and earth has a long tradition within Greek religion. Purification by earth was usual in certain ancient mystery cults, since clay and bran were smeared on the initiates, especially on their face, and then wiped off. Among the ancient stories are also those telling about the ceremonies exclusively performed by women when celebrating their goddesses, for example the *pannychis*, all-night festival and clay-daubing of marriageable girls at the Artemis shrine at Ledrinoi, on the banks of the Alpheios river (Pausanias 6.22.8–9). From ancient Greece (Pausanias 9.17.4–6), we also learn about the importance of taking earth from a particular grave before the grain harvest and laying it on the tumulus of the heroine, Antiope to ensure the crop. In modern Greece holy earth from graves at the cemetery is also important, thus paralleling the holy earth from Panagia's sanctuary on Tinos which is seen as a powerful fertility and healing-remedy along with the holy water.

The clear bubbling water of a spring, rising out of the earth by a power, habitually regarded as a Water-Nymph, was, in the imagination of the ancient



Greeks, a gift of the water deities, the goddesses by which all life on earth was fed. Water was considered to have therapeutic and purifying properties. Near the city at Odysseus' island was a

(...) fair-flowing fountain, wherefrom the townsfolk drew water (...), and around was a grove of poplars, that grow by the waters, circling it on all sides, and down the cold water flowed from the rock above, and on the top was built an altar to the nymphs where all passers-by made offerings. (*Od.* 17.208–212, cf. 240)<sup>5</sup>

When Poseidon violated Demeter, in fact he coupled with her in the form of a stallion, she became angry. Though later she got over her wrath and wanted to wash in the river Ladon. According to Pausanias (8.25.6), this is how the goddess got her title, the Fury, because of her wrath, and Washing Demeter because she washed in the Ladon.

Strabo (8.6.8) tells that expiatory purifications were performed at the lake of Lerna, near which was the spring of Amymone. This is also where the heads of the murdered husbands of the Danaids were buried, according to tradition. In other words, they were buried in one of the Demetrian fruitful marshes, and thus married to the earth.

Paralleling the healing pools in modern Lourdes in Southern France, where Bernadette Soubirous (1844–1879), had several mystical visions in 1858 seeing the Virgin Mary appearing to her in a cave, thus paralleling the Tinos-legend (cf. Håland 2007b), one may mention the six water reservoirs in the Asklepieion, or sanctuary of Asklepios, of ancient Corinth.<sup>6</sup> Their dimensions suggest that they were used to store water in summer when the springs ran low, and that the water was recycled for repeated use. It is also possible that water from the thermal springs at Thermà (Loutraki, cf. *loutro* i.e. 'bath') was transported to the Asklepieion in Corinth. Thus the Asklepieion at Therma (Loutraki) could have been a branch of the Corinthian Asklepieion. Six thermal springs bubble from the ground at Loutraki, and even in ancient times they were considered to be something special. Balneological analysis has shown that their water has a very high mineral content and is slightly radioactive. Rainwater was collected in one of the tanks. The total capacity of the water basins and reservoirs was about 341,406 cubic meters. In ancient times the water of the Fountain of Lerna was considered particularly wholesome and good, and its quality is comparable to that of the water from the Peirene Fountain (Athenaeus 4.156e).

Springs are often connected to healing and purification both in the ancient Greek and Graeco-Roman worlds and the modern Mediterranean. In ancient Greek written sources as in the modern Greek world, water is regarded and frequently mentioned in connection with exceptional powers. Water is also often dangerous, associated with water nymphs, the *Nereids* (cf. Blum & Blum 1970; Håland 2005, 2007b).

The Greek ritual carried out on “New” Friday, or Friday after Easter, which is dedicated to the Panagia under her attribute of the “Life-giving Spring” (Håland 2007b), is a part of the spring festivals, and may also be regarded as a purification ritual before the new season, which starts with the Resurrection of Christ. In this connection it may be compared to other purification rituals, such as the ones carried out in Persia, and under Persian influence in Iraq, Syria and Egypt, where the New Year was for some time celebrated in spring.<sup>7</sup> In Persia, around 1008 AD, people went to the water of the aqueducts and wells. Frequently, they drew running water in a vase, and poured it over themselves, considering this a good omen and a means to keep off hurt. People also sprinkled water on each other, for which the cause was said to be the same as that of washing. According to another report of the same custom, the reason for it was that once after a long drought, rain fell on New Year’s Day. People considered the rain a good omen, and poured it over each other. Afterwards the ritual remained among them as a custom that was carried out annually. Naturally, the water-sprinkling may have simply held the place of a purification by which people cleansed their bodies from the smoke of fire and from the dirt connected with attending the fires in winter.

Water has fertility-enhancing, healing, purifying and protecting powers; in the form of Holy Water, it is central to many rituals designed to ward off evil and to ensure blessings. It is also used in conjunction with different magical remedies. In an account from modern Greece it is said that the spring, at the Church of Christ at Spata, lends power to stones gathered there and these, added to holy water and passion flowers, make a charm which protects a house from illness.

An earlier account of sainthood in Islam gives interesting parallels with ancient and modern Greek customs in connection with death-cult.<sup>8</sup> According to the British archaeologist, Sir Arthur Evans’ description of the cult of a minor Muslim saint’s sanctuary in the Southern Balkans (i.e. Albania), approximately a hundred years ago, the worshipper who would conform to the full ritual, fills a keg of water from a spring that rises near the shrine. In the centre of the grave is a hole, into which the water from the holy spring is poured, and thus mixed with the holy earth. Of this the votary drinks three times, and he must thrice anoint his forehead with it. Other rituals follow to shape the dreams of the faithful.

As already mentioned, springs are important in connection with the sanctuaries of Asklepios. But, long before he became famous, healing springs sacred to the Water-Nymphs and Artemis were widespread. Springs were also often connected with caves. According to Pausanias a ritual, performed in a Nymphs’ cave containing sulphur springs, cured leprosy.<sup>9</sup>

Today, people from all over the world, come to Lourdes and Tinos, famous for their restoring capacities because of their holy healing and purifying waters, which the pilgrims take home. It is also important to point out the fact that the modern sanctuaries often are situated at places where ancient pre-Christian people also made pilgrimages to holy springs, for example in Greece, where Agia Marina of the Holy Springs has her church next to the ancient site of a temple holy to the goddess, Themis (Blum & Blum 1970: 324) and the Panagia has replaced the Water-Nymphs in the Acropolis cave at Athens (Håland 2007b, cf. 2005).

In Pamukkale in Turkey, the excellent curative properties of the waters, known from ancient times in the neighbouring Hierapolis, where the Great Goddess was worshipped (Lucian *Syr. D.* 45–48), have permitted the construction in modern times of spas which are generally annexed to hotels in the area. Particularly, the ancient Romans appreciated this place.

Thus, water, and also earth have traditionally been important symbols in the wider Mediterranean and Near Eastern world as well as in the Greek contexts. The symbols were important in connection with the Persian wars in the 5th century BC, since the king of Persia set out to conquer all the Greek communities which refused to give him earth and water (Herodotus 6.94). The Greeks who refused thought these symbols were reserved for eternal divinities. Accordingly, they would not submit to a living person thus making him a god. On the other hand, the story illustrates that they shared a fundamental value-system, despite differing official political or religious ideologies. Today, the custom is a central element both in the church on Tinos and among Muslims in Istanbul where people dedicate to the religious leader water and earth, thus showing their submission. Afterwards, the same symbols are redistributed, thus paralleling the ritual surrounding bread (Fig. 13) within the Greek Orthodox Church, where the faithful also fetch water and earth. In



**Figure 13.** Offerings of bread, olive oil and wine, Markopoulo, Kephallonia island, 15 August. Photo by Evy Johanne Håland.

Istanbul, many of the fountains with holy water (*agiasma*), which were formerly associated with Greek Orthodox saints, are also adopted by Muslim believers (Sezim & Darnault 2005). Springs are also of fundamental importance in general within Islamic rituals, since prayer is valid only when performed in a state of ritual purity, and therefore has to be preceded by ablution, *wudû'*. The duty of ablution accounts for the presence of fountains in the mosque courts, thus paralleling the Asklepian demand for ritual purity in ancient Greek culture, also seen in the modern importance of *agiasma*, for example in connection with the ritual year of the icon on Tinos.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Since 1990, I have been engaged in several periods of fieldwork on Tinos particularly involving research into the festival dedicated to the Dormition of the Panagia on 15 August. On Tinos, I witnessed the festival in 1990, 1993–1998, 2004–2010. I have also carried out fieldwork on the festival dedicated to the “Vision” of Saint Pelagia (2005). Håland 2007a gives a comprehensive presentation and discussion of the Tinos-festivals, particularly the Dormition, as well as an extensive bibliography on the island and its history. See also 2006a, b and 2007b. The English translations of Greek texts, such as the pamphlet distributed by the church on Tinos, never translates *Euangelistria* with the Panagia of the Annunciation or the annunciated, but writes, for example, “The Church of the Annunciation (*Euangelistria*)”. In general, people do not translate *Euangelistria*, cf. also *infra* concerning the street.

<sup>2</sup> See Meraklēs 1986: 178n.14 for the Euresēs-festival on 30 January and the relationship with invention of tradition, the customs, etc. and his citation from Phlōrakē 1973. See also Håland 2007a: ch. 4 and 6 and particularly my forthcoming book for extensive discussions of older customs in new settings or modern recycling of ancient customs. The survival of values and beliefs, even though new normative religions have been introduced and the close relationship between the official Orthodox religion and popular religion, particularly in the rural parts of Greece, is further discussed in Håland 2005, 2007a: ch. 3. I disagree, therefore, with Meraklēs’ assertion that the customs during the festival are new inventions. Although the Euresēs-festival is new, several of the customs in connection with this, and other festivals (such as the importance of fetching holy water and earth, etc.), have very long traditions within Greek culture, a fact which is also evident for Meraklēs as illustrated in his later reference to Katerina Kakouri (cf. Håland 2007a: 134).

- <sup>3</sup> Bent 1966 gives a vivid description of the festival in the 19th century, comparing it with ancient pilgrimages to the neighbouring sacred island of Delos, see also Håland 2007a: 113–114 for discussion.
- <sup>4</sup> Abbreviations for ancient titles are listed with the respective references.
- <sup>5</sup> This aspect and the following topics from ancient Greek myths/culture are further discussed in Håland 2009.
- <sup>6</sup> The following is mainly based on Kasas & Struckmann 1990.
- <sup>7</sup> The following draws on Grunebaum 1981: 54–55 quoted from al-Bīrūnī, who wrote ca. 1008. Cf. Håland 2005, for similar New Year rituals in Greece, i.e. in the beginning of January, but also the rituals after the Resurrection, Håland 2007b.
- <sup>8</sup> For the following, cf. Evans 1901 and Håland 2004, cf. also 2005, 2007a.
- <sup>9</sup> Pausanias 5.5.11, cf. 9.40.1–2; cf. Håland 2009, see also 2005.

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# THE HISTORY OF LAPLAND AND THE CASE OF THE SAMI NOAIDI DRUM FIGURES REVERSED

*Francis Joy*

**Abstract:** The Sami are the indigenous peoples of northern Scandinavia and the Kola Peninsula in Russia.

Up until the periods between the 17th and 18th centuries the Sami practiced an indigenous form of shamanism, characterised by hunting and animal ceremonialism. After the crusade against the Sami and the practice of their ancient nature religion by the Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish priests and missionary workers, a subsequent number of Noaidi-Shaman drums were collected and in time exhibited in different museums throughout Europe, where many still remain today.

The Noaidi drums have been vital sources of information for scholars outside Sami culture, as well as the Sami themselves. In the 1670s, Johannes Schefferus, the German scholar and linguist wrote about the history of Lapland which was translated into Latin under the uniform title *Lapponia*. English, French and Dutch editions soon followed as did a German edition. This article discusses some of the implications for researchers due to a number of significant errors recently identified in these original manuscripts and furthermore, what this means for the Sami history, religion and culture today?

**Key words:** divination, errors, figures, illustrations, Lapland, priests, publications, reversed, Sami Noaidi

In the winter of 2002, I travelled to Finland to undertake studies in Circumpolar and sub-Arctic animism and shamanism, as an exchange student at the University of Helsinki, and a student of comparative religion. This was under the auspices of Juha Pentikäinen, professor of comparative religion, whom I had met in the fall of 2001 when he was visiting Bath Spa University in the UK, to present a series of lectures about Sami and Siberian shamanism, where I was a first year student, studying religious studies and European history.

Soon after the arrival in Helsinki, an invitation arrived concerning a conference on Finno-Ugric Shamanism about the minority peoples of Siberia. The title of this event was *From Taiga to Tundra*, and was to be held at the Museum of Cultures in Helsinki, organised by Institute for Cultural Research, Department of Finno-Ugric Studies in University of Helsinki, and the M. A

Castren Society, chaired by Professor Pentikäinen and the President of the Society for Shamanic Research in Hungary, Mihály Hoppál. Both scholars were amongst a host of others, to present a series of lectures about the Sami and Siberian peoples and their respective cultures and religious practices.

As part of the conference, there were a large number of historical and cultural artefacts on display at the museum, which included shaman drums, costumes and garments, ritual and ceremonial items, hunting weapons and a series of wooden animal figures and deities. These had all at one time served as the religious implements of the Nenets, Khanty, Mansi, Selkup and Sami, the native peoples of the northern areas of the globe. The extensive display was titled *The Siberian Collection*.

Documented on one of a number of information sheets given to the audience, was a brief introduction to two Sami Noaidi/Shaman<sup>1</sup> drums which had originated from the Kemi Lappmark area, in present day northern Finland. The larger of the two drums measured approximately 83cm in height, which seemed like a master-piece in itself, and was currently the property of the National Museum of Antiquities in Stockholm.

In April of the same year (2002), the opportunity to take a trip to the far northern areas of Scandinavia to visit several of the museums in Lapland began on an overnight train to Rovaniemi, the capital of Finnish Lapland. After a visit to the Arctic Centre in Rovaniemi, to see what could be learned about the Sami, indigenous people of the north, through a fine and colourful series of exhibitions. To follow this, a further journey commenced across the border in to Norwegian Lapland to the Sami Museum (Sámiid Vuorká-Dávvirat) in Karasjok. The first initial encounter with the old noaidi drums in the museum was with a plastic replica of one collected at the times the noaidi of Lapland were persecuted during the 17th century witch hunts conducted by the Swedish church; it was hanging suspended from the roof on several ropes.

After asking a few questions to a female member of staff about the drum, she told me in no uncertain terms that both the Norwegian and the Finnish Sami did not have any of their own drums in their respective museums, and that there were several Norwegian Sami drums in the United Kingdom in the British Museum and in Cambridge University Museum.

It was during the investigation into the plight of the Norwegian drums in the UK, via a visit to the Siida Museum in Inari, Finnish Lapland that a second encounter with another drum took place, namely, with the larger of the two Sami noaidi drums from Kemi Lappmark, which was on loan from Sweden, and on exhibition there. Whilst at the Siida museum, the chance to take a couple of photographs of the drum would serve as an important factor for what was to unfold.

Once back in Helsinki, I made some comparisons between the black and white copy of the drum which was in the first English publication of *Lapponia* from 1674, and the newly coloured photograph taken at the Siida Museum. On close observation it became obvious that the portrait of the drum from the black and white copy and the coloured one were somehow different, but it was not initially clear why.

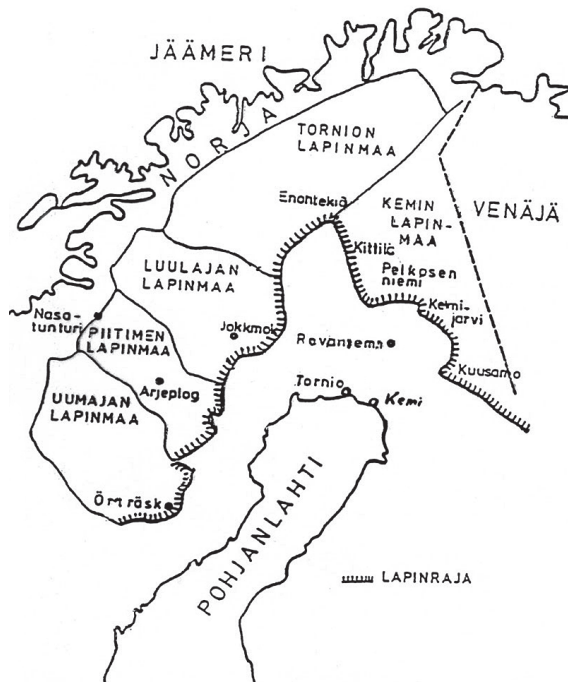
After the initial observation of these differences and a careful study of both the images of the drums and the layout of the painted figures on the surfaces of the drums, it became evident that the images were reversed when compared with each other. Initially, what had happened, as to how or when this had happened and to what extent these differences varied in the literature that had been published almost 340 years previously was not understood and therefore, this needed to be investigated further. What was to unfold is the purpose for writing this article.

## INTRODUCTION

This article investigates the plight of the two known Sami Noaidi drums that have originated in Kemi Lappmark<sup>2</sup> (Manker 1938: 685) in present northern Finland. The larger of the two is currently the property of the National Museum in Sweden, and the second, a slightly smaller drum is owned by the Städtisches Museum für Völkerkunde, Leipzig, Germany<sup>3</sup> (Manker 1938: 686) and can be seen on display there.

The preliminary aim of this article is in this first instance, to give the reader a brief introduction to the subject under discussion of both the origins and the history of the drums in question. This is followed by an examination of the sources and material of which there are chiefly four different publications, including documentation of the drums case histories, originating in Sweden during the latter half of the seventeenth century. These sources by and large pertain to the events which took place as the Swedish crown asserted its colonial powers through Christianity over the indigenous peoples of the northern areas of Lapland, thus bringing about religious change. At the time, there were a number of priests who figured prominently as informants for the church, and who were predominantly responsible for the religious change amongst the Sami; their tasks were centred on the collection of data about the drums and the activities associated with their usage. This information and motivations by the priests have played a key role in the publication of a series of books about Lapland life and customs titled in English *The History of Lapland*, which are the texts under investigation here.

The second aim is to assess the literature that has been written about the drums both historically and more recently and to clarify the problems encountered in this task. The motivation for the enquiry focuses primarily on the positioning of painted zones and sun centred systems (and non noaidi drum diviners used)<sup>4</sup>, in relation to the different publications, which the noaidi used traditionally to divide the content on the drums into three different levels, as a way of structuring their animistic world view. The relevance and indeed importance of the zones for understanding and interpreting the different elements in Sami culture and religion, has by and large been one of the most debated subjects amongst scholars since Ernst Manker produced his esteemed works. His *Die lappische Zaubertrommel. Eine ethnologische Monographie 1*, from 1938, which is an in-depth study of all the Sami drums currently preserved in various museums around Europe. Following this, a second edition from 1950 is titled *Die Lappische Zaubertrommel. Eine ethnologische Monographie 2*. It is published with different content which pertains to analysis and interpretation of the symbolism that can be seen pictured on the surface of the drums.



**Figure 1.** An old map of Scandinavia showing the division of the northern parts of the Swedish Empire into the five Lappmarks. The map also shows the Lapland border: Lapinraja. Received with grateful assistance from Risto Pulkkinen.

Both of Manker's editions include analysis and discussion of the two drums from Kemi Lappmark and their individual history in addition to different typologies, and origins and description of 75 other drums, making a total of 77 drums (Itkonen 1943–1944: 68). Manker's second publication discusses, in addition, the positioning of painted human, animal and divine figures, trying to illustrate how the Sami world-view was presented and how it varied considerably, firstly by region and area; and secondly, according to the noaidi's experience and interaction with the spirits in these zones and the way in which this was then documented on the drum which served as a kind of Cosmological Map prior to and during hunting.

These early sources have been used extensively in the study of comparative religion, folklore and ethnography since their publication; it is only recently, that after analysing them, a number of historical problems became apparent concerning the positioning of the figures on the drums. These were in the early "foreign" publications, and therefore, the discussion which is to follow seeks to clarify and understand what the implications are for scholars of comparative religion and folklore who aim to study Sami religion and how this, in turn, impacts on cultural history and religion.

## **THE DRUMS AND THEIR HISTORY**

The remaining 71 (Itkonen 1943–1944: 68) Sami noaidi drums have been preserved throughout Europe in various museums in Italy, Sweden, France, Germany, Denmark, Norway, and Great Britain (see also Manker 1938). They were collected from the northern areas of present Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, initially by "missionaries and explorers in the 17th and 18th centuries and sold and shipped to private [collectors] all over continental Europe" (Pentikäinen 1998: 27). It would seem that as interest in the drums as religious artefacts, as well as the priests' accounts of their usage in rituals dedicated, to the arts of divination and prophecy became more widespread, the drums gradually "found their way to the museums" (Pentikäinen 1998: 27).

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Sweden as a kingdom was in the process of seeking to expand its territories throughout the northern parts of Scandinavia and up into the far reaches of the northern areas of Norway and Finland. The drive into Lapland by the Swedish Empire brought news to the towns and cities further South of "evil rumours about the inhabitants in the far north, [which] cast shadows of a barbarous paganism on protestant Sweden (and it might be added) whose, astonishing victories on the German battle-



**Figure 2.** This is Rhen's illustration that he sent to Schefferus, depicting a Sami noaidi moving through different stages of consciousness into a trance state where he depicted initially on the left side of the picture "preparing himself for the trance by beating the drum with his hammer, on the right he is lying in a trance whilst his soul, aided by the alter ego" (Pentikäinen 1998: 39), or guardian spirit, as the noaidi begins his journey into the world of spirits. This illustration is taken from Ernst Mankers: *Die lappische Zaubertrommel. Eine ethnologische Monographie* (1938).

fields were said to be due to the witchcraft of Lappish sorcerers in the armies of Gustavus Adolphus." (Ahlström 1971: XI)

Also, and at the same time, "the Swedish state had performed a blessed and noble deed by introducing the gospel and enlightenment in otherwise godforsaken tracts [into its culture]. But the distances were vast, the churches few. Pagan evil still had plenty of room at its disposal. In other words, the devil was at large in Lapland." (Ahlström 1971: XI)

Therefore, and with much conviction, the confrontation of the nature religion of the Sami in the far north by Christianity assured that clergymen and missionaries alike frowned upon the Sami arts of using the magical drum for prophecy, fortunetelling, and divination. These were activities related primarily to sacrificial ceremonies concerning the successful breeding and hunting of animals, and successful outcomes in business and life affairs via the use of magic, these were interpreted by the church fathers as solely "devilish practices" (Schefferus 1674: 54).

In 1670, the High Chancellor of Sweden, Magnus de la Gardie appointed German linguist Johannes Schefferus to investigate claims of sorcery and witchcraft amongst the Sami in the northern areas of Sweden, Norway and Finland.



The undertaking was seen at the time, merely as an attempt to clarify the rumours of such practices that had earlier been provided by priests and missionary workers who sought to convert the Sami to Christianity. The outcome of Schefferus's investigation concluded that there was no basis for this so called witch hysteria in the north.

As Schefferus had never been to Lapland himself, information was sent to him at Uppsala from "the priests of the northern districts [who] wrote down accounts of the Lapps in their parishes. These reports were then forwarded to Schefferus for editorial rewrites." (Lundström 2002: 1)

The names of the priests whose manuscripts were sent to Schefferus, and which contained information about the Sami communities in the northern areas, were namely Samuel Rheen, Olaus Graan, Nicolaus Lundius and Johannes Torneus; and from Kemi Lapland Gabriel Tunderus. It is helpful at this point to make it clear to the reader that among these informants there were chiefly three priests whose contributions were considered important by Schefferus. The first is by the Swedish clergymen Samuel Rheen.

"Rheen's description concerns mainly the Lule Sami. He provides information about their customs and their pre-Christian cosmology. The report included pictures of a shaman's drum and a shaman falling into trance. Rheen's report (*En kortt relation om lapparnes lefwarne och sedher, wijd-Skieppellser, sampt i många stycken grofwe wildfarelser* (A short account of the Lapps' life and customs) was the first of the sources for (Schefferus's work) to be submitted about 1670." (Pulkkinen *et al.* 2005: 337)

Reports that were sent to Schefferus by other priests from the northern districts are considered problematic as far as authentic source material goes. This is because during Rheen's assessment of Sami culture and customs, the material he formulated and sent to the "Swedish College of Antiquities (which had by all accounts) requested clergymen working in Lapland to supply information (to) Schefferus, (had been) circulated among the other clergymen in Lapland, with the result that many who subsequently contributed source material (to Schefferus) based their accounts to a considerable extent on Rheen's report." (Pulkkinen *et al.* 2005: 337)

In addition to Samuel Rheen's reports, another priest whose past work was criticised after examination by Schefferus was Magnus Gothus Olaus (1490–1557). Olaus Magnus was the author of one of the earliest accounts of the pre-Christian religion of the Sami, included in his major work *History of the Northern Peoples* (Pulkkinen *et al.* 2005: 251).

“Magnus Gothus Olaus was Swedish priest, Archbishop of Sweden (and ethnographer (whose work according to what has been written) contains a fair amount of fanciful material. His description of a shaman falling into a trance was almost certainly not based on something he had personally witnessed. It follows the pattern of Saami legends. He (also) talks about Finnish seers and witches. In his (collaboration with the Swedish priests) Johannes Schefferus puts right many of the misrepresentations of Olaus Magnus, and in fact his work was to a great extent written in order to correct many of the rumours regarding the sorcery of the (Sami) arising out of the descriptions of Olaus Magnus.” (Pulkinen *et al.* 2005: 252)

The third informant, who could be considered as one of the most important with reference to the Finnish drums originating from the Kemi Lappmark area is Gabriel Tunderus, “a Finnish clergyman working in Lapland who converted the Kemi Saami to Christianity. As a result of Tunderus’ missionary work, the Kemi Saami renounced practices connected with their ethnic cosmology, including the use of the shaman’s drum.” (Pulkinen *et al.* 2005: 418)

By all accounts, the information which was sent to Schefferus by Tunderus was written at the time as manuscripts. These manuscripts were later published in a serial publication about Swedish language and ethnology. The title of the article is *En Kort Underrättelse Om The Österbothniske Lappar: som under Kiemi Gebiet lyda*. This was published in Swedish in 1905 in *de svenska landsmälen och svenskt folkliv XVII: 6*, in Uppsala<sup>5</sup> (it was later published again in *Svenska landsmål ock svenskt folkliv*, 1910). Other manuscripts produced by Tunderus describe the Kemi Lapp bear hunting rituals which were intricately woven into the Lappish pre-Christian religion<sup>6</sup>.

## THE MATERIAL OF THE STUDY

Schefferus’s task of collecting and editing the material presented by the Swedish priests produced a detailed and thorough assessment of Sami culture and beliefs which was finally published in 1673 in Latin under the uniform title *Joannis Schefferi Argentoratensis Lapponia* (see Schefferus 1673); it included an inspiring and probably one of the most important chapters (number 11), with reference to the art of the noaidi and the history of six particular noaidi drums, titled *Of the magical ceremonies of the Laplanders* (Schefferus 1674: 50). At the beginning of chapter 11, the pages contain illustrations of the six

Sami drums, including the two Kemi Lappmark ones and the hand held instruments-hammers, used to play them with, which are the purpose of this study.

The rumours in Europe that the Sami noaidi were an essential part of the victorious Swedish army appear to have been instrumental as well as a very important motivation for the publication of *Lapponia*, first printed “in the basic Latin version in Frankfurt am Main titled *Joannis Schefferi Argentoratensis Lapponia* in 1673, and then introduced to English readers in 1674” (Ahlström 1971: XI-2), titled *The History of Lapland wherein are shewed the original manners, habits, marriages, conjurations, &c. of that People*. Written by John Scheffer, Professor of Law and Rhetoric at Upsal in Sweden, at the Theatre in Oxford, MDCLXXIV (1674), in a 147 page volume. The book was “to be sold by George West and Amos Curtein”. In addition, “a young English student by the name of Acton Cremer did the translation from Latin to English” (see Lundström 2002)<sup>7</sup>. This edition was later republished in 1971 in Stockholm with the same illustrations.

There are two further publications from the Latin edition that have been translated into English, the second from 1704 that contains illustrations of the six drums, and being of the same title *The History of Lapland*. This edition was printed for Tho. Newborough, at the Golden-Ball in St. Paul’s Church-Yard, by R. Parker under the Royal-Exchange.

The third, a smaller edition is titled *The History of Lapland*, printed for R. Griffith, in London, 1751. This edition has no drum illustrations in its content at all.

Other publications of *Lapponia* include a translation into German titled *Joannis Schefferi von Strassburg Lappland*. The German edition was printed at the publishing house Martin Hallerborden/Buchhandlern, in Frankfurt am Main und Leipzig, in 1675.

The French translation *Histoire de la Laponie*, was published in Paris at Chez la Veuve by Olivier de Varennes (chez la veuve Olivier de Varennes – by the widow Olivier de Varannes), au Palais, dans la sale royale, au vare d’or, in 1678. The edition was translated by Augustin Lubin (see Schefferus 1678).

The Dutch translation was published in Amsterdam in the year 1682, titled *Waarachtige en aen-merkens-waardige Historie van Lapland*, by Jan ten Hoorn, Boeckverkooper, Over’t Oude Heeren Logement. It is not clear who the translator was for this edition (see Schefferus 1682).<sup>8</sup>

The extensive research and study of material undertaken by Schefferus and notably that which is concerned with the Sami drums is far from conclusive and according to the foreword written by Gunnar Ahlström in the second printing of the English edition published in Sweden in 1971:

“Schefferus went to work making himself familiar with what was written before on the subject, he had access to more authentic field material. Local officials in the North, clergymen, bailiffs, and other reliable informants were requested to send him reports and observations. He never went up to the latitudes himself but he saw fur-clad little people at the winter markets in Uppsala.” (Ahlström 1971: XI)

It is important to take into account this because it helps to establish how Schefferus was influenced by what could be described as a lack of knowledge about Sami culture and customs as well as field-work experience. Having said this, Schefferus can be merited on the pictures of ritual objects and artefacts, received from his various sources, that have been used for publication in the Latin and German editions. At the same time, the illustrations seen on pages 51 and 52 in the first English edition from 1674, which described the only two known Kemi Lappmark Sami noaidi drums, and the other two English editions published in 1704 and the republished edition from 1971, as well as the French and Dutch editions, need to be discussed in greater detail with reference to publication to clarify errors that were made in these earlier editions.

Both Swedish (Schefferus 1956) and Finnish (Schefferus 1963) publications have illustrations of the drums in them which are taken from the original Latin edition and are correct illustrations of all the drums.

## **THE DRUMS ILLUSTRATIONS AND THE PROBLEM OF INTERPRETATION**

The questions raised in this study are primarily concerned with the importance of the structure of the zones on the drums and designation and positioning of each of the figures and smaller structures within these areas such as animals, deities, human figures and sacrificial areas, that have been recognised as giving valuable insights for helping us to understand to some degree the nature of the content and territory depicted on the surface of each drum by the noaidi, as having both depth and value for study purposes.

The first two illustrations have been taken from the original Latin publication of 1673 (microfilm), of the two Finnish drums E & F from Kemi Lappmark which are exhibited below. In addition, and to try and avoid confusion, Ernst Manker in his assessment has used numbers to category the drums. There are numbers 43 (drum E) and 44 (drum F). Several other illustrations which are similar are not of very good quality in their appearance, this is because of the quality of the printing and publication at the time.<sup>9</sup>

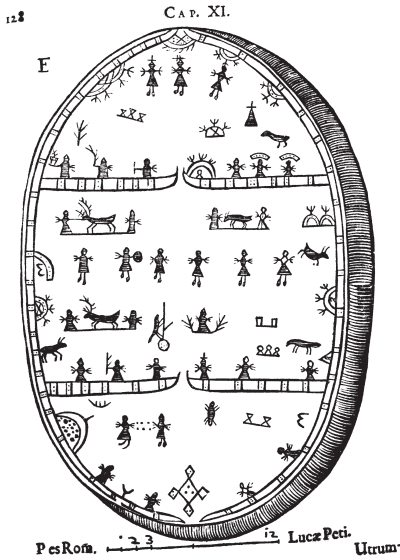


Figure 3.



Figure 4.

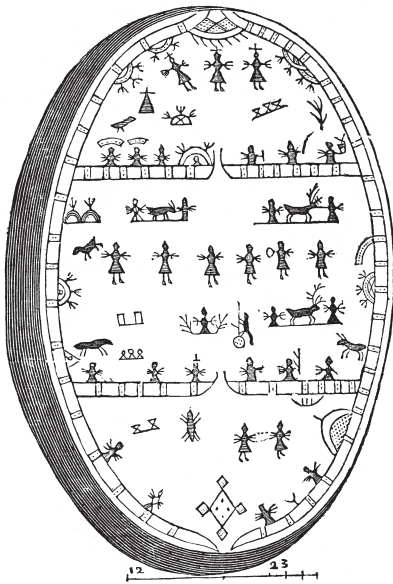


Figure 5.

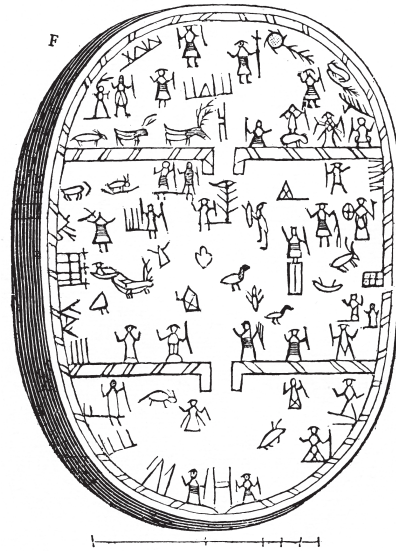


Figure 6.

**Figure 3. Drum E from Kemi Lappmark.** The illustration of drum E shows the profile of the side and bottom of the drum as being to the right hand side in the picture. The overall portrait of the drum shows its contents divided into three levels or layers. In this picture, in the top zone on the left, there are three figures that are visible and are numbered by T. I. Itkonen as numbers 1-2-3. The figure in the middle

appears to be holding a forked object which is pointing upwards in its left hand. In the middle zone on the left hand side, can be seen two antlered reindeer figures facing west, to the left, and in the bottom zone on the left, there are two figures, numbered 5-6 by Itkonen, who have dots between them. The size of drum E is recorded to be "85 x 53 x 11.5 cm" (Itkonen 1943–1944: 69).

**Figure 4. Drum F from Kemi Lappmark.** The illustration of drum E, also shows the side/edge profile of the drum as being on the right hand side, the lines are running horizontally and not vertically. Like drum E, drum F is also divided into three zones or levels. In the top zone to the right hand side, there are three animals, two which have antlers, who are facing towards the left, west. In the middle zone on the left side, there are several figures standing close to each other. The figure of the far left is holding a circular object which has a cross in the middle of it indicating what could be a drum in one hand and a hammer used to play the drum in the other hand. In the lower zone at the far left side there are two figures that look as if they are wearing hats which are hanging from their heads. Finnish scholar Itkonen has recorded the size of drum F as being "66 x 42.5 x 10 cm" (Itkonen 1943–1944: 71).

**Figure 5. Drum E from Kemi Lappmark.** The side/edge profile of the drum is pictured on the left hand side in this illustration taken from the republication of the original English copy first published in 1674, and shows what looks like the grain of the wood. The same figures seen on the drums from the original Latin edition can be found facing in the opposite direction. For example, the figure in the top zone that is holding what looks like a forked branch is now on the right side. The reindeer figures in the middle zone that were on the left facing west are now on the right facing east. The two figures in the bottom zone, that have what look like dots between them are now on the right side.

**Figure 6. Drum F from Kemi Lappmark.** The side/edge profile of the drum is on the left side and is opposite to the profile on the Latin drum, and also indicates a kind of grain in the wood. The three animal figures, two which can be identified as reindeers, standing on the top zone are found on the left side facing right, and east, as opposed to the same ones on the Latin publication, that are on the right side facing west. The lines that can be seen on the drums from the 1674 English translation run vertically and not horizontally as is the case in the original Latin publication.

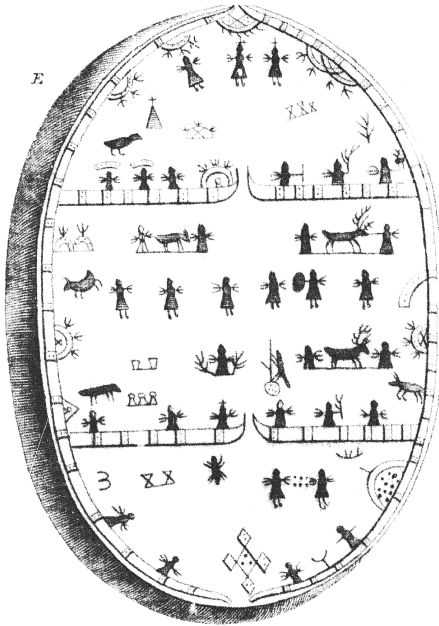
**Figure 7. Drum E from Kemi Lappmark.** Taken from the French publication of 1678 (microfilm). The lines which are much finer in detail are running vertically in the same fashion as the illustrations in the Latin publication. The figures are also reversed by comparison with the original Latin edition and again this is seen through the two reindeer figures positioned in the middle zone on the right facing towards the east.

**Figure 8. Drum F from Kemi Lappmark.** Taken from the French publication 1678 (microfilm). The lines here also run vertically and the side/edge profile of the drum is to the left; the figures are also reversed when compared with the illustrations in the Latin publication

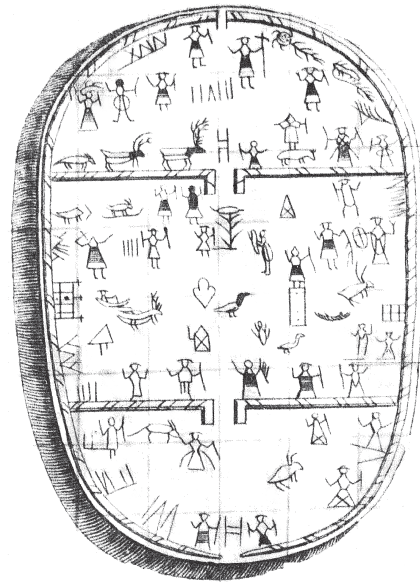
**Figure 9. Drum E from Kemi Lappmark.** This is the illustration from *The History of Lapland* second English publication, dated 1704. The right side is slightly distorted in the microfilm image, because it has been printed against the fold in the book. The figures on both the right and left sides of the drum are reversed in comparison to the original Latin publication.

**Figure 10. Drum F from Kemi Lappmark.** This is the illustration from *The History of Lapland* second English publication, dated 1704. The illustrations of figures on the right and left sides are reversed when compared with the illustrations seen in the original Latin publication.

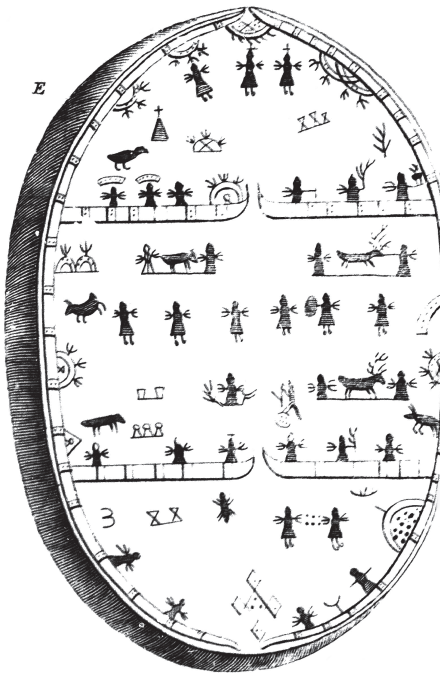




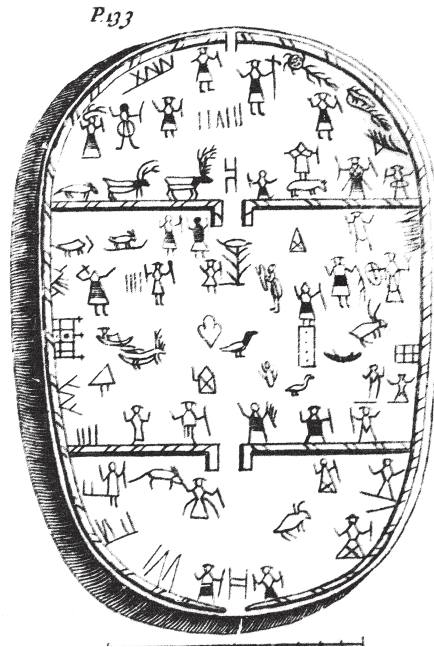
*Figure 7.*



*Figure 8.*



*Figure 9.*



*Figure 10.*

In Manker's inventory of the drums, *Die lappische Zaubertrommel. Eine ethnologische Monographie 1938*, drum F is documented to have been received by Schefferus from "Henrici Flemming who was an officer in the Finnish cavalry" (Manker 1938: 32)<sup>10</sup>. Drum E on the other hand, was received by Schefferus from Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie, "the Chancellor of the Kingdom" of Sweden (Schefferus 1674: 49).

The two drums pictured next are the same drums from Kemi Lappmark but the illustrations used here are taken from the first English publication from 1674, (which was reprinted in 1971). The illustrations in the English edition were taken from the original Latin one<sup>11</sup>.

There appear to be two main reasons why these illustrations vary as they do, and may to a greater extent at this present time be unrecognised simply because the variations happened three hundred and forty years ago. Therefore, the task ahead is to examine and then present to the reader how extensive the mistakes/variation run?

Swedish scholar Lillemor Lundström points out that in the first English edition which was re-published in Sweden in 1971, "the illustrations in the book consist of 25 woodcuts made in compliance with the author's own drawings" (Lundström 2002: 1). The woodcuts, as I understand it, are where the figures are carved to make them stand out for printing purposes, and the pictures are printed with the text.

Lundström does make a distinction between the Latin and English publications by clarifying that

"the English edition is the first translation of *Lapponia*, originally published in Latin and printed in Frankfurt am Main 1673. The text of the translation is partially curtailed but does contain all the illustrations belonging to the original (though in a slightly different style and often reversed), and the author was never able to read his text in proof, as the original edition was published in Germany, and therefore has a number of misprints." (Lundström 2009)<sup>12</sup>

One may consider during the times the literature was published, the printers and publishers themselves were not as interested in the subject as the academics were, and therefore, mistakes were bound to happen.

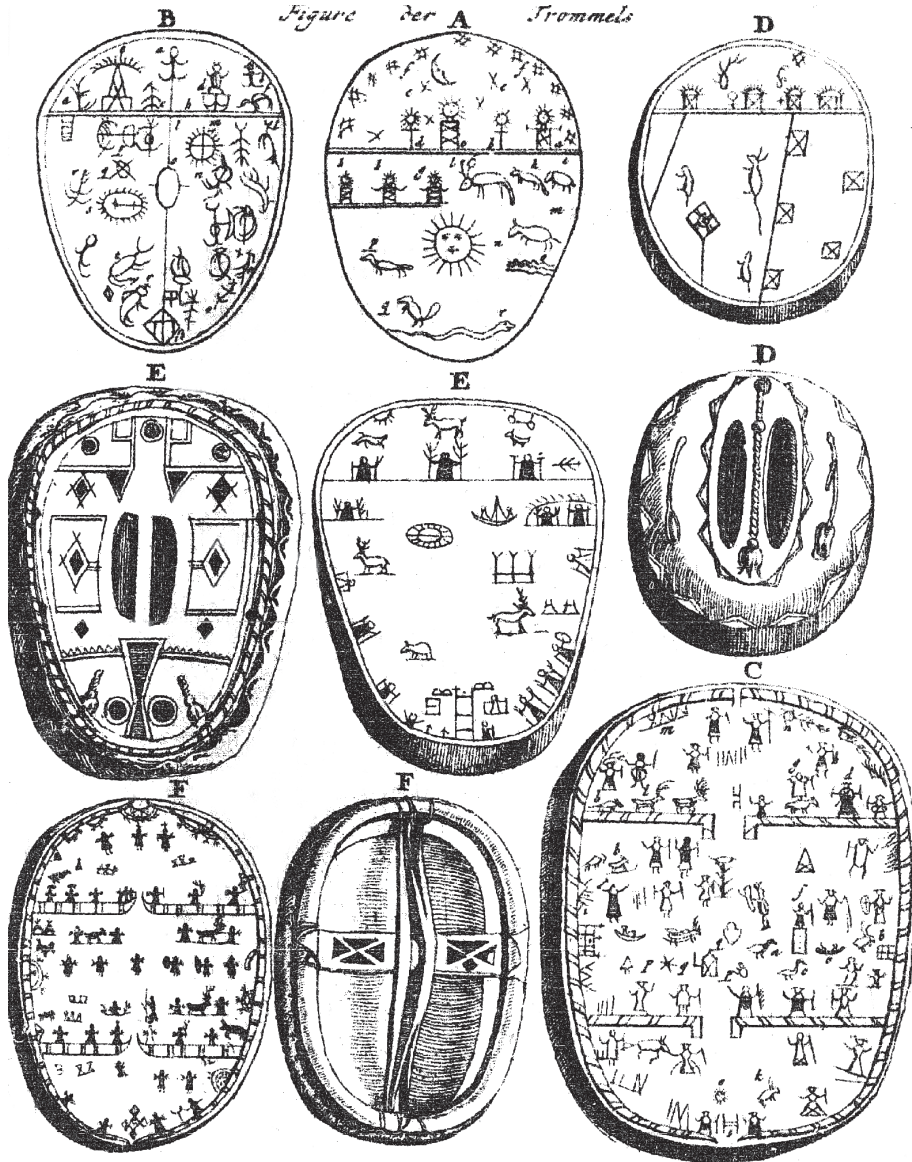
Further enquiry into other publications of *Lapponia* revealed that illustrations of the two Kemi Lappmark Sami drums pictured in the French edition published in 1678, have been printed on pages where there is no text at all, and the mistakes that are obvious in their illustrations appear to be due to the fact that both the drums and the figures which are pictured in this edition are portrayed the same way as is seen in the English edition, everything is re-

versed because of the way the illustrations in the book have been printed. However, and in addition to this, the side/edge profile of both drums in the French edition are not illustrated in the same way as the English drums where the lines are running horizontally; the lines in the French edition run vertically, the same way as the lines seen in the Latin publication, but the side profiles of the drums are positioned on the left side, as seen on the English publication. Therefore, it may be assumed here the illustrations used in the French publication were taken from the English one, but it is not clear how the side/edge profiles were made as they were.

I consulted Sirkka Havu from the National Library of Finland, who specialises in rare books, and was to discover that apart from using woodcuts, some publishers also used copper plates for printing purposes, onto which images were engraved without text. This could be the case with the illustrations from the French edition and it may indicate the answer to the question concerning the same illustrations being used/copied from the English publication for the French one, thus in preparation for publishing by Oliver de Varennes in Paris, the edges of the drums were engraved. However, what happened in between is a mystery.

Investigation into the publication of the French edition of *Lapponia* in Paris in 1678 revealed some interesting points concerning whether or not the same illustrations were taken from the English 1674 edition. The first point is according to the preface in the book, Olivier de Varannes, the publisher, was given a manuscript of *Lapponia*, but there is no mention who or where it came from. Furthermore, the King of France at the time Louis XIV made strict copyright laws declaring that there were to be no other publications made from the original for a period of ten years, and if any person was found to have produced a copy of the book unlawfully, the penalty was a 3,000 livre-pounds fine and confiscation of all material related to the book<sup>18</sup>, which suggests the book was of great importance to the French at the time because Sweden had close political and military ties with France.

It is also worth noting that the second English translation, dated 1704, has copies of the drums which have been engraved on copper plates before printing. In the preface of the book the publisher states the following: “this translation we now present to the world, is done from the last edition in the original Latin, and collated with a French translation printed in Paris, which contains several addenda that the translator had from the author, all of which are here taken in. The copper cuts we here make use of were done in France by Monsieur Bols.” (Schefferus 1704: Introduction) Therefore, the prints of the drums in this edition are the same as those in the French edition, which states the obvious, the illustrations in the 1704 edition are also reversed.



**Figure 11.** Taken from the Dutch publication of 1682, which is on microfilm. These illustrations show both front and rear designs of the drums labelled: E and D. By contrast to what is presented above, the drum which is labelled E, is shown in all other publications as drum C. Also, there appears to be some confusion concerning the Kemi Lappmark Sami drum on the far right at the bottom concerning a mix up of the letters used to identify the Kemi Lappmark drums. The rear of the drum in the centre on the bottom line is marked under the letter F which is correct. However, its size is the same as drum E which is to the left, but in Manker's inventory of the same drums, the design of the drum corresponds with the rear of drum F which is labelled as drum C. In this case in the Dutch publication drum F which is marked C is much larger?



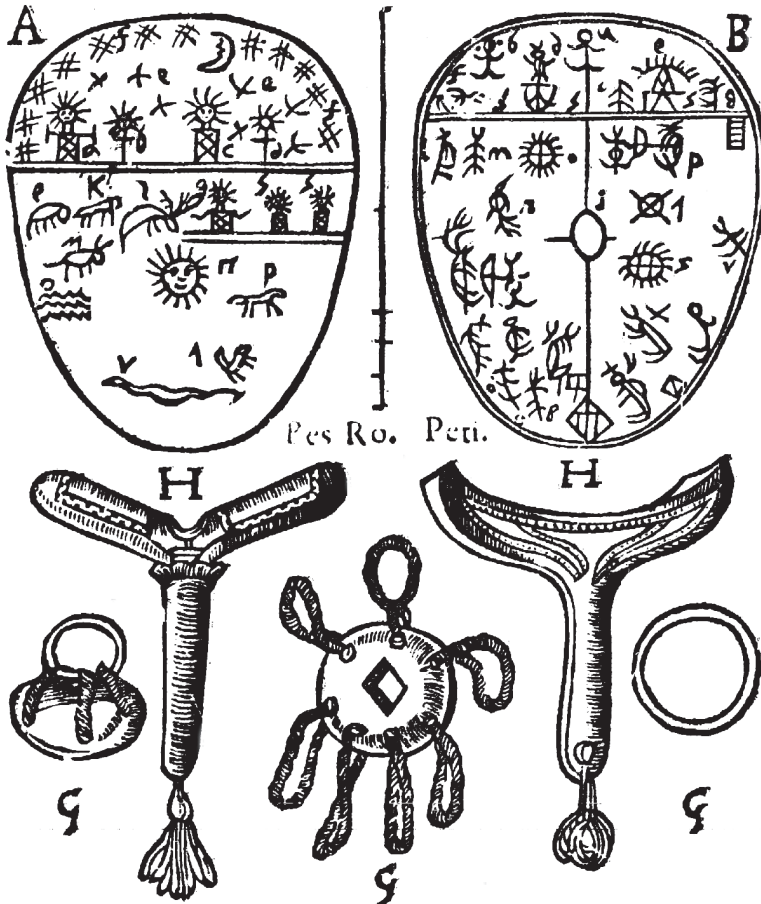
The Dutch edition of Schefferus's *Lapponia* published in 1682 has within its pages illustrations of 6 Sami noaidi drums on an engraved plate. The three drums at the bottom of the plate can be identified as the Sami drums from the Kemi Lappmark area, the ones on the far left and right are facing outward, the middle one is pictured from the rear. The drums are recognisable as the Kemi Lappmark ones because the illustrations are reversed as seen in the English publication, therefore, indicating that all the illustrations may have been taken from the English or French publications. The lines on the edges of the drums also run vertically and are positioned on the left side.

The mistakes that have become evident concerning the two drums from the present Finnish Lapland area are also apparent with four other drums also illustrated in the same chapter in Schefferus's *History of Lapland*. These four other drums are labelled A, B, C and D; and are all pictured in Schefferus's first Latin publication *Joannis Schefferi Argentoratensis Lapponia*, in their true portraits. In the first English publication of 1674, the 1704 second edition as well as the republished edition, and the French and Dutch editions, the drums and their contents are presented in reversed order as well.

I have provided illustrations of the four other drums from Schefferus's publication, thus highlighting the mistakes. The drums A & B from original Latin edition of 1673 are presented first so the reader can, on careful examination, see the true positioning of the drums and the illustrations of the figures. The landscape in drum A shows several important features to it which need to be recognised for study purposes. In the top zone or area of the drum there are four figures, and a picture of the crescent moon which is slightly to the left side. Below, is a kind of platform on which three figures are standing, this is situated on the right hand side of the drum. Underneath this is a sun figure in the centre of the drum.

A further point in need of clarification concerns drum A pictured in Schefferus's Latin edition, where it is pictured with three other drums, whereas in Ernst Manker's publication (*Die lappische Zaubertrommel eine ethnologische Monographie*), the drum is also being played by a Sami noaidi, who is accompanied by the devil like figure. The picture is the one sent to Schefferus by the clergyman Samuel Rheen, and the one used in the illustration on page 4 above. The location of the origins of the drum A, is Lule Lappmark according to Manker (1938: 393) which is in Swedish Lapland. There is mention of the drum in Manker's book in the chapter *Nicht erhaltene Trommeln*, not existing drums.

The landscape in drum B shows an area at the top of the drum where to the left there is an elevated figure with raised arms and what look like horns on its head. Below on both the right and left sides of the larger area of the drum are



*Notarum Explicatio.*

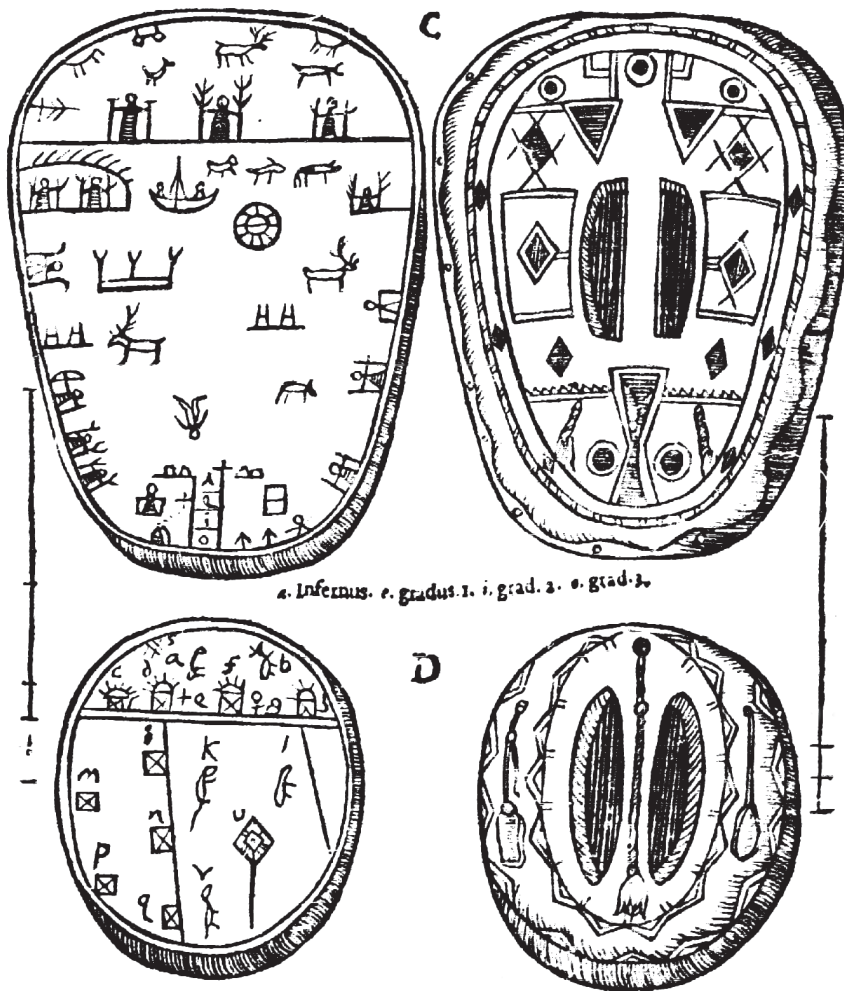
In Tympano *A. a.* Thor. *b.* famulus ejus. *c.* Stoorjunkare. *d.* famulus ejus. *e.* aves. *f.* stellæ. *g.* Christus. *h.* Apostoli ejus. *i.* ursus. *k.* Lupus. *l.* rangifer. *m.* bos. *n.* fol. *o.* lacus. *p.* vulpes. *q.* sciurus. *r.* serpens.

Q 3

ira

**Figure 12.** Above is an illustration of drums A & B (from microfilm), and the bone hammers the Sami noaidi and more general drum diviners used as instruments to strike them with, as well as the copper rings which acted as a guide during divination. Also, the names of the figures on the drums in Latin.

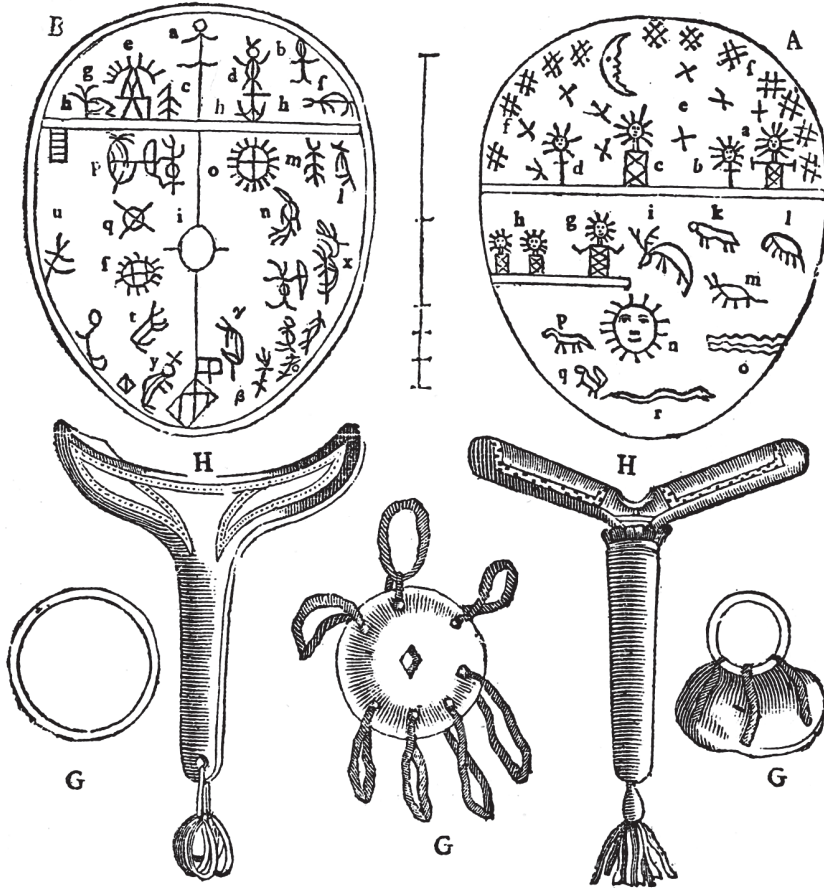




a. Infernus. e. gradus. 1. i. grad. 2. o. grad. 3.

a. notat aves. b. vulpes nigras. c. Tiur, deum. d. Thoor, deum.  
 e. malleum Thoronis. f. Stoorjunkare. g. idolum ligneum. h. fa-  
 mulum. i. stellam. k. bovem. l. hircum. m. stellam. n. lun. o. So-  
 lam, p. stellam. q. idem. r. lupum. s. Norias fiord. i. e.

Figure 13. Drums C & D from the Latin publication 1673 (microfilm).

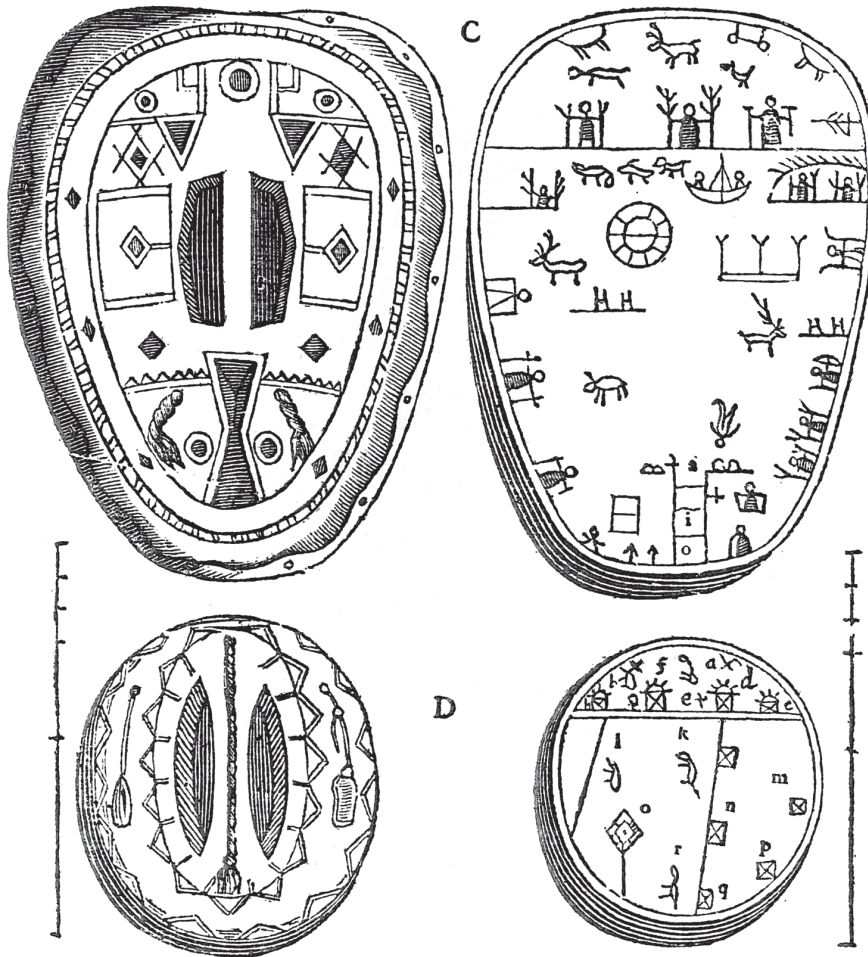


### The Explication of the Figures.

In the Drum A. a marks *Thor*. b *Thors Servant*. c *Storjnnkare*. d *his Servant*. e *Birds*. f *Stars*. g *Christ*. h *his Apostles*. i *a Bear*. k *a Wolf*. l *a Rain-deer*. m *an Ox*. n *the Sun*. o *a Lake*. p *a Fox*. q *a Squeril*. r *a Serpent*.

In the Drum B. a denotes *God the Father*. b *Jesus Christ*. c *the Holy Ghost*. d *S. John*. e *Death*. f *a Goat*. g *a Squeril*. h *Heaven*. i *the Sun*. l *a Wolf*. m *the fish Siik*. n *a Cock*. o *Friendship with the wild Rain-deer*. p *Anundus Eerici* ( whose Drum this was ) *killing a Wolf*. q *Gifts*. r *an Otter*. s *the friendship of other Lapps*. t *a Swan*. u *a sign to try the condition of others, and whether a disease be incurable*. v *a Hog*. y *a Fish*. z *one carrying a Soul to Hell*.

**Figure 14.** Drums A & B from the English publication 1674 (photocopies). On analysis of the drums and the positioning of the figures themselves, when contrasted with the Latin drums, most of the figures are reversed. Note that the text describing the figures on the drums is not clear because these are photocopies from the 1971 republication of *The History of Lapland*.



The explication of the Figures.

In the Drum E. a denotes Birds. b black Foxes. c Tinur, a God. d Thor, a God. e Thors hammer. f Storjunkare. g a wooden Idol. h his Servant. i a Star. k an Ox. l a Goat. m a Star. n the Moon. o the Sun. p a Star. q another Star. r a Wolf.

Figure 15. Drums C & D from the English publication 1674 (photocopies). The case is the same with these drums as well, the figures are reversed.

circular shapes with lines across the middle which look like creatures with many legs, or even a figure representing the Sun?

Drum B is also located in the book, in the chapter about not existing drums, *Nicht erhaltene Trommeln*.

In a similar fashion to drums A & B, drums C & D are also divided into zones with the names of the figures documented below in Latin. The significant characteristics on the face of drum C show in the top zone three Divine like figures, and above them animals facing right to the east. Below the top zone is a large area and in the left hand corner at the top, there are two figures, holding poles/sticks, who are in a kind of enclave. Just to the right of the centre, is a Sun motif. The divided areas on drum D show four different zones. The figures in the top part are not easy to identify clearly. However, what is important to recognise here are the motifs in the zones to the left and centre of the drum. The left side has square box-like structures which are marked by a cross from corner to corner, and the zone in the centre of the drum shows three animal figures facing right to east. Drum C, pictured in all Schefferus's publications is recorded by Manker as "probably being from Lule Lappmark" (1938: 788). The drum was on display in the National Historical Museum, Stockholm. Drum D, from the Schefferus publications is also pictured in Manker's inventory.

These magical drums appear to have been drawn by hand and then examined in detail, giving a descriptive account of animal figures such as reindeer as well as solar and lunar symbols which are apparent on the drum surfaces. The presence of deities is also evident on the drum. According to the analysis of the drum figures here, the figures of Thor's servant and what are referred to as Apostles are seen on the same drum, indicating the contrast between Paganism and Christianity amongst the Sami the time the drums were collected around 1670, and this is important to acknowledge as it shows both the cultural and religious change at the time.

Firstly, the argument presented here is used to clarify the extent of the different errors found in *Lapponia*, and to state the obvious, that Schefferus is not at fault with reference to the variations of these drum illustrations pictured reversed in the early publications. Secondly, the aim is to consider these implications caused by the presentation of this material which reached a global audience during the seventeenth century. It may be added that the use of this material still continues to some extent in the countries aforementioned, to the present date and these mistakes are not necessarily obvious. It is also worth mentioning that both the United Kingdom and France have drums in their museum collections which are on exhibit there. Therefore, these pictorial mistakes have both historical and cultural implications for scholars as far

as the use of these sources as primary source material goes when analysing the structure and content of the drums for religious purposes and understanding Sami culture.

A further point in need of clarification is that these original copies are all very highly priced and valued from what I have been able to determine because of their age, without any awareness of these errors.

As scientists in the field of religious, ethnographical and cultural research, the challenge of interpreting the drums and the literature associated with them in relation to the study of comparative religion has been clearly outlined by scholars such as T. I. Itkonen (1943–1944), Ernst Manker (1938, 1950), Håkan Rydving (1993), Tore Ahlbäck & Jan Bergman (1991), and Rolf Kjellström (1991), all of whom through both field work and in depth textual analysis of the early material published in relation to the religion of the Sami and their culture, stress not only to the complexity which surrounds the specific usage of the drums for a wide variety of ceremonial and cultural activities, but more problematically the context through which interpretation of painted illustrations ranging from humans, animals, gods, goddesses, human and animal like figures in different zones actually takes place outside of Sami culture by scholars.

The challenge of understanding the drum illustrations with reference to certain symbols carefully selected and painted in the areas within the zones and representing for example places such as mountains, and holy offering places, known in the physical environment, presents further difficulty because some of the drums were painted both for individual usage as well as collective. Furthermore, they were illustrated in a religious sense as well in relation to culture and cosmology, but at the time they were collected by the priests, the drums were in some cases subject to interpretation by the priests themselves rather than those who had made them.

The current understanding of the division between different areas on the surface of a drum is that they represent physical and psychic realities or spiritual worlds, namely the top level where certain deities reside as the “celestial sphere of the drum” (Pentikäinen 1998: 26), the middle zone as representing the physical world, and the lower part of the drum in most cases is a representation of the area where the dead reside.

Previous material produced by Manker, Kjellström and Itkonen has, for example, discussed the complexities surrounding the interpretation of the variation of the painted figures on the drums constructed before conversion to Christianity took precedence, during the time when the Sami were in the process of being converted to Christianity, and after conversion to Christianity in certain areas had taken place. By the fact that many of the symbols on drums constructed at different times are mixed with both Christian and Sami

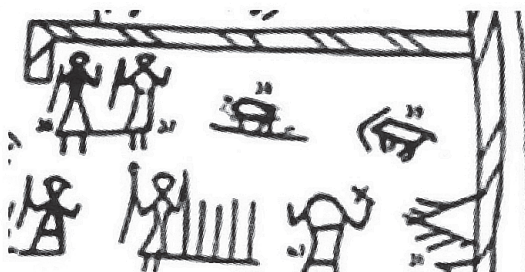


symbols and representations, the task of interpretation is difficult in relation to understanding these “psychic landscapes” which were in a gradual process of change.

In addition to this, the early Sami cosmology or world-view shows animatistic, animistic and totemic features. “Nature was regarded as animated; meaning each important feature, mountain, hill lake, waterfall, grazing area etc., had its own local deity. The powers of nature, sun, thunder, wind, frost etc., were personified in god-figures, sickness and death in evil spirits of demons.” (Whitaker 1957: 296) This point in itself creates misunderstanding because in a modern sense the scientific world-view deals with concrete everyday physical reality. Also, it would be true to say that many of these personifications of spirits and deities would have varied considerably in each area.

Totemism on the other hand, in the Sami pre-Christian society was a “concept according to which social groups such as extended families or clans have close relationships with particular animals” (Pulkkinen *et al.* 2005: 417). Totemism is here understood in a modern way as broad concept and not presupposing particularly a fore father relationship. There are many examples of the ties between the Sami and animals, such as the bear and reindeer which are featured on many of the divination drums. The positioning of these figures is known to have been of crucial importance for the Sami using the drums to bring balance and alignment in the relationship between human beings and the natural environment, for example, in relation to hunting which is one of the central features in shamanism.

Seen depicted in its true context on drum F from Kemi Lappmark, on the right hand side in the top corner of the middle zone, is the illustration of a bear in its den sleeping, therefore, we can assume this is during the winter months.



**Figure 16.** This illustration is taken from the 2005 publication: *The Saami: A Cultural Encyclopedia*, page 33. It shows one of the rare images of a bear in its winter hibernation on the Kemi Lappmark drum F, currently on display in Leipzig. In the earlier copies this location is reversed. Here the bear is numbered as image 39 in the right upper row.



Needless to say, the location of the bear in its den seen in the publications which show the figures reversed, positions the location on the left side. The problem caused by this error needs to be made clear because it is understood the “bear had a special cultic position in Saami culture” (Pulkkinen *et al.* 2005: 33). In addition, associated with the bear were a number of very specific taboos and certain ritualistic practices adhered to stating the relationship between the bear and human beings, a very old custom well documented in Sami folkloristics with reference to astral mythology and cosmic order, as well as bear hunting ceremonies, and the events which took place both before and after, which included songs about the animal sung in association with the drum images before hunting begun. All of these activities contributed to the maintenance of their livelihoods as hunter people.

### **THE CONSEQUENCES OF THESE PUBLICATION ERRORS**

The difficulties presented to scholars of the history of religion with regard to analysing and interpreting the information on the surfaces of the drums has been well documented by both Nordic scholars Rolf Kjellström and Bo Sommarström in their analysis of how the information was collected by clergymen, missionary workers and explorers alike. For the most, explanations of the ways in which a drum scene was interpreted in accordance with the positioning of each figure by the noaidi, are not known because the drums were collected at a time when “the drums represented their threatened culture, the resistance against the Christian claim to exclusiveness, and a striving to preserve traditional values” (Rydving 1991), and therefore illustrations without commentary from the artists themselves present a great risk for error of judgement and interpretation by those outside the culture.

It is almost certain the structure and content of many of the drums were both influenced and characterised with reference to hunting by both solar and lunar activity as well as the orientation of the different elements of earth, air, fire and water, and understood within the four cardinal points of north, east, south and west. These factors are in addition to the structure of the Noaidi’s cosmos as seen portrayed within the three cosmic levels or zones through which the surface of the drum was divided into.

An early reference clearly stating the importance of this found on page 49 in the first English edition of *Lapponia*. Schefferus states that:

“I have observed that several of their drums have not the same pictures upon them. They are described differently in which the figures are distinguished so as to refer to several places, of which there are chiefly

three. In the first stands *Norland*, and other countries of Sweden which are placed on the South side of the drum, and are represented by a line from the rest, in this also is contained the next great city, where they traffic most, as in drums made at *Torne*, or *Kiemi*. On the North part, Norway is described with all that is contained in it. In the middle of these two stands *Lapland*, this takes up the greatest part of the drum, here they picture herds of reindeer, bears, foxes, wolves and all manner of wild beasts, to signify when, and in what place they may find them.” (Schefferus 1674: 49)

The quote by Schefferus is crucial because for example, it shows how important it was for the Sami to know the specific positioning of the figures on the drums with reference to using the instrument for divination to secure a successful outcome prior to hunting when they were travelling, for example, on harsh migration routes during the months between summer and winter. It is also worth noting that in the 1980s the interest amongst scholars, with regard to the Sami noaidi drums belonging to the Scandinavian countries, was as such that, a symposium was held in Turku, Finland on August 19–20, 1988, titled *The Saami Shaman Drum*. The organising committee – Rolf Kjellström, Håkan Rydving and Tore Ahlbäck – pointed out that:

“there were a number of different ways that the Saami drum might be approached, e.g. an analysis of drum illustrations or individual drums, categorisation by region and/or type of Saami drums, the role of the drum in Saami society and religion, the significance of drum music from the shaman’s ritual ecstasy, drum illustrations as a source of information on the Saami world-view.” (Ahlbäck & Bergman 1991: 7)

The material presented at the symposium was published in the book titled *The Saami Shaman Drum*.

I want to outline in particular here the conclusions of one of the contributors, namely Rolf Kjellström, who focuses on the importance of the positioning of figures on the drum F from the Kemi Lappmark area. Kjellström refers to a group of three animals in his presentation, two of which can be identified as reindeer because of their antlers and are illustrated in the top zone on drum F. He makes it clear that when analysing reindeer which are the most commonly occurring figures on the drums “often the reindeer figures stand alone on one of the three upper rays of the sun figure, or on the left-hand edge of the drum but rarely on the right-hand side, or floating freely in the middle of the picture surface” (Kjellström 1991: 117). At the end of the chapter Kjellström lists a small chapter regarding the “different ways of classifying drums with refer-

ence to images and positioning of drum illustrations (which includes) the connection between figures and positions in relation to signs on the drum” (Kjellström 1991: 133).

What this evidence does show that the publication errors of the drum illustrations that have been formulated and then presented in the first and second editions of the English editions, as well as the French and Dutch ones by the publishers, and although unintentional, these mistakes complicate the opportunity for further understanding or insight into the content of each of the scenes on the drum. Instead, this takes us away from understanding these expressions of Sami nature religion and culture at a time of religious change, and therefore, for a number of reasons this makes the material misleading not only to scholars, contributors to the history of religion, but to the Sami themselves.

Due to the extent of these errors, there is a need for the mistakes in the material to be brought to the attention of the institutions, museums and establishments where copies of *Lapponia* are held, because for example, and more importantly, should scholars from the aforementioned countries of France, Great Britain and Holland, or any other country for that matter, use these drum illustrations which are reversed from the original copies for producing material<sup>14</sup>, but perceived as true illustrations without any knowledge of the errors, then these mistakes will keep on repeating themselves.

## CONCLUSION

How do these mistakes affect the ritual practices and also the world-view of Sami culture and religion? The task of the scholar of comparative religion is to study and analyse the differences and similarities between religious rituals, concepts, and different approaches taken to ascertain the reliability of source material of religious phenomena. In this case, the analysis has been between different editions of the same source material published at different times in different languages, in different countries.

The importance of the positioning of zones and figures on the drums has been essential for the Sami community for understanding how the landscape, of both the physical and mythological worlds, was ritualised and then portrayed in association with how the function of the cosmos was interpreted and understood within their culture which formed a sense of unity amongst the people. This understanding was then expressed in a holistic way within Sami religion as an expression of maintaining a state of cosmic order between the different levels of existence, especially the realm of nature.

It was understood that what took place on the earth was reflected in the skies and in the world of the ancestors, thus highlighting the relationship between the supernatural world, where certain deities or totemic ancestral spirits resided, and the physical world and how, for example, the animals in the physical reality were related to those in the spiritual realities.

Both the content and layout and positioning of figures that have been painted onto the surfaces of the drums, such as animals, humans and deities who have played a central role in the Sami world-view, hunting and community, have historical value within Sami culture because the drums have been pictographs used for recording different chapters throughout history in Lapland. A good example of this from both a religious and historical point of view would be the historical differences portrayed on the drums depicting “the religion during the hunting stage and the religion of the nomadic stage” (Hultkrantz 1983: 11) showing when and where reindeer had become domesticated. Another example would be the appearance of Christian symbolism such as crosses and the positioning of churches in certain villages or towns, which were previously unknown on the earlier drums.

More recently, a further hypothesis has been put forward, suggesting that the content, positioning and layout of animal figures on some Sami drums correspond with certain “star horizons” (Sommarström 1991:136) in the sky, which represents the theory of totemism. If this is the case, then the differences seen on the drums which are presented here, change the understanding of both the relevance of the figures in their positions in the sky and their geographical locations of the mythological world, as well as the hunting areas on the tundra. We know that because of seasonal variation when the Sami migrated between different locations on migratory routes for hunting and fishing, a way of recording these locations, which included rivers, mountains and caves (where bears were sleeping), was on the surfaces of the drums, which is why they are sometimes referred to as maps.

The aim of this article has been to clarify the importance of the survey of the Sami noaidi drums and this undertaking has established a number of errors relating to the way in which the material has been published in France, Holland and the United Kingdom with reference to historical data and Sami culture and religion. Therefore, it can be stated these illustrations in the English, Dutch and French editions cannot be relied upon as any kind of authenticity, because the illustrations have a number of important features which are portrayed as mistakes due to the ways in which the editions have been printed. Although these mistakes do not necessarily make the editions invalid, however, the reliability of these sources as material which represents the knowledge of the noaidi as seen portrayed through the intricate symbolism illus-

trated in detail on the drums, and also the position of the drums as cultural and historical artefacts and representations of Sami religion and culture, need to be made clear due to these historical inaccuracies which misrepresent the Sami, Sami culture and religion.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The term *shaman* today is generally not applicable in Lapland amongst the Sami; its origins can be found in the early Russian sources. In Lapland the traditional healer has been compared to a Medicine Man or Woman known as Noaidi.

<sup>2</sup> A further point for the reader's attention is the usage of the terms: 'Lapp', 'Sami' and 'Saami' throughout the article. The terms 'Lapp' and 'Lappish' have been used extensively and particularly in early literature mainly by outsiders and is considered derogatory by the Sami. The application of the term in this article is used only in quotes from literature. The term 'Sami' is the Finnish word used when referring to the native people of northern Scandinavia, as is the Swedish word Saami. Both of these are also used in quotes from English and Swedish literature in this article. Furthermore, both of these are used today to help distinguish the native people of Lapland from those who live there but whose roots maybe elsewhere.

<sup>3</sup> The museum is nowadays called Museum für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig (Leipzig Museum of Ethnography) and it is a part of the Grassi Museum.

<sup>4</sup> The word noaidi is used here as a technical term to point out to all the drum users. According to Risto Pulkkinen, at least on the more southern parts of Sápmi the drum was not the privilege of the noaidi only but the use of the drum (in divining ) was each person's right.

*“Recalling Ancestral Voices* is a project dedicated to recording the material cultural heritage of the Sámi. The project was launched in April 2006 and ended in November 2007. In Finland, the Sámi Museum Siida is participating in the project, in Sweden, the Ájtte Museum in Sweden and Varanger Sámi Museum in Norway.” (This quote is from the web site address below). The discussion about the Sami noaidi drums can be viewed in a wider scientific context with reference to previous

research, seminars and discussions about drums, as well as a number of other indigenous artefacts in relation to Sami cultural history. The information about the project is in Swedish, Finnish and Sami language. <http://www.siida.fi/heritage/english/index.html>

- <sup>5</sup> The list of manuscripts that were received at different times by Schefferus, and contain in particular the writings of Rheen and Tunderus, as well as information from other priests of the northern areas, can be found in the National Library also under the title *Laponia*, which is as a compilation of sources given to Schefferus.
- <sup>6</sup> For information about the manuscripts concerned with bear hunting rituals made by Gabriel Tunderus, see *Fragments of Lappish Mythology*, edited by Juha Pentikäinen, English translation (Laestadius 1997).
- <sup>7</sup> See the foreword at the beginning of the book.
- <sup>8</sup> On-line research into the current sale prices of the 1674 English edition and the French and Dutch editions at a Antiquarian book sellers revealed the cost for the original copies are as follows: English 1674 edition on sale in Stockholm, Sweden: 2,420 euros, French edition on sale in the United States, California: 801.00 euros, and the Dutch edition is on sale in the Netherlands: 1,250.00 euros.
- <sup>9</sup> According to the British Library catalogue, there are copies of *The History of Lapland* on microfilm and in digital form, distributed to a number of institutions in different parts of the world. I contacted Tim Pye from the Rare Books Reference Service at The British Library and he supplied me with the following information. One of the most comprehensive and reliable sources for identifying the various editions of a particular work is the English Short Title Catalogue (<http://estc.bl.uk>) (the catalogue also indicates which institutions around the world hold copies of a work). The ESTC lists four distinct English editions of *The history of Lapland* – two published “at the Theater in Oxford” in 1674 (ESTC nos. R8773 & R183263), one printed in London “for Tho. Newborough” in 1704 (T146952), and one printed in London “for R. Griffith” in 1751 (T111934). The catalogue records for the 1674 editions attribute the translation into English to Anton Cremer. The Library’s 1704 and 1751 editions have been digitised and are available via Eighteenth Century Collections Online, a subscription database that is available in many libraries and universities. One of the 1674 editions has also been digitised and is provided by the Early English Books Online database, but the digitised images are taken from copies held not by the British Library but by the Huntington and University of Illinois Libraries, both located in the United States.
- <sup>10</sup> Translated from German to English by Kristiina Nayho at Finnish Literature Society.
- <sup>11</sup> The University of Helsinki does not have the first English publication on microfilm and therefore, I have used photocopied pictures in this case.
- <sup>12</sup> Comparison of some illustrations with their sources and derivations. Lillemor Lundström has created an on-line version of the 1674 English edition of *The History of Lapland*, and addresses the issue of reversed images by correcting them for this version of the original English text. He states the following: “The illustrations in the 1674 English translation of the book are imitations of those in the Latin source text from 1673. Apart from being mirror-images of the originals, some noteworthy changes were made; a few of these are commented below. As in the main text, I have here



reversed the English illustrations back to their intended orientation, and then individually reversed all letters in the legends, as well as colouring these and any scale bars red. Chapter X contains two illustrations, both depicting the worship of idols. In the original, the idols' heads are crudely shaped as described in the text, while their English counterparts have been changed to have clearly visible facial features, contrary to the description." Sourced from: <http://old.no/samidrum/lapponia/> this is the web address where the corrected pictures of the two Finnish drums from Kemi Lappmark can be viewed in the chapter *Of the magical Ceremonies of the Laplanders*: <http://old.no/samidrum/lapponia/chap-xi.html>

<sup>13</sup> The translation from the old French text to English which can be found in the introduction in the book was made by the grateful assistance of Pascal Cotroux.

<sup>14</sup> On a visit to the National Library of Finland in Helsinki, the cost for a photocopy of the illustration of the drums from the First English Edition was ten euros and no one there had any knowledge concerning the errors.

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# FORMULAE FOR EXPELLING ILLNESSES/ DISEASES IN UDMURT CHARMS AND PRAYERS

*Tatiana Panina*

**Abstract:** The article is devoted to Udmurt healing charms (*pel'as'kon*) and traditional prayers (*kuris'kon*) which have been collected since the 18th century. The living tradition of charming is still considered to be one of the effective ways of fighting with different diseases and weird spirits which cause abnormal conditions both in people and livestock. Available magic texts of folklore allow the revelation of the principles of resistance to diseases and evil spirits and consider them as the representatives of the other world. These conclusions are made on the basis of the analysis of special formulae which are aimed at expelling the illness/disease from the human body and the local environment.

**Key words:** charms and prayers, formula for expelling illness/disease, Udmurt folklore, weird character of the illness/disease

Typology of formulae which contain the idea of sending illnesses away has been studied in detail by Russian and foreign researchers in a number of articles devoted to sacral texts of Slavic (Russian, Ukrainian, Belorussian, Polish, Bulgarian, Czech), West Romanic (French) and Baltic (Lettish) traditions (Sveshnikova 1993, 1995; Olupe 1993; Vel'mezova 2000; Nebzhegovskaia-Bartminskaia 2005). Comparative analysis of different traditions allows us to reveal some specific features in describing the space of charms (Sveshnikova 1993; Vel'mezova 1999). Thus, Ekaterina Vel'mezova comes to a conclusion that, in Russian charms, the world has a multi-level structure, in Czech charms it is represented as a two-level space, and in French sacral texts the space is extremely reduced (Vel'mezova 1999: 54).

Likewise, it would also be interesting to study the formulae of expelling illness/disease in one of the Finno-Ugric cultures – the Udmurt tradition. Mythological conception of illness in the mentioned tradition has already been researched by some ethnographers (Vladykin 1994; Minniakhmetova 2003; Nikitina 2003; Zaitseva 2004). Taking into consideration that one of the most important features of the text is its ability to pass on and keep information, I analyse a collection of magical texts to find out more about the worldview of

the Udmurts, with focus on Udmurt charms (*pel' l'as'kon / pel' l'as'kon kyl*) and prayers (*kuris'kon*). For this purpose, approximately 400 sacral texts, written since the 18th century, were examined, published in different editions, and held in the archives of the Udmurt Institute of History, Language and Literature (Russian Academy of Sciences, Ural Department), folklore and dialectological archives of the Faculty of Udmurt Philology (Udmurt State University) and the Philological Faculty (Glazov State Pedagogical Institute). In addition, some charms have been recorded by the author during her scientific expeditions since 2003.

According to the Udmurt healing charms, illness or the spirit of illness can penetrate into the human body and start “eating” it from within. The terms which are used to address the illness emphasise its hostile status toward people – *tushmon* (‘the enemy, evil spirit’), *tushmon-aman* (‘the enemy, the fiend’):

*Сизьымдон но сизьым дас сизьым пöртэм ошмесэз огаёе карны быгатйд ке, валлань кошкись карны быгатйд ке, собере, тушмон, си-ю та адямиз!*

If you are able to join seventy seven, seventeen different springs and turn their stream back then you, **the enemy, eat and drink this person!** (Munkácsi 1887: 184–185)

*Уллань кошкись вуэз йырад понон изьы лэсьтыса-карса нуллыны лутод ке – сотэк уг сётйськы мон тöндыд сини-юны!*

If you are able to turn the river flowing down into a hat and to wear it – otherwise I don't allow/give you **to eat and drink** (this patient!) (Munkácsi 1952: 156–157)

The analysis of the Udmurt healing charms shows that the motif of eating a patient is common for those texts which were supposed to treat wasting disease (the result of putting an evil eye on a person). Most likely, it can be explained by way of the mythological perception of illness by the Udmurts: severe unknown illnesses/diseases were considered to be caused by the negative influence of evil sorcerers. In those cases a patient could languish and waste away in a short period of time. The anxiety associated with this was the reason why the Udmurts sought the help of superior gods, their prayers expressed the request to protect the people from that kind of negative influence:

*Тушмонлы-аманлы эн сёт, Инмаре! Зарни кенерен, азвесь кенерен тушмон-аманлэсь уть-ворды, Инмаре!*

**Don't give us to the enemy/the fiend, God Inmar! Enclose us within a gold fence, a silver fence/save us from the enemy, God Inmar!** (Munkácsi 1887: 151)

**Тушмонлы-аманлы эн сёт!** Олокин “сиё-юо” шуоз, солы эн сёт!  
Олокёче шукед-шагед вань, олокёче калераед вань, эн сёт!

**Don't give us to the enemy!** Someone will say: “I'll eat and drink”, don't give us him/her! You [Inmar] have different illnesses, you have different contagious diseases, don't give us [them]! (Munkácsi 1887: 149)

The illness was ordered to leave the body the same way it had entered:

**Кытй пырид, отй потса кошкы** та адыми бордысь, тьфу! Та верам  
кылы-буры эм мед луоз та адымилы!

**Where you've entered this person there leave him/her,** pah! May these words said by me be medicine/cure for this person! (Munkácsi 1952: 157–160)

*Рось-грось, мылегуи, бекбекут, куштэм кут, дюруктэм, погань, татын эн ветлы мон дорам бейлэныса, касланса! Кытй ке пырид, отй потыса кошкы! Пыремтйетйд (потса кошкы)!*

Ros'-gros', myl'egun, bekbekut, d'uruktem, pogan' [allegorical words describing/cursing the devil], don't come to me, thinking of hurting! Where you've entered there leave! **There you've entered (leave)!** (Munkácsi 1952: 160–161)

*Куинь сюреслэн куттйз лыктэм, отй мед кошкоз!*

Which of the three ways it has come there let it leave! (Wichmann 1893: 176–177)

*Тольсь вуид – тёлэ ик кошкы, калыкысь вуид – калыке ик кошкы!*

If you've been brought with the wind, go away with the wind, if you've come from people, go away to the people! (FD UdsU 2003/2004 N. Eshmakova, p. 10).

According to the ancient people's logic the surrounding environment was divided into two parts: “this world” (the world of people) and “the other world” (the weird world, the beyond). Like other peoples, the Udmurts thought that an illness/disease/unhealthy condition was caused by the supernatural beings – representatives of “the other world”. The spirit of illness was considered to be one of these beings, which breaks into this world and thereby shatters the order and stability of the objective reality. To re-establish the disturbed harmony, it was necessary to return the spirit to the beyond. For this purpose during the process of healing the sorcerer appealed to the evil spirits *peri* and asked them to take the illness back with them to the next world:

*Качиен но венен зус вылэ но выржем интые кирос пуктоно но собере верано:*

*Кыр пери,  
Акшан пери,  
Їукна пери,  
Уй пери,  
Нуназе пери,  
**Вань висензэ басьтэлэ.***

Using scissors and a needle one should make the sign of the cross over the bench and painful site (lit. site/part of a body/organ that was “pulled off”, i.e. lost its common position) and say:

*The spirit of an open space,  
The spirit of the dusk,  
The spirit of the morning,  
The spirit of the night,  
The spirit of the afternoon,  
Take away all his/her diseases/illnesses.  
(FA UdSU, FE-1975, с. 5, s. 17)*

The Udmurts appealed not only to the spirits but could also ask deities for help:

***Бу мумы, чылкытаты пимес, сякой приччалэсь-висенлэсь чылкытаты пимес!***

**Water mother**, clean our son, from any illnesses/disorders clean our son! (FD UdSU 1999/2000 E. Lozhkina, p. 30)

or the God *Inmar*:

*Куже ыжгонлэн вирез потоз, соку, **Инмаре**, сёт монэ вединлы сибыны!  
When fleece bleeds, then, **Inmar**, give me to an evil sorcerer for eating!  
(Archive of UIHLL f. 749, с. 10, s. 52)*

As a result of Christian influence, the Udmurts began to address to Jesus Christ:

***Я, Инмаре-Кристосэ, туж та секыт висензэ но мынам басьтэме потэ, бордысьтыз келяме потэ. Кызы ке но басьты та адями котырысь та секыт висензэ!***

**Inmar-Christ**, I am eager to take this severe disease away [from the patient]. In some way or other take this severe disease from this person! (FD UdSU 1999/2000 L. Maksimova, p. 33)



The illness/disease was thought to have its own special place. This idea is found in the following well-known formula:

*Шунды бертэм,*

*Толэзь бертэм,*

*Нунал бертэм,*

*Кизили бертэм.*

**Озы ик та но мед бертоз.**

*Эмыз-юмыз мед та луоз. Мед йӧналоз.*

The sun has come back,

The moon has come back,

A day has come back,

A star has come back

**May this [boil, furuncle] come back too.**

May it [the charm] be medicine/cure. May the patient recover.

(Archive of UIHLL f. 762, c. 18, s. 17)

*Толэзь бертэм,*

*арня бертэм,*

**озы бертыса мед кошкоз**

The moon has come back home,

The week has come back home,

That way may the disease come back home (Mikheev 1926: 44)

*Шунды бертэм,*

*Нунал бертэм,*

*Кизили бертэм,*

*Толэзь бертэм –*

**Мед бертоз йыдые синмысьтым!**

The sun has come back,

A day has come back,

A star has come back,

The moon has come back –

**May my sty (hordeolum) come back home!**

(Kel'makov 1981: 42)

The presented formula emphasise the established order in the world and cyclic recurrence of natural processes. The illnesses/diseases (their spirits) entering the human body disturb the harmony of the world and are therefore forced to return back their original space – the beyond.

The idea of considering the illness/disease as a representative of the other world is proved by the established concept: the illness can be sent away by water of a river:

*Уян пырыку эмняно, кийын кыскаса, таҗе кыллѣс вераса (ум пушкын гынэ): “Бу кузя берты, пень каӓ, тузон каӓ куасьмыса быры!”*

When an illness/disease enters [the human body], it is treated by way of massaging and whispering the following words: “**With the water return [home]**, like ashes, like dust dry and disappear!” (FDA UdsU 2000/2001 M. Nabieva, p. 4)

*Седэз, азьтэмез вуж мед кошкоз, урод сямьд мед быроз!*

May all your blackness [everything that is bad, poor] and laziness **go away with the water**, may your bad temper disappear! (FDA UdsU 2001/2002 L. Kuzmina, p. 15)

*Та дун ву сямен ик жылъыртыса, бызись вуж мед кошкоз син усемез, медаз бӓрды ни Олѣша, мед таза, чебер будоз.*

As this clear water murmurs, may his evil eye go away with the running water, may Alex not cry any more, may he be healthy and handsome. (FDA UdsU 1996/1997 E. Ziyatdinova, p. 6)

*Куасьмылысьтэм мумыѣс! [here: Чупчи мумы, Пызеп мумы, шур мумыѣс] Бу бӓрсяд келялэ котьмар чердэс!*

Never drying mothers! [here: mother of the Cheptsya river, mother of the Pyzep river] **With your water send away all severe illnesses/diseases!** (Wichmann 1893: 134)

In many mythologies the river is known as a symbol of a special route to the beyond, the way which connects the quick and the dead (Slovar simvolov 2006: 167; Slavianskie drevnosti 2009: 416). The Udmurts associated the water/river with the lower part of the triform structure of the world (Vladykin 1994: 75) and believed that the souls of the dead were supposed to leave this world along the river (Vladykin 1994: 75). Thus, the water, or the river, taking away the illnesses and diseases to the other world would help to clean this space from evil spirits and, by way of this, treat a patient.

The disease can be sent away not only with the water, but also with the wind: ...озы ик та висѣнме но мед нуоз тӓл сьӓры ‘...may **the wind take away** my illness, too’ (Vereshchagin 2000: 29), or with the smoke: *Кинлэсь кышкад, пие, пунылэсь-а, ӓзеглэсь-а яке кинлэсь ке, та ӗын сыцраз мед*

**басътоз вань кышкамъёстэ** ‘Who you have been frightened of, my son, whether a dog, whether a goose or somebody else, may this smoke take away all your fear’ (Archive of UIHLL f. 742, c. 6, s. 5) (see about fumigation: Chirkova 2009: 262–265).

As mentioned above, the Udmurts interpreted the illness as a hostile being living in the other world. This territory is presented in the Udmurt healing charms as the space which is located beyond the bounds of the forest:

*Синме потэм йыдыез эмъяло вылэм пересъёс тазы: “Шунды бертэм, нунал бертэм, кизили бертэм, толэзь бертэм, мед йыдыед быроз, кыдёке сик съёры кошкоз!”*

The old treated the sty the following way: “The sun has come back home, a day has come back home, a star has come back, the moon has come back, **may your sty disappear, far beyond the forest go!**” (FDA UdsU 2001/2002 O. Strelkova, pp. 7–8).

The Udmurt prayers refer to the places to where one can conceivably send the illness away:

*Гуртэ пырысь через-чурез тузонэз сяин, лысвуэз сяин нюлэс съёры, чабы съёры лэзысалйд ке...*

If you threw away the illness, coming into the village, as dust, as dew if you threw it away **beyond the wood, beyond the hedge ...** [of a special sacral place for praying] (Munkácsi 1887: 163)

As we can see illnesses could be sent beyond the forest, and the border between this and the other world could be a special hedge made of branches of conifers. Such hedges were made by the Udmurts only around the sacral places for praying in the forest (Vasil’ev 1906: 186).

In the Udmurt sacral texts the beyond was presented also as a territory beyond the field: *Котькӧйе дышмонэз бусы съӧртӧй лэзь* (‘Let every enemy pass **beyond the field!**’) (Wichmann 1893: 131), under the bath-house (*баня*) benches: *Ведӧньёс, съӧд синмын учкисъёс лапча съӧры мед кошкозы* (‘May evil sorcerers and those who have put their evil eyes go **under the bath-house (banya) benches!**’) (FDA UdsU 2000/2001 E. Vasil’eva, p. 11). The healing sorcerer could also order the disease to leave the body and go away along a road, a river or a fence: *Сюрес кузя, ву кузя, кенер кузя мед кошкоз* (‘May it go away along a road, a river, or a fence’) (Minniiakhmetova 2003: 58). These places can be regarded as ones where illnesses are sent to as they can exist there. The Udmurts also believed that in those places one could catch a disease.

It is significant that in the Udmurt healing charms and prayers “the beyond” is not described in detail but only its location is indicated (downstream the river, beyond the wood, the hedge, the field, etc.), whereas the healing texts of eastern Slavic peoples describe the other world more carefully: the beyond is shown as an exact antithesis of this world (Sveshnikova 1993: 142).

Illnesses and diseases can be dispatched not only to the other world – their original place of living, but also to the tree or wood which was considered as a substitute of a human soul. It is remarkable that such a way of getting rid of an illness is typical of only three functional groups of Udmurt healing charms: the texts for treating furuncles/boils, a sore throat/tonsillitis and agnail/panaritium:

*Кӧс ньылос потэм, та кӧс писпу борды мед кылӛз. Эмез-юмез та мед луоз.*

A dry throat occurred, **may it stay on this dry tree**. May this [these words] medicine/drug be. (FDA UdSU 1997/1998 A. Spiridonova, p. 20)

*Гижнисийисез эмьяку, висись чиньйез кор пылпськем виски мырылоно. Озь мырылыку, таӛе кылӛс верано: “Шунды бертэм, нунал бертэм, кизили бертэм. Тань, Валялӛсь гижнисийисьсӛ эмьясько. Та гижнисийисьсӛз кор виски мед кылӛз.”*

While treating agnail/panaritium one should poke his/her finger into a log crack. At the same time one should say the following words: “The sun has returned, a day has returned, stars have returned. I am healing Valya’s agnail. May **this agnail in the log remain**.” (FDA UdSU 1992/1993 T. Volkova, p. 37)

The study of Udmurt charms shows that it was not always necessary to expel the illness to a special place, in some cases it was just enough to separate it from the human body:

*Инмаре-Кылчинӛ, батюшко, кызы ке тон мыным юртты та адыми котырысь черӛсты уल्याны, та адымиез мынам **висьяме** потӛ.*

Inmar-Kylchin, father, somehow help me to expel the illnesses from this person, I want to separate him/her [from the illness]. (FDA UdSU 1999/2000 L. Maksimova, pp. 31–32)

*Абадан, гызег, та верам кылбур эмез-юмез та медло! Пуртӛн-тӛрен вӛлса бордысьтыз **мед паласькоз!***

Abadan, gyzeg [words swearing the illness], may the told words be the medicine/drug! Like with an axe and a knife shaved may the illness fall away! (Munkácsi 1952: 156–157)

*Та пурт кызы вӧлса басьтэ пуэз, озы ик вӧлса басьтӥсько висӥнзэ.*

As this knife shaves wood, so I shave/separate the illness [from the patient]. (FDA UdSU 2002/2003 L. Komarova, p. 18)

Thus, the process of separating the illness/disease from a patient was equal to the process of healing.

In conclusion, it would be expedient to emphasise once more that separating the illness/disease and the patient's body and expelling the pathogenic spirits to the beyond was regarded as a magical influence with the use of thought/word/act on the clinical process. Moreover, returning the illness to its original space symbolises the process of stabilising the world order.

## ABBREVIATIONS

f. – file

s. – sheet

p. – page

c. – copybook

UIHLL – Udmurt Institute of History, Language and Literature (Russian Academy of Sciences, Ural Department)

FA UdSU – folklore archives of the Faculty of Udmurt Philology (Udmurt State University)

FDA UdSU – folklore and dialectological archives of the Faculty of Udmurt Philology (Udmurt State University)

FE – folklore expedition

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# FUNERAL AND MAGICAL RITUALS AMONG THE KOMI

*Galina Misharina*

**Abstract:** The article dwells upon two types of Komi ritual lamentation: funeral laments and the ones used for expelling bedbugs from the house or for ridding the fields of burdock. The focus is on the magic aspect of ritual lamentation, together with the analysis of the genres of laments within protective rites – although the texts used in such rites actually operate as charms and incantation, the context of the custom reveals a number of elements which are intrinsic of the logic of presenting laments. The author comes to the conclusion, by way of analysing the texts performed at funerals and ward-off rites that besides the poesy, uniform popular terminology and recitative presentation, these texts have similar performing characteristics and unitary magic. As an integrated whole, these characteristics make it possible to use the same terminology with regard to the texts used in protective magic rites and the ones of funeral customs.

**Key words:** charms, funeral customs, Komi people, laments, warding-off rites

Lamentations are categorised according to their function, i.e. funeral, wedding and soldier's laments when being recruited. The ones performed outside a certain ceremony are referred to as non-ritual laments, performed during the events of everyday life. The most archaic and the best known in many cultures are lamentations to the dead, folklorists presume that at first lamentations to the dead reminded of recitation/charming,/enchancing, whereas the one who performed them acted as a shaman escorting the souls (*Psychopomp*) (Honko 1978: 80–96; Nenola 1978: 77).

According to Kirill Chistov's theory, the genre of lamentations was transferred to other rituals, associated with sending away and receipt, and developed into an independent form that can exist outside rituals and can be performed according the relevant need, e.g. when reminiscing and mourning a close person. Chistov refers to the northern part of Russia, and the habitats of Finno-Ugric peoples, where the tradition of lamenting was particularly pronounced and where the above-mentioned hypothetical process can indeed be observed (Chistov 2005: 189).

A universal set of ritual lamentations has been recorded among the Komi Zyrians, however, they also tend to have lamentations which are little known

by other peoples or not at all – these are the lamentations performed when warding off insects from the house, expelling weeds in the fields; during economic undertakings, e.g. when building a house, or when cultivating or processing cereals. For example, the Komi lamented prior to crossing a wide river; when ice was breaking up, and during major feasts, e.g. Radunitsa<sup>1</sup> and Easter.

This article focuses on two types of lamentations among the Komi: laments for the dead and the ones performed during warding-off rites (e.g. expelling bedbugs from the house and burdock from the fields).

Lamenting at funerals is supposedly a familiar custom for the reader, however, lamenting when warding off weeds and parasites created questions in those who discovered this phenomenon several decades ago, and also among those who research Komi folklore today. Moreover, these rituals cast doubt on genre-wise categorisation of lamentations. Indeed, it might be that in ward-off rites, it is not the lamentation at all, but instead, a charm – a genre used to protect from and expel all kinds of sources of danger, including insects, predators and, among many cultures, even diseases or illnesses. The combination – magic and lamenting – is not very customary. In the current article I attempt to introduce the use of laments in magic. Magic is concealed, it is not talked about loudly, and not practiced publicly; this is why it is not easy for researchers to discover magic (Virtanen 1988: 239). The concealed magic component of Komi lamentations for the dead is, in my view, revealed in their relation with the recordings of warding-off rites. Upon the comparison of the texts of the latter with lamentations, the categorisation of these texts and the use of laments in expelling parasites and weeds, seems logical.

## KOMI LAMENTATIONS FOR THE DEAD

A number of researchers have studied the funeral customs of the Komi (e.g. Nalimov 1907; Semenov 1992; Teriukov 1979, 1984; Limerov 1996). Up until today, the lamentations of the Komi, however, have been the object of research on extremely infrequent occasions, differently from their other aspects of oral tradition. When talking about burials, the informants, from among the Komi, underline that lamentations were performed repeatedly during the funeral: at home, on the way to the graveyard, in the graveyard until the coffin was closed, and while the coffin was lowered into the grave, etc. In 1939, lamenter Platon Kalisa presented the following lamentations to the collector, Ivan Osipov: *When mother lies on the table* (195 lines), *Lament when carrying the coffin out and on its way to the grave* (60 lines) and *Lament on the grave* (70 lines) (Osipov 1986: 74–93). There are not many recordings of lamentations, used at different

stages of ritual practices. Still, in the archive documents of the later period, lamentations have been marked by the performers or, more evidently, by the collectors, according to the addressee, e.g., *To mother, To husband, To father*, etc. The article published by the renowned Komi collectors and researchers, Anatoli Mikushev and Fedor Plesovskii in 1979 can be considered to be the only source material describing the lamentations from different Komi areas. The authors of the article provide the following description with regard to Komi burial laments: “(Burial) lamentations express the materialistic worldview, and are far from any kind of mysticism, “the world beyond” is not at all mystical. The images of the life beyond the grave are generally not reflected in lamentations and all details within lamentations are there for the main aim which is to express the endless grief of the family who has lost the breadwinner, a dear and beloved person” (Mikushev & Plesovskii 1979: 48). It might be that materialism and the absence of mystics were indeed intrinsic in the Soviet folkloristics of the time, whereas during this era, when folkloristics was oriented at philology and used the terms and notions of literary criticism, materialism was actually a characteristic of insufficient artistry and aestheticism. The fact that there were no descriptions of the passage to the beyond and afterlife, indicated that burial lamentations are not the core of archaic, mythological cultural strata of the Komi.

Yet the bearers of traditions did not evaluate the burial lamentations from an artistic perspective and, likewise, did not solely associate these with the possibility to express one’s feelings, and attributed a magical power to the wailings. According to the 1979 report by Komi folklorists, the participants in the expedition came across an astonishing phenomenon during the recording of the burial lamentation – not that the Komi women had forgotten lamenting, quite the contrary – the lamentations were in active use and people believed in their power. The lamenters categorically refused, as a response to the relevant request by the collectors, to perform the lamentation, or even fragments or retelling thereof, because they believed that performing the lamentation outside a certain ritual practice would cause someone to die. One of the well-known lamenters in the neighbourhood, K. Turkova, dictated the text of the burial lamentation to her student grandchild (girl). Soon after this, another one of her grandchildren (a boy) was killed. The grandmother associated the slaughter with the fact that she had “performed” the burial lamentation outside the ritual (KSC RA fund 5 inv. 2 f. 209a). The fact that lamenting outside the ritual is not safe is also evident in the procedure *шог пыркӧдӧм* ‘shaking out the grief’, which means that the clothes worn during lamenting were shaken and beaten afterwards (NMKR DF inv. 198; Plesovskii 1968: 123).

## THE MAGIC OF LAMENTATIONS

The concept of magic is treated differently by researchers, for example, Laura Stark, in her treatise determines magical as follows: “supernatural means to cause harm to others, to protect someone from supernatural damage, the spelling of charms and healing from illnesses” (Stark 2006: 45). Elena Levkieskaia makes a distinction between three forms of magic in charms: tangible, actualisational and verbal (Levkieskaia 2002: 334). Word magic is usually associated with charms, the words of which are believed to be “a weighty means to achieve a certain goal; [---] a medium that cannot be opposed by natural laws or the will of an individual” (Poznanskii 1917: 102).

Jouko Hautala, a Finnish folklorist, has expressed his opinion that the existence of any kind of poesy is conditioned by magical factors and the entire primordial poesy can be conditionally referred to as charms (Hautala 1960: 40). When discussing the (magic) power of the word, the researcher Hautala turns to the genre of lamentations. He writes that the magic of wedding lamentations lies in protecting the bride from the danger that primarily proceeds from the deceased of her family, whereas the burial lamentations soften and erase the deceased’s doubt as if the living ones could be blamed for his/her death. The researcher is also of the opinion the expression of mourning and grief is magical in nature, as when the dead person hears being mourned, the dead person would not be hostile against the living ones (Hautala 1960: 39).

Folklorists Valeriia Eremina and Kirill Chistov have specified the connections between Russian burial lamentations and magic. According to V. Eremina, charms are being intertwined in Russian lamentations; K. Chistov underlines the magic function of burial lamentations (Eremina 1981: 70–86; Chistov 1994: 267–274). Both researchers reach their conclusions on the basis of the motifs, existent in lamentations, where the lamenters ask, in an imperative form, the coffin cover to open and the deceased person to rise. According to K. Chistov, the magical function of these motifs transformed into an emotional rhetoric method as early as during the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century (Chistov 1994: 273).

The universal all-embracing term magic (magical) attains concreteness when placed in the frames of performative utterances, language, as presented by John Austin, the analytical philosopher in this book *How to Do Things with Words* (Austin 1986). When contemplating the diversity of language use, Austin came to a conclusion that there are a number of utterances that are not merely said, but are also used to do something (Austin 2006: 264). He suggested such utterances be referred to as performative, without describing the exact possi-

bility to make a distinction between constative and performative utterances. Austin also presented utterances as three-level compounds wherein locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts take place. Later on, his idea was used in developing the speech act theory (mainly in the case of the illocutionary act which adheres to a certain force which is revealed in speaking) (Austin 1986: 100; Searle 1986: 151–1969). The subject matter for the speech act theory was everyday speech, and naturally, magic was not borne in mind while referring to the power of words.

Activity-based aspect of language has been studied for a long time in the case of anthropology of linguistics and folkloristics. The researchers have repeatedly noted that folkloristic performances do not merely describe but also confirm, organise, create and transform the world (Siikala 1994: 68; Piela 1988; Adon'eva 2004). Performativity is also one of the key words in Lotte Tarkka's monograph *Rajarahvaan laulu*. Tarkka observed the Karelian folk songs of the White Sea as a speech act "used as a mediation to speak about the surrounding world and attempting to influence this" (Tarkka 2005: 11). Word magic, the power of words equals with activity, this was earlier mentioned by a number of folklorists in connection with charms and this is a conspicuous example of the performativity of folkloric language. Nevertheless, it is not only the charms that can be treated as performative. Tarkka is of the opinion that a specific way of performing is intrinsic to any genre, not only to a ritual one (Tarkka 2005: 386).

## **SPECIFIC USE OF WORDS AT LIMINAL TIMES**

Burial lamentations of the Komi, and also of other peoples, are a particular form of communicating with the dead. First, the lamenters make abundant addresses to and ask rhetoric questions from the deceased. When addressing the dead, the lamenters use specific expressions such as *вөр пу йылысь лэдзысьёй, ва пыдöсьсь лэптысьёй, шондїбанöй чöскыд йöла матушкаöй*, 'descending/bringing down from the tops of my trees my sun-faced and sweet-milk mother' etc., conveying an exclusively positive and respectful attitude, the veneration of the living towards the dead. The appearance related features and social status of the deceased is comprehensively praised and lauded when addressing them in lamentations. K. Chistov has said about the addresses in Russian lamentations, that the paraphrased names used to refer to the deceased, the bride and bridegroom, are connected with the "prohibitions to protect the lamenter and other members of the family from the further impact of evil powers, the first manifestation of which had been the death of the person

who is being grieved for” (Chistov 1960: 13). An entire system of paraphrased metaphors to be used for kinship relationships has been worked out in Karelian lamentations. The researchers of these lamentations support K. Chistov’s opinion that it is a taboo to mention the actual name of the person (Stepanova 2004: 7). Though, according to Unelma Konkka, the taboos had lost their power yet the metaphors had obtained a poetic meaning in the language of lamentations (Konkka 1975: 170–180). The traditional motif in Komi burial lamentations is the grief of departure, whereas in the archived Komi lamentations, there are no verbal markers referring to communication with the dead ancestors, no motifs of passing on greetings to the dead relatives, all of which are intrinsic of the lamenting tradition of Northern Russia, Karelian and Ingrian areas (see, e.g., Konkka 1992: 117–119).

Yet in connection with the magical power and performativity of lamentation, I would like to draw attention to funeral lamentations which at first glance are the most neutral ones and evidently reflect this materialism that earlier caught the eye of the researchers of Komi folklore. These mentioned motifs as if describe and state as to what is going on in the ritual. In these utterances, the speaker uses reflexive pronouns “I” and “we”, however, there is no data indicating to the fact as if the lamentation was performed by many women at a time. In this case the pronoun “we” would tell that the lamenter, instead of talking solely on behalf of herself, actually does this in the name of other participants in the ritual. The predicate of these utterances characterises the activities that the “I” is performing at the moment or intending to do so. One verb can be repeated and form an entire section in the lamentation.

One of the most typical stating utterances is *ме мӧдӧда* ‘I send’. Indeed, there is a difference when comparing this with the rhetoric question, intrinsic of lamentations, *where do you go, where are you going, where are you preparing yourself for*, etc. In the latter, the utterance is formed in the way as if the deceased would go to the world beyond in his/her own free will. The words “*I send you / we send you*”, the performers depict the sending as if initiated by the living. These two utterances can be observed as evidence of an ambiguous attitude towards the deceased. On the one hand, the cult of ancestors and fear of the dead gives rise to utterances according to which the dead person would get him/herself dressed and prepares for the journey, and leaves him/herself, etc. He/She is the one going on a journey, and the participants perform as the ones passively sending him/her away. Yet on the other hand, with an aim to restore order in the world, the living ones need to act themselves, and by doing so they transform the ritual action of the deceased into a passive object.

In lamentation the deceased are sent from this world to the world beyond. The characteristic features of this world are revealed by way of the following



concepts: *light, will, white, free, warm*. The world of the living may be denoted in lamentations by way of the expressions such as *вӧльнӧй свет* ‘the free world’, *вӧльнӧй вӧля* ‘freedom, free will’. In lamentations, the notions of the worlds are often of deictic character, thus, the world of the living can be denoted in burial lamentations as *таладор сьвет, тайӧ му* ‘the world of this side, this land’, and when referring to being in this world, the phrase *татӧн* ‘here’ is used. To depict the world beyond, opposition of deictic terms is used: *this – that, here – there, from here – to there*. For example, it says, in a lamentation mourning the dead mother: *сэтчӧ вӧд тӧӧй мунан да* ‘there you go, yes’ (Osipov 1986: 75). In fact, deictic signifiers do not have a specific content and instead, this is determined by the circumstances of the spoken act message. *There*, as an opposite of *here*, denotes any place farther away from here. The metaphors, used in lamentations to denote the world beyond, are expressions wherein the word indicating a location is formed with the suffix *-тӧм*. This grammatical form of the nouns in the Komi language refers to the absence of something, giving the meaning of imperfection of an action, or lack of knowledge – that the activity was not completed. The place where the deceased are sent away in lamentations is marked by expressions such as *пельӧн кывлытӧмин* ‘the place the ears have not heard of’, *синмӧн адзывтӧмин* ‘the place eyes have not seen’, *туй дженьдытӧмин* ‘the place where the road is not becoming shorter’, *туй оттӧмсьытӧмин* ‘the place where the way does not become narrower’. These metaphors are not unambiguous, and obtain different meanings when communicating with the deceased. The expression *пельӧн кывлытӧминӧ* simultaneously acquires the meaning “send to the place of which my ears and your ears have not heard of”, and also “the place where you and I would not hear about each other, from where the sounds would not be heard in “here””. What it means is that the dead person is sent to a place out of the reach of auditory and visual senses. The living can send the dead to a long and wide road that leads to eternity where “the road does not shorten and the road does not become narrower” and from where there is no way back or further. This idea is realised in the following formulaic motif:

*Кузь туй ме мӧдӧда дженьдытӧминӧ.*

*Ота туй ме мӧдӧда оттӧмсьытӧминӧ.*

I send you to a long road where the path would not become shorter.

To a wide road I send you where the path would not become narrower.

Traditionally, this given motif would proceed as follows:

*Водзе ме мӧдӧда мунтӧминӧ нин,*

*Бӧре ме мӧдӧда костӧминӧ нин!*

Farther I send you from where there is no way on,  
Back I send you from where there is no return.  
(Mikushev *et al.* 1994: 75, No. 18, 76, 18b)

In general, love is being expressed towards the deceased in all possible ways and in the unwillingness to depart; even reproaching the deceased for leaving the others behind. However, in the given example, the lamenter explicitly words her thought: she sends the deceased person to the way in order that he/she would not return. Such formulae can also be noted in the lamentations of the Izhma-Komi. Maybe, it is the reversed prosody of the verse, intrinsic of Izhma-Komi lamentations that makes it possible to convey this idea, particularly in the tradition of the given area, the word at the beginning of the utterance would match together with the last word in the phrase. Lamenters say “back I send” but they actually bear in mind “I send to there from where is no return”. As a result of such an intentionally “wrong” word order in the utterance, the direct idea is encoded in the composition of the line of verse.

Besides the utterances “I send you” there are also motifs, intrinsic of burial lamentations, conveying the idea of relocation and of placing the deceased somewhere. In these motifs, the focus is on the verbs put, place, followed by a word denoting the situation. For example, in lamentations, the “I” says that she puts or places “him/her” under a thick layer of soil, “under the twelve layers of ground”. In burial lamentations from Udora, it says:

*Муыслы да му пыдöсас пуктаме,  
Ваыслы да ва пыдöсас пуктаме,  
А пуыслы да пу сьöмöсас пуктаме /*

Into the earth, underneath the ground we place,  
Into the water, underneath the water we place,  
Into the tree, in the heart of the tree we place /  
(KSC RA fund 1, inv. 11, r. 291)

As the world of the living is on the surface of ground, earth and water, the placing of the dead under the soil and water can indeed be understood as maximum removal from the world of the living. In the above fragment, the expression “into the tree, in the heart of the tree we place” can be interpreted as a metaphor for putting the dead in the coffin, as when making a coffin, the core of the tree was carved out (Belitser 1958: 147). Besides the fact that the places to where the deceased are sent or placed, these locations are also visually unreachable and soundproof, as far as possible from the world of the living, the lamentations also contain the ideas of creating obstacles, e.g. utterances regarding a high mountain with a stone wall, and closing the destination where

the deceased had gone, with, e.g. “a wooden and German lock” (Mikushev *et al.* 1995: 170, 173). In Russian and Karelian lamentations, it is customary to refer to the grave as a new dwelling, whereas in Komi lamentations, the grave is also denoted with the metaphor of being a house, and, in addition, as a locked place (Stepanova 2004: 91; Rakhimova 2005: 109–119).

Descending into the grave and putting the dead in the coffin can be conveyed with a metaphor of a dark monastery, which, in my opinion, originates from the association of being imprisoned in a monastery.

*Сыра нин пукта да матюраэ,  
Квайтэ нин пукта да пöлыс косме,  
Джуджыд нин пемыд да манастыре,  
Уусянь нин буксэн да букшайтанінэ,  
Вьысянь нин тшакен тшаксйатанінэ.*

In the moist soil I put you,  
Between the six boards,  
In a deep and dark monastery,  
A place already moulding from underneath,  
A place covered with fungi on top.  
(Mikushev *et al.* 1994: 75)

## **CHARMS AND LAMENTATIONS IN WARDING-OFF RITES**

In 1960, the collectors of Komi folklore in Mutnyi Materik village, Komi Republic, came across the so far unknown singing performances, described later as the “forgotten genre of folklore”. These texts, pursuant to the observations of the collectors, reminded of lamentations, considering their musical and poetical characteristics, and the terminology used by the bearers of tradition. However, when attempting to ascertain the context of performing these texts, the researchers needed to contemplate as these lamentations were performed, in the words of the informants, when expelling bedbugs from the house and warding off burdock from the fields (Mikushev *et al.* 1994: 11).

The tradition of expelling insects was known long before the “discovery” of these texts. A. Sidorov, a Komi researcher, referred to the warding off of bedbugs and cockroaches as magical rituals and published the description thereof in his monograph *Charms, witchcraft and evil eye of the Komi people (Знахарство, колдовство и порча у народа коми)*, first published in 1928 (Sidorov 1997: 28). According to oral records, rituals to ward off burdock were carried out before Midsummer (St. John’s Day) and autumn harvesting, bedbugs were expelled prior to Christmas, St. John’s Day and St. Peter’s Day, and if neces-

sary, also at other times. The process to eliminate burdock from the fields was as follows: *куим ѳкмыса* ‘three times nine’ burdocks were pulled out with roots, tied together, and then one group of women would take the burdock to the river, walking backwards, and the others would beat the burdock with whips (KSC RA fund 1, inv. 11, r. 206). According to another story, the largest burdock was pulled out in the field and thereafter planted on the road (KSC RA fund 11, inv. 11, r. 186). At darkness, the burdock could also be cut with a fire poker (SyktSU FA 1573-34). There were several methods to get rid of bedbugs: put on a woodchip, the bedbugs were let go downstream the river (Sidorov 1997: 81–82); a bundle of bedbugs was put inside the birch-bark shoe and then taken to the crossing of three roads (e.g. SyktSU FA RF 12-XVI–40); bedbugs were “buried” in the graveyard (SyktSU FA 1911-32, 34)

In general, such “bewitching” seems to be quite appropriate to use charms therein, however, the texts that were read during the ritual practices (the narrators bear in mind the charms) or asked (here the narrators bear in mind dialogue-charms) are actually the most typical lamentations to bedbugs and burdock. To illustrate the tradition and the relevant lamentations, I would hereby present the material recorded (written down in 1991, from the inhabitants of the Kozhva village, Pechorskii district, Komi Republic. The oral Russian-language text, written from the Komi language guide, has been made more legible.

*Навстречу Иванову дня клопов хоронили. Собирают три раза девять штук, собирают три раза по девять штук. В коробку спичек положишь да завернёшь, да к кочерге привяжешь. Да эту кочергу возьмёшь. Старик кочергу возьмёт да на кочергу сядет, как будто бы на лошади. А сзади толпа собралась, да как они плачут, как будто поплакивают они <...>. Пойдёт по деревням, плачет со слезами: “Прощай, Клоп Клопович, Прощай, Клоп Клопотовна”. Много людей собирается, на могилу все пойдут. Где хоронили покойника, туда же, на кладбище. Это в Иванов день, навстречу Ивана, 6-го...*

Bedbugs were buried before St. John’s Day. Three times nine bedbugs are collected, three times nine bedbugs. You put them in a matchbox and wrap them up, tie them to the fire poker. And then you take this fire poker. An old man sits astride on the fire poker, like on a horse. People would gather behind him, and how they cry, almost like lamenting [---]. Goes around the village, in tears: “Farewell, Bedbug, son of Bedbug, farewell, Bedbug, daughter of Bedbug.” A lot of people gather, all go to the grave, where the deceased are buried, to the same graveyard. This is on St- John’s Day, before the feast, on the 6th... (SyktSU FA 1911-32, 34)

## SPECIFICITY OF WARD-OFF TEXTS

The verbal part of ward-off ritual, performed as lamentation (or, in some occasion, as singing), according to the informants, is of communicative character: with bedbug or burdock as addressees. To address the bedbug and burdock, the performers use periphrases, which, in their structure and formation, are similar to the addresses used in burial lamentations. As a comparison: bedbug – чӧскыд вирес юись ‘the one who drinks tasty blood’, mother – чӧскыд йӧлӧн вердысь ‘the one who feeds with tasty milk’. When using the words *ludik* ‘bedbug’ and *jön* ‘burdock’, these are always accompanied with epithets of positive colouring, e.g. *šondibanöj ludiköj* ‘my Sun-faced bedbug’. Frequently, the lamenters commence their performance with indeed such addresses (highlighted in bold):

**Шондӧбанӧй дай лудикӧй,  
Чӧскыд ун паледысей дай.  
Первой гажедысей.  
Чӧскыд вирес юисей дай,  
Кор нӧ ме тэнэ сэсса аддзыла,  
Эв же нин тэ жаль да,  
Кор нин эся ме тэнэ аддзыла,  
Некор ӧд ог ме аддзыл.  
Маег йылэ, ой, тэ кайин  
Дай кынман.**

You my Sun-faced bedbug,  
You who wakes me in my sweet sleep,  
My first entertainer.  
The one who drinks my tasty blood, yes,  
When shall I see you again,  
I feel so sorry for you, yes,  
When shall I see you again,  
Never again shall I see you now,  
Oh, you climb up on a stake  
And freeze to death.  
(KSC RA fund 5, inv. 11 r. 172) (103)

In order to add more respect to the utterance, bedbug and burdock can be called after their first name and father’s name *Лудык Лудыкович* (*Ludyk Ludykovich*) ‘Bedbug, son of Bedbug’, *Тотарин Тотаринович* (*Totarin Totarinovich*) ‘Tatar, son of Tatar’. By the way, it is not at all accidental that the word *татарин* (*tatarin*) ‘Tatar’ is used as an epithet or metaphor for burdock. In wedding lamentations of the Komi, Tatars are considered to be the kinship of the bridegroom, and until a certain moment in the wedding, they are foreign and dangerous for the bride, i.e. the ones coming from the other world.

The specific feature converging these texts to these of lamentations is a group of verbal expressions providing the speech with a tint of grieving. Grief about departure may be expressed in rhetoric questions to bedbug and burdock: *how shall I live from now on, who will now wake me up early, when shall we meet again*, etc. Likewise, the performers may be compassionate about their future, e.g., being afraid they might die of cold and hunger. They can ask

forgiveness from bedbug and burdock, from their “brothers-sisters and the entire family”. It is also characteristic of the ward-off texts to use phrases with which the performer of the rite as if comments or describes the stages of the ritual. For example, “I” or “we” tell the bedbug that they will now wrap it in a rag and take it to the crossing of three roads, put it in a bag and take it away, send or intend to send it on the way and put it in the ground. The ward-off utterances, stating the ritual, again remind of burial lamentations where it is told that the deceased is sent away from home, sent on the way, put in the coffin, placed in the soil, etc.

These utterances of ward-off rituals may be presented as integral compositional blocks. The following example introduces the phrases said by the charmer to go with the main elements of the ritual: the start to sending off the bedbug, bedbugs are collected in a box, three times nine bedbugs, they are sent to the earth, sent forever, buried, in order for them not to come out, in order for them not to come back, not to return in the future.

*Эжтыр луд лудыкес мōдам мōдэдны бур рōдвужьяснаснум,  
Эжтыр луд лудыкес мōдам мōдэдны бур вок-чойнаснам,  
Куим өкмыс тiянтэ кучам чукартны кōребыс пытшке,  
Сэсся нин тiянтэ кучам сыра земля нуэдны матюра пытшке,  
Картыр рōдвужьен тi помласьныд мōдам укеренитны бур рōдвужьяслы,  
Эжтыр Луд Лудыкес мōдам нуэдны тi помныд бур вок-чойнаснам.  
Ас олыг сэсся ми мōдэдiм векыс кеже,  
Водзе нин Лудыкес сэсся ми сэчче пуктiм вотэм вылэ,  
Бōре нин Лудыкес сэсся ми пуктiм костэм вылэ,  
Сыра земля ми пуктiм петтэм вылэ...*

We intend to send the bug, the bedbug on the journey, sheets full of good family,

We intend to send bug the bedbug on the journey, sheets full of good brothers and sisters,

Three times nine we collect you in a box,

Then we start sending you to the bosom of mother earth<sup>2</sup>,

Because of you we uproot a nest full of good family,

Because of you we take the bug the bedbug sheets full of good siblings.

We sent then for the lifetime, forever,

There we put the bedbug, in order for it not to return,

Then we put the bedbug in order for it not to come back,

Into the soil (=grave) we put, in order for it not to come out...

(KSC RA fund 1 inv. 11 r. 206)



The widely spread opinion with regard to lamentations, i.e. these being primarily associated with tragic circumstances and the expression of grief for the passing away of the close ones, did not allow the researchers to associate lamentations with warding-off rituals (Alekseevskii 2007: 267–269). The texts, expressing benevolence towards the vermin, were performed in a mournful manner, with simultaneous crying, and the entire ritual seemed to be in every way contradictory to the main aim of this tradition – to ward off vermin and protect the people and their wellbeing. Likewise, the connection between lamentation and warding-off rites has not been observed in the system of Russian folklore genres, on which the folklorists relied. The context of the performance, the magical number of bedbugs and burdock (three times nine) in the rituals, noted by Anatolii Mikushev, the laudatory, pleasing tone of the addresses and apologies to the objects of being expelled, made the researchers think that the texts operate in this ritual as charms and conjuring. Functional approach and an attempt to include popular folk names and presenting these in the songs gave rise to the following key words with regard to this text group: charm-songs, songcharms, lamentation-charms, charm improvisations, songcharms of agrarian cycle (e.g. Konakov 1993; Mikushev 1973, Filippova 1996).

However, pleading, threatening, disparaging and commanding formula, intrinsic of bewitching ones, are not to be found in these texts. It became obvious that the texts belonging within warding-off rituals are actually converging with lamentations, both with regard to their style, poetic specificity, manner of performing and musical characteristics. Likewise, the informants also confirmed that the performing of the texts in warding-off rituals is actually lamenting. Communication with the addressees of the text – bedbugs and burdock – is analogous to lamentations sending off the deceased: it is customary to only talk good about the deceased, and ask him/her for forgiveness, it is obligatory to show the deceased, by way of benevolent verbal and physical form, that he/she is being mourned.

The elements, within the logic of performing lamentations, can also be noticed within the context of the ritual with vermin – one of them being the fact that terminologically, the warding-off rite, particularly in case of bedbugs, was referred to as sending away and funerals (*ludik gualöm, lidik dzeböm*), and, based on the narratives, this burial was actually conducted as a real-life activity. The insects and weed are not destroyed during the ritual, instead, they are “sent” from one space to another. The places, where the bedbug or burdock actually are in the course of the ritual, are associated in the Komi culture with the world beyond or with the way leading to the other world, being liminal areas, the mediators between the two worlds. Within the expelling rites, bedbugs end up in the river, crossing of three roads, be tied to the

cart of a beggar; burdock can occur in the river or be planted on the road. The tradition encompassed a number of activities and artefacts with protective properties. For instance, when expelling bedbugs, it is necessary to ride on a fire poker, making three circles around the house. In many rituals, drawing a circle is a method to create a closed space, which cannot be penetrated by the sources of danger (Levkievskaja 2003). Reverse activities have been recorded in “taking out” the burdock, e.g. the lamenters, when holding the plant, moved backwards. In this, Anatolii Mikushev has noticed a parallel with the burial customs of the Nenets, neighbours of the Komi, where, in order to protect oneself from the hostile power, and blur the traces, people walk backwards (Mikushev 1973: 38). Likewise, funeral customs of the Komi also entail a whole complex of reversed actions – committed to protect oneself from any influence possibly coming from the deceased –, e.g., turning around or inverting objects and artefacts, plaiting a reversal braid, moving counter-clockwise around a fresh grave, prohibition to look back when leaving the graveyard, etc. Concerning the items used in the ritual, I would like to highlight the fire poker. I am of the opinion that the poker is involved in both of the above-described rituals in order to protect the person performing these ritual activities, at the moment of encounter with the world beyond. The protective power of the iron poker is indeed confirmed in a traditional children’s game where the house spirit, invited from the cellar during the play, was scared off and sent back to its location with the help of the poker (Nesanelis 1993: 96–98).

Still, what remains disputable, genre-wise, are the motifs of warding-off texts where the performer, on behalf of herself, talks about what she is doing. Such utterances are extremely intrinsic in the case of charms (e.g. Viljakainen 2009, Piela 2005). Bearing in mind the fact that these texts are performed during the warding-off ritual, the words said to bedbugs and burdocks are self-evidently associated with charms.

Nevertheless, according to reference literature, similar motifs are also present in the burial lamentations of the Komi, and not only there. Tatiana Bunchuk, a linguist, had defined “syntactic constructions, with the predicate in the central position” in Komi wedding lamentations, work songs and other lamentations. She is of the opinion that the relevant Komi texts are similar to the *vita herbae / rei* texts, used in Slavic culture as an apotropaic magical agent, or the one with productive character. Bunchuk refers to the *vita herbae / rei* texts as the ones contributing to restoring the balance of world order, when the representatives of the world beyond have disturbed or are threatening the order of the world, during the liminal stages of human life (Bunchuk 2006: 113–126).

Ulla Piela talks about healing narratives (*parantavia narratiiveja*), when referring to the text groups in Finnish-Karelian charms narrating of the ritual wherein the healer *tietäjä* talks about his activities and wishes within the charm text (Piela 2005: 13). Proceeding from the above, the utterances in the style of “I do something” in warding-off rites function as performative narratives that send away the bedbug and burdock and create a world without vermin. Similarly, the performer, who is authorised to represent the interests of the entire group, creates performance narratives, by way of imitating and doubling his/her actions with words. The interpretations of the metaphors denoting the locus to where the deceased are sent or placed make it possible to conclude that performativity, the magic of burial lamentations is all about the capability of the lamenter to place the deceased in the place where it is not possible to make oneself heard or visible, from where there is no way back or forth, and to close this place. Thus, the texts performed at funerals and warding-off rituals have similar performativity, in addition to the recitative nature, poesy and common folk-related terminology; in other words, they have a uniform magical foundation. As a whole, these characteristics make it possible to use the same terminology in the case of texts utilised at expelling rituals, and the ones performed in funeral tradition.

The given interpretation does not pretend to be an exhaustive characterisation of lamentation magic. Performative interpretation thereof provided an opportunity to see the so far unknown facets of burial lamentations and mould a standpoint with regard to the genre of warding-off rites, and to partially understand the logic of lamenting in expelling rituals.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Radunitsa* [радуница] – a pagan spring feast associated with the cult of ancestors among the Eastern Slavs. After conversion to Christianity, this feast was celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter, or on the following Monday or Tuesday. Food and drinks are taken to the graveyard, to symbolically treat the deceased. (Dal; Hronos).

<sup>2</sup> Metaphoric formula *sōra zemlja mat'ura*, borrowed from Russian.

## ARCHIVAL SOURCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

inv. – inventory

r. – record

f. – file

- KSC RA = Komi Science Centre research archive. [NA KNTs – Nauchnyi arkhiv Komi nauchnogo tsentra.]
- NMKR DF = National Museum of Komi Republic, department of funds. [OF NMRK – Otdel Fondov Natsional'nogo muzeia Respubliki Komi.]
- KSC RA fund 1 inv. 11 r. 291 = Udora district, Liaziuv village, A. F. Ershova (b. 1884). [NA KNTs f. 1 op. 11 ed. khr. 291 = KR, Udora r-n, Liaziuv g., Ershova A. F. 1884 g.r.]
- KSC RA fund 5 inv. 2 f. 209a = Materials of the expedition to Luza district, Letka in 1976, collected by I. Rochev. [NA KNTs F. 5. Op. 2. Delo 209 “a” = Materialy fol'klornoi ekspeditsii v Letku Priluzskogo raiona v 1976 godu. Sobiratel' Iu. G. Rochev.]
- KSC RA No. 172 (103) = Ust-Kulom district, Sotchemyvv village, collected by Murav'eva, written down in 1964. [NA KNTs No. 172 (103) = RK, Ust'-Kulomskii r-n, d. Sotchemyvv. Zap. 1964, zap. Murav'eva.]
- KSC RA fund 1, inv. 11, r. 206 = Ussinsk district, Novikbozh village, A. Kaneva (b. 1889), M. Bessonova (b. 1912), M. Kaneva (b. 1905), written down in 1967. [NA KNTs f.1 op.11 d.206: RK, Usinskii r-n, d. Novikbozh. Kaneva A.N. 1889 g. r., Bessonova M. I. 1912 g. r., Kaneva M. M. 1905 g. r.; zap. 1967 g.]
- NMKR DF inv. 198 = Materials collected by A. Nalimov, in the National Museum of Komi Republic, Department of Funds. [OF NMRK Inv 198. = Materialy. Sobiratel' Nalimov V. A.]
- SyktSU FA 1911-32, 34 = Syktyvkar State University folklore archives, Pechora district, Kozhva village. A. Arteeva (b. 1907), A. Semiashkina (b. 1920), written down in 1991 [FA SGU 1911-32, 34 = RK, Pechorskii r-n, d. Kozhva. Arteeva A. P. 1907 g. r., Semiashkina A. F. 1920 g. r.; zap. 1991 g.]
- SyktSU FA 1573-34 = Kortkeross district, Vylib village, E. A. Misharina (b. 1930) [FA SGU 1573-34 = RK, Kortkerosskii r-n, d. Vylib. Misharina E. A. 1930 g. r.; zap. 2001.]
- SyktSU FA 12-XVI-40 = Ust-Kulom district, Kerchomia village, A. Samarina (b. 1916), written down in 2000. [FA SGU RF 12-XVI-40 RK, Ust'-Kulomskii r-n, s. Kerchom'ia. Samarina A. E. 1916 g. r.; zap. 2000 g.]

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# ABOUT FEMALE DEITIES IN THE MYTHOLOGY OF FINNO-UGRIC PEOPLES

*Nina Yurchenkova*

**Abstract:** The most widespread female deity in world mythologies is the Goddess of the Earth, known among Finno-Ugric peoples as Mother Earth. Research presumes that the cult of Mother Earth is relatively recent in origin, and somewhat associated with and related to the development of agriculture. Still, the religion of Finno-Ugric peoples comprises abundant other female deities whose help and assistance women can account for when in need. Moreover, among those Finno-Ugric peoples whose tillage culture is less developed, the Goddess of the Earth can sometimes obtain even cosmogonic functions. The article gives an overview of Finno-Ugric female deities, their functions and the ways to sustain the favour of gods.

**Key words:** female deity, fertility goddess, Finno-Ugric mythology, Mother Earth

The most prevalent deity in world mythology is the Goddess of the Earth – fertile, giving birth and devouring. This Great Mother combines both the surface of the earth, giving benefits to people, and the world of death underneath. The attaining of immortality in paganism is associated with the cult of the goddess personifying the archetype of motherhood, making it possible for the people to become one with the god.

Among the majority of Finno-Ugrians, it is the figure of the Mother Earth who represents this archetype. Researchers presume that the cult of the goddess, Mother Earth, does not go back to distant history, being of much more recent origin than that of other peoples involved in the cultivation of arable lands, for example the Slavic people. In the case of certain Finno-Ugric peoples (e.g. the Mordvins) the development of the cult of Mother Earth has evidently become more pronounced once agriculture became their prevalent field of subsistence.

In the case of others (e.g. the Khanty and Mansi), natural conditions have added the motif of fertility to the cult, usually expressed in honouring the earth and associated with the meaning of the earth as the giver of life. This motif, however, has been borrowed as the land in these habitats would not provide a vitally necessary and expedient fruit of crops (Karjalainen 1995: 236–237).

The imagination of the Earth as the female primordium of the Universe, the wife of the Sky and the goddess of fertility was most evident in family and calendar customs. The Mari people believed that Mlande Ava (Mother Earth) has the ability to fall pregnant as a woman, at certain periods when it was forbidden to dig the ground, knock, shout or make noise. During *Mlande shotchyn*, the feast to honour the Mother of Earth, it was not allowed to do any work that would be detrimental for the earth; likewise, it was forbidden to heat stoves, food could be cooked only in the evening, and the bread had to be baked earlier. People had to abstain from walking barefoot on the ground and agricultural activities – ploughing, digging or pounding stakes in the ground – were forbidden. Violation of the rule could bring about a relatively harsh punishment: a thunderstorm would beat down the crop or a person could be hit by lightning (Toidybekova 2007: 162).

According to the folk belief of Udmurts, Muzjem-Mumy (Mother Earth) would become angry if land was cultivated at the wrong time, during her sleep. She would not like the digging of holes. The animals sacrificed to Muzjem-Mumy were of dark colour – that of the earth – oxen and sheep: their bones, blood and offal were dug into the ground, and meat was eaten during the feast.

Pursuant to the folk belief of Estonians, the Mother of Earth, spouse of the God of Sky, conceived the crop during sowing and thunderstorm rain.

In Mordva, the earth was revered as a deity, it was personified, with human features and characteristics attributed to her. The songs and incantations reflect the anthropomorphic figure of Mastorava, the Earth Mother, whereas it is underlined that “Mastorava is not beautiful, she has a black face, long nose and thick lips” (Harva 1952: 189).

With regard to Mordvin mythology, there are no direct references to the belief that the Earth was the spouse of the Heaven, however, the imagination that fertility depends on the earth, and also on the main god Verepaz who would symbolise the heaven, was wide-spread. Mordvins say that “Verepaz is our father, Mastorava is our mother.”

Karelians honoured Munnutar, the mother of the earth, and approached her as a living being prior to sowing:

<i>Munnutar, mistress of the earth,</i>	<i>Wake up, meadow,</i>
<i>Force the tuft to come to life,</i>	<i>Let stalks rise here,</i>
<i>Make the ground fertile...</i>	<i>Let sprouts emerge here...</i>
<i>Wake up, earth,</i>	(Petrukhin 2003: 82)

In folk tradition, the Earth could cure a person from all diseases, she was asked to protect from evil spirits and witches. People believed that the earth was the main habitat of the dead, the element connecting the world of the dead and that of the living.



*Mastorava – Mother Earth.  
N. S. Makushkin.*



*Norovava – Mother Bread.  
N. S. Makushkin.*



*Paks'ava – protector of fields.  
A. S. Aleshkin.*



*Paks'ava – protector of fields.  
N. S. Makushkin.*

Differently from the Mother Earth of the Eastern Slavs, personifying the productive primordium and fertility of woman, the Finno-Ugric Earth Mother does not bear such functions. For instance, in Mordvin folk belief, the characteristics absent in Mother Earth Mastorava are attributed to Paks'ava, the protector of fields, who has an immediate connection with the crop, and Mother Bread Norovava, who, in addition, explicitly denotes the field and crop.

Among the Finno-Ugric peoples with scanty land cultivation, the goddess of the Earth sometimes also has cosmogonic functions. The Earth Mother of the Mansi, Kaltashch-ekva (Kaltas-ekva, Ma-ankva, Ioli-Torum-syan) participated in the creation of the world and man: it was indeed Kaltashch-ekva who gave advice to Numi-Torum, to secure the land floating on the surface of the ocean, with a belt of mountains; she was also the one who blew life into the first people.

Kaltashch-ekva, thrown on the earth from heaven, became the Goddess of Earth, and in folk tradition, she is also referred to as “earth with skin”, “earth with hair”. She was revered as the one protecting from illnesses and giving children. Kaltashch-ekva was considered the ancestress of the Mos people who united the Ob-Ugrians. She was depicted as a female rabbit or goose – the (totem) animal of ancestors, or as a butterfly, the spirit animal. As the ancestor of people, Kaltashch-ekva was believed to assist at childbirth, and to determine the destiny of people: she marked the entire course of life of a person on special sticks. The human fate after death also depended on her – she determined the persons from whose descendants the dead person had to be reborn (Myths 1990: 15).

In the mythology of the Scandinavian Sami, the Mother of Earth, Madderakka, i.e. the spouse of the heavenly god Madderatcha, participates in the creation of man, giving the spirit to the created body: when a boy is born, he is trusted to Uksakka, the daughter of Madderakka, and the newborn girl is given to another daughter, Sarakka. Fertility and the birth of people and animals are under the protection of Sarakka, as is the growth of plants. The third daughter Juksakka protects children and the dwellings of people.

The three daughters of the Earth Mother remind of the three governing goddesses, the Greek Moirae, or the three Old Norse Norns, known in the Balto-Finnic folklore as the ones who determined the destiny of people.

The archetype of motherhood among the Finno-Ugric peoples, revealed in protective deities who have a dense connection with the elements of the earth, is most vivid in Mordvin mythology. The Water Mother, Ved'ava, provides invigorating humidity, she is the protector of love, marriage and childbirth; family, calendar and (particularly) wedding traditions refer to this. Help was sought from the Mother Water not only during the drought, but also when the spouses



were infertile, or in order to overcome an illness associated with water; brides would call for the Mother Water, praying for happiness in the marriage, the blessing of the goddess, and to have many sons and daughters. On the second day of the wedding, the prayers of the bride were confirmed with offerings in the form of money or a hen drowned in water. An indispensable ritual was to immerse the bride in water – the bride was taken to the riverside straight from the wedding bed. Mordvins believed that this ritual was to contribute to the delivery of children.

Mordvin Ved'ava has certain common traits with mermaids, both with regard to their appearance, functions and disposition – as mermaids, Ved'ava was an anthropomorphic figure, she could appear as a young girl (either naked or in clothes) with long loose hair, and as a dreadful woman with hanging breasts. As with mermaids, water was the home of Ved'ava, and she could affect the destiny of man, fertility and crop yield of fields.

Likewise, water spirits protected motherhood and women's work among the Maris. After wedding, the young wife would give an offering to the Water Mother Vyd Ava: three beads or coins and a cowrie, saying, at the time: "Let it be peaceful for me to come to the water and let the evil not besiege me."

The Udmurts worshipped Gudyr-mummy and Invu-mummy (the Mother of Celestial Water), her name was constantly reiterated in prayers and at large ritual gatherings where the gusli-player played a sacred tune about the search of heavenly water, this was accompanied with the ritual lamentation of the people: the tears had to bring about a down-pour from heaven. Invu-mummy would also bring luck at childbirth and happiness in the family.

Ban'ava, the Sauna Mother in Mordvin mythology, has similar functions as Ved'ava – she is the protector of parturient women, family and health. The anthropomorphic figure of Ban'ava is a naked woman sitting on sauna platform, combing her long hair. Ban'ava lives on the sauna platform, or, less frequently, in the hearth. She lives there with her family – with children, and his husband Ban'ata. She can also appear in the attic, in infrequent occasions.



*Ved'ava – Water Mother.  
N. S. Makushkin.*



*Ban'ava – Sauna Mother. A. S. Aleshkin.*

Ban'ava as the protective deity of childbirth, family and health, had an important role in family tradition: at childbirth, wedding, funerals and wakes. The connection of Ban'ava with delivery is clearly traceable as it was indeed in the sauna where midwives assisted at childbirth.

Ban'ava's guardianship of childbirth and family is clearly evident as she also participates in wedding customs. A pre-nuptial ritual washing takes place in the sauna, and the content of the lamentations targeted at Ban'ava refer to a connection with initiation rites after which the bride is entitled to get married. The semantics of this tradition is very explicit: the bride leaves her virgin spirit to the protector of the sauna, in the sanctuary of ancestors. This act is associated with death. The signs of forthcoming resurrection

can be seen in un-plaiting hair, symbolising transformation in folklore, the assumption of a new shape, rebirth in a new quality.

Among the Mordvins, the Sauna Mother functions as the giver of health – as a healer, it is in her capacity to rid people of suffering, but she can also afflict people with a disease. Healing is thought of as expelling the disease, and is practiced in the sauna as this is a place of hygiene, with a curing and magic function. As the Sauna Mother occurs as the guardian of the life cycle of man, and also as the one guiding the future, it is not at all surprising that she also has the capability to forecast the future; she does indeed partially function as the goddess of fate (next to other protective deities) in Mordvian folk belief where there is no separate goddess as such.

Forest Mother, Vir'ava, appears to be the one protecting the fertility of women. In some texts, she also figures as a midwife – indeed, this might be associated with her anthropomorphic figure, huge breasts hanging to the knees or thrown over her shoulders. Vir'ava has the capacity to predict the future: according to one folklore text she had drowned the first newborn, and thrown the second baby in the fire, when assisting at childbirth, and wrapped the third one in swaddling clothes and given this to the mother. She had done this because she could see the future of the babies: “the first one would have drowned



when growing older, the other one would have burned in a fire, and the mother would have been more devastated than now” (Smirnov 2002: 221).

A number of fairy-tale plots, concerning Vir’ava, narrate of abduction of children and their later return home, referring to her ties with the initiation rite. Vir’ava helps children who have appeared in an unfamiliar environment (lost in the forest or the world beyond) and are tormented, giving them advice. In initiation rites Vir’ava tends to have similar functions as the Russian Baba Yaga; in general, they both look similar, being repulsive, not pleasant: Vir’ava has extremely long legs, or only one leg, one eye on top of her head, her teeth are huge and remind one of harrow spikes; Baba Yaga has one bone leg, she is blind (or her eyes ache), and her teeth are big and sharp. Both these characters underline certain femininity: large breasts which probably refer to fertility.



*Vir’ava – Forest Mother.  
N. S. Makushkin.*

The deities complementing the image of a big mother in Mordvin folk belief comprise Kudava, the house fairy, and Yurtava, the farm mother, who protected the surrounding environment, customs and traditions of people and their mode of life. They could foresee the destiny of a person, and could also change and affect this towards a certain direction. The connection with the cult of ancestors and the underworld is more explicit in these deities than the ones discussed above – the presence of Kudava and Yurtava is obligatory at weddings, funerals, wakes, or when placing a cornerstone, building a new house and moving in, etc.

Likewise, similar functions are also attributed to Konga ava, the protector of hearth and stove in Mari folklore – childless women appealed to her for help, and hopes were put on her in case of illnesses that seemed to have occurred during everyday work at the fireside, or when making firewood, fetching water or cooking for the wakes. The protector of hearth was prayed to provide domestic wellbeing during ritual practices concerning the most important phases of human life: at birth, when creating a family, at death and wakes (Toidybekova 2007: 120).

This archetype is also evident in Pugos (Anki-Pugos), the life-giving female deity, of the Eastern Khanty, who protects against diseases and gives children,

and is also referred to as the Mother of Fire. She was the daughter of Numitorum (though, in some myths, his mother).

Her dwelling lies far away in the east – beyond seven mountains, seven seas and seven birch forests. With sunbeams – the plaits of the deity – Pugos sends the souls of children, as little birds, into the bosom of the mother. At birth, she grants the power of life (*ИЛЬТ*) to the newborn person: for this she needs to touch seven cradles on the golden roof of her dwelling, and do this for seven times. When the baby gurgles in the cradle, this means she/he is talking to Pugos, and therefore, the grown-ups have to be careful not to speak indecently about the spirits while the child is listening. Pugos can punish women for being unfaithful, either with a complicated delivery or by giving birth to a bastard (Petrukhin 2003: 365).

Presumably, this archetype connecting fertility, destiny, marriage and the protection of the hearth in Finno-Ugric female deities, has certain mantic functions. Mother of Earth is the most complete representation of this archetype, having certain typological similarities in the tradition of different peoples. Likewise, the variability and the specific functional features of the archetype originate from the fact that some of her functions are executed by other deities, occurring in parallel in folk belief.

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## RESTRUCTURING OF THE RITUAL YEAR IN THE POST-SOCIALIST COUNTRIES

*Irina Sedakova*

The panel, under the title *Restructuring of the Ritual Year in the post-socialist countries: European values, ideology and ethnography*, was held in Stockholm in August 2010 at the 8th congress of ICEES (International Council for Central and East European Studies) and was dedicated to multifaceted processes in the festival year of former socialist countries. Three specially invited panelists (Ekaterina Anastasova, Bulgaria; Gabor Barna, Hungary; Arunas Vaicekauskas, Lithuania) made their presentations aiming to outline the major trends in the development of the corresponding national ritual years. The discussant Mare Kõiva (Estonia) made some points regarding the relations between official and personal celebrations and summed up the meeting.<sup>1</sup>

The theme for this academic discussion continued the questions raised on a smaller scale in 2007 in Stražnice (Czech Republic) where the SIEF (Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore) Ritual Year Working Group (President Dr Emily Lyle) held its annual conference under the general title *The Ritual Year and History*. Proceedings of this conference were published in the series of this working group's publications (*The Ritual Year and History* (The Ritual Year 3). Ed. by Irina Sedakova. Stražnice, 2008). At this conference and in the proceedings the correlation between holidays (be them official – state, church, or non-official) and history was set up as a major research problem, especially for the countries of the former USSR and the socialist bloc. At the Stockholm panel we decided to concentrate on a certain historical period – that of the last two decades when the socialist regime gave way to another new period in the history of many East European countries.

The change of epochs, regimes (and leading political and religious figures) results in new rituals, rethinking of heritage and inventing of traditions followed up by restructuring of the whole ritual year. Thus the official bank holidays, a single ritual or a part of one festivity (performance, folklore, magic object or art object), even individual celebrations are subject to historical transformations.

The changes in the ritual year(s) in the Eastern Europe and former socialist republics of the USSR proved to be a very deep, active and on-going project.

Gradual rejecting or rethinking of socialist celebrations, restoring of older, pre-socialist holidays and inventing of new national ritual complexes are still taking place in many countries.

Constructing of a ritual year has its specific features in each country. The historical dates which are incorporated into the run of the festival year and the political and religious (including the confession) background differ, as far as the balance between church and secular celebrations, the attitudes towards the European Union are concerned. The speed of changes and establishment of new (old new) values involved is also different. The first to change the calendars were the countries which regained their freedom in 1991.

The modern Russian ritual calendar can be opposed to that of many other former socialist countries which include such dates as “The invasion of the Red Army”, “Soviet occupation of the country”, or “the Day of the socialist revolution” as black memorial dates, and vice versa, with the liberation as a red day in the calendars. Each of the former Soviet republics in their turn develops their own attitudes toward the Soviet and pre-Soviet past. Smaller and bigger corrections (like the date of the Day of Independence in Belarus – from 27th to 3rd of July), innovations (a new memorial date on the 27th of June – the Day of Reconciliation in Tajikistan), discussions on potential calendric changes (introduction of the Day of the Soviet Occupation in Georgia), etc. demonstrate hard work by the government in shaping of the national ritual year.

Thus the panel in Stockholm aimed at drawing more attention to **comparative** studies of the social, political, cultural, religious, ethnological, philosophical, etc. status of modern festivals, which during the last two decades developed new semantics and structure. Along with the specific elements, which I mentioned above, all the changes in the system of the calendar festivities in post-socialist countries exemplify identical facets, based on old and new European values. All these and many other issues have to be analyzed for each country separately and then systematically compared.

## **SEVERAL COMMENTS ON THE CASE OF MODERN RUSSIA**

The last decade of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century made “the restructuring of the ritual year” one of the most topical subjects in the fields of religious and cultural studies, sociology, ethnology, political science and folklore in Russia. Unfortunately there are no academic studies which have interpreted these processes in depth.

The significance of this restructuring becomes obvious if we compare the Russian official calendars of 2000 (not to mention 1985) and of 2010, or just name the changes in the calendar celebrations during the last years. Many governmental decisions were made immediately after the decay of the USSR,

in the early 90s, when the new Day of Independence was established and the religious celebrations were legalized.

This process is not over – the state ritual year in Russia is still under construction, or reconstruction, and historical events play a crucial role in this process. It is a difficult task to make the new ritual year applicable to a new country and a new society, and meanwhile to keep the “old-fashioned” people pleased. We are at present witnessing a variety of attitudes to the events of history and different ways of incorporating them into the calendar

I will take as an example some of the new Russian holidays where important modifications to the ritual year followed in 2004–2005. To the unpopular Day of Independence, or Day of Russia (12 June), another “red” date was added. The Great Red Day of the October Revolution, which marked the ideologically most important ritual complex, was declared a memorial date and an ordinary working day. Instead, as the official holiday and day-off work, there was introduced an enigmatic date of the 4th of November – the Day of People’s Unity – in commemoration of very ambiguous historical events of 1612. Minin and Pozharsky coming from Nizhniy Novgorod fought off the Polish-Lithuanian occupation forces (and Pseudo-Dmitry) and the ruler became Tsar Mikhail Romanov, thus putting an end to the time of turmoil. Another motive for choosing this date came out later on, in 2006, from the Orthodox Church authorities, for this is the day of the Kazan icon of the Mother of God, celebrated also on the 4th of November. The coincidence is even more impressive to those who know that in Moscow the memorial to Minin and Pozharsky is erected close to the Church of Kazan Mother of God (destroyed by the communists and rebuilt during 1990–1993) in Red Square.

The combination of historical and religious content for facilitating the development of the national idea is at the core of many modern calendric decisions. Even more, religious content sometimes dominates and gives way to the invention of new national holidays. In 2008 the Day of Family, Love and Fidelity (8 July) was introduced in Russia and it immediately became very popular. This celebration grew up from the local veneration of the Saints Peter and Fevronia of Murom (beatified in 1547), the patrons of spouses, and was declared as nation-wide. The monuments of Saints Peter and Fevronia are erected in many Russian cities (and will be erected in many more), marking the places for new celebrations and performances (like bestowing specially issued medals with the images of the Saints to the couples who have lived together for 50 years). This holiday has a Russian flavor, in opposition to the Western celebrations of St Valentine’s Day which is still very popular in Russia. St Valentine’s Day is complementing the other “gender holidays” of Soviet origin – the Day of the Defender (23 February) and the International Women’s Day (8 March), which lost their ideological contexts and turned into commercial celebrations of love and romance. The new holiday has to be regarded in

the context of a series of other meaningful opposing factors: “Catholic/Russian Orthodox”, “somebody else’s, imported” as opposed to “our own”, “new/ traditional”, “partnership/family”, etc. This is not a bank holiday, but the mass-media made it very popular all around Russian territory.

There are also unending discussions of the restructuring of the calendar in the Russian Duma: whether to change the status of the Victory Day (9 May), and which memorial dates to add to the ever growing list of them in Russia.

***In conclusion.*** Being so vivid, obvious and well-illustrated, the transformations of the national ritual years, as it seems to me, are underestimated by the scholars in many countries. Probably one of the reasons for that is the similar “simplicity” and availability of the ethnological, folklore and sociological data. The traditional folklorists and ethnologists of the so to say before-Internet generations are not used to obtaining the research material so easily, close at hand, and to utilize it for theoretical generalization. Another reason, in my opinion, is the reluctance of the post-socialist societies, at this historical stage, to follow the decisions of the governments which in many countries are unpopular and are subject to crucial criticism.

Meanwhile the study of the modern calendric celebrations, if investigated in a typological and contrastive prospective, can give a lot to the understanding and evaluation of the dynamics of the official and non-official holidays and reasons for that. The analysis of this synchronical layer undoubtedly leads to the understanding of crucial diachronic points. The change from the ideological to non-ideological politics, correspondingly from closeness to openness (which brought in many borrowings), from aggressive atheism to open, supported and even advertised religiosity, etc. created a revolution in the scope and scale of values. It coincided with the universal process of globalization and the development of new technologies, which added to the rise of visual characteristics in any celebration, its commercialism, and the new achievements of the new generations of the 21st century, as some sociologists and psychologists note – joyfulness, infantilism, eagerness to perform. This last point goes along with some positive developments in society – the growth of the non-official support for local festivities and folklore events. Thus globalization is accepted in post-socialist countries but is resisted by keeping and promoting of the national ethnographic calendric customs and rituals.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> This topic was found that interesting and promising that in September a panel was arranged in Tartu at the conference *From Language to Mind. On the occasion of 110th Birthday of Academician Oscar Loorits and 75th Birthday of Pille Kipper*, see <http://www.folklore.ee/r/fo/konve/2010/loorits/teesid.pdf>.



## A FEW IMPRESSIONS AND REFLECTIONS

**American Anthropological Association: 109th Annual Meeting.  
November 17–21, 2010. New Orleans**

*Art Leete, Elo-Hanna Seljamaa, Laur Vallikivi*

In November 2010, our small group of Estonian scholars participated in the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) in New Orleans, Louisiana.<sup>1</sup> The general theme of the meeting was “Circulation”, inviting participants to explore the moving and mobility of people, objects, ideas, images, goods, practices and technologies, in various contexts as well as to critically assess scholarly understandings of circulation. The AAA is the world’s largest professional organization of scholars in anthropology and related fields. On this major scholarly forum of the year we presented our own papers and also visited several other panels. Since around 6,000 scholars participated in the meeting and there were 10–15 panels running simultaneously all the time, we could attend only a minor segment of the overall amount of sessions. Hereby we attempt to provide a few impressions gathered during this significant forum, focusing on anthropology of post-colonialism (including post-socialism), anthropology of Christianity and urban anthropology. First though let us give a short summary of the papers authored by us and our closest collaborators from abroad.

In the morning of the first day of the meeting, Elo-Hanna Seljamaa presented her paper on reflections on Estonian nationalist discourse in a panel titled *Migratory Spaces of Inclusion and Exclusion*. She strove to provide a balanced overview of Estonian minority policies and commented on larger societal drives that have shaped them, arguing that the post-Soviet Estonian state seeks to contain Soviet era immigrants while at the same time keeping them at bay. In addition, Elo-Hanna gave a few hints about the discrepancies between dominant integration discourse and grass-root-level responses from her fieldwork partners commonly classified as “the Russian-speaking population”.

The rest of us were, together with our Russian and Swiss/US colleagues, involved in a panel bearing the title of *Pentecostalism in Contemporary Rus-*

*sia: Globalization, Indigenization, and Social Context of Charismatic Christianity.* The concept of the panel was derived from the theoretical framework of an international project, which studies Pentecostal and Charismatic movements in Russia, predominately in the northern regions. Our joint project is coordinated by Alexander Panchenko and Sergei Shtyrkov from the European University at Saint Petersburg.

The panel was introduced by David Koester (University of Alaska, Fairbanks) who presented a retrospective on an earlier project of our joint team (NEWREL, see <http://www.newrel.org/nrm> ) that similarly focused on contemporary religious change in different regions of Russia. David expressed his optimism about the prospects of our new project and proposed that the continuation of the teamwork would promise reasonable progress in this important strand of research.

Piret Koosa provided an overview of social strategies of a small group of Evangelical Christians in a remote Komi village in the Ust-Kulom district in the south-eastern part of the Komi Republic. In spite of attracting much attention, mainly negative and because of the American missionary present, the group has remained very small, having less than 15 regular members. Preaching locally of a new faith is irritating for the villagers because they perceive it as an attack against their traditions and Orthodox religious continuity in their families. Furthermore, Evangelicals evidently carry and somehow give off the idea that their faith is more real and “right” than that of many of whom consider themselves to be Orthodox. It causes serious tensions between the Evangelical group and the rest of the community and makes the dialogue between them quite intriguing.

Art Leete analyzed social strategies of another Protestant group in the same region. The tiny Pentecostal community, led by a local-born Komi missionary, has existed for 10 years since 2000. The predominant issue that determines the slow social progress of the Pentecostals in the Ust-Kulom district is connected to the missionary’s personal choices of style. He does not try to apply extensive methods of missionization. At the same time he is convinced – in a rather inactive or fatalistic way – that better times for his group are still ahead.

Laur Vallikivi explored an ethnographic case of idol destruction in an encounter between a reindeer herding family and a Ukrainian Pentecostal missionary on the slopes of the Polar Ural Mountains in the northernmost part of the Komi Republic. The negotiation practices of idol destruction illustrate remarkable discrepancies between the Nenets and Russian Protestant understandings of the language (e.g. linguistic persuasion and coercion) and materiality. The act of destruction potentially cuts existing relationships both

with the spirits, kin and one's own past self among the Nenets, yet what is exactly destroyed and what a rupture brings about is not necessarily understood by the Nenets in the same way as the missionary expects.

Tatyana Bulgakova (Saint Petersburg, Russia) dedicated her report to the development of the Pentecostal Church in the context of post-Soviet religious transformations among the Nanay people in Russia's Far East. Tatyana argued that the post-Soviet religious change appeared among the Nanay people without causing a loss of shamanic traditions (although traditional shamanism was very much lost by the end of the Soviet era). When the Pentecostal missionaries arrived and demanded converts to reject shamanism, the Nanay perceived it as a request to renounce their ethnic cultural traditions and not their religion. Actually, when the Nanay people came across multiple new religious choices after Perestroika, a number of them preferred the Pentecostal Church because its religiosity seemed to match with the Nanay understanding of inherited shamanic practices.

Alexander Panchenko gave the last presentation of our panel. His paper was titled "*They Keep Killing Children*": *Pentecostalism and the Rise of "Anti-Sectarian" Discourse in the USSR after 1960*. Alexander analyzed the blood libel legend and other stereotypes employed in the anti-sectarian discourse by Soviet propaganda against the Pentecostals in the early 1960s. He demonstrated how certain interpretations of religious practices and behavioral models were represented by official propaganda and public opinion in order to attack the Pentecostals and other religious minorities in the former Soviet Union.

The 2010 Annual Meeting reflects a sudden upsurge of the interest in the anthropology of Christianity (especially the anthropology of charismatic Christianity) which only ten years ago was a relatively marginal research topic. This trend echoes the quick spread of Christianity itself, especially in the southern hemisphere but not only this, as the panel on the Russian North demonstrates. For example, the panel *Going Global: The Transformative Power of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christian Networks* focussed on the specific ability of Pentecostal Christianity to spread fast (attracting 9 million people annually) and maintain its shape. Key questions of the panel tackled features of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity that mould their interaction with each other in local communities, Pentecostal networking practices and identity-making, and conditions that support or obstruct the flow of global Pentecostal-Charismatic Christian discourses and practices.

Another panel, labeled as *Belief, Participation, Circulation: Challenges in Participant-Observer Fieldwork with Evangelical, Pentecostal, and Charismatic Christianities*, was dedicated to problems of the anthropologist's personal and

professional self-analysis while in the field which is heavily loaded with intensive religious feelings and thoughts. A participant field-worker confronts several crucial problems among the different charismatic Christians. To what extent must one participate in intensive practices (prayer, prophecy, speaking in tongues, healing) of the congregations under study? What to do if people seriously expect a researcher to get converted? Or in other words, do they trust only those who are completely engaged in their shared spiritual venture? Issues related to uncomfortable feelings regarding the researcher's own possible religious concerns and demands of sincerity were also actively discussed during this session.

The panel titled *Rethinking Postcoloniality and Postsocialism: Circulations of Religiosity and Secularization in the Expansion of Sovereignty* approached religious issues from a different perspective, exploring similarities and differences between the contexts of colonialism/post-colonialism and socialism/post-socialism. Presenting case studies from different societies, the participants explored problems of modernity in colonized and revolutionary societies. These societies faced the rapid expansion of secularization, but after the decolonization or the collapse of state socialism, they have experienced certain religious counter-reaction. These responses include new religious nationalisms, non-state or anti-state religions, causing a complex interchange between secular and religious modernist projects. One of the ideas expressed in the discussion following the presentations was that both post-colonialism and post-socialism ought to be treated as a relation rather than a condition.

In the panel *Conversion as an Analytic Category: Creating Emerging Worlds*, effects of radical spiritual change on individual and collective lives were discussed. Panelists examined conversion both ethnographically and analytically, aiming to reveal its formal logic, and investigated conscious and unconscious shifts in values, understandings and knowledge that go along with such religious experiences.

We also attended the panel dedicated to the relationship between religious domain and medicine titled *Bridging Spirituality and Medical Practices in New Ways*. Our main interest was related to Marjorie Mandelstam Balzer's (Georgetown University, USA) presentation that was devoted to the analysis of spiritual aspects of contemporary Sakha healers. Professor Balzer explained how healers had combined their medical practices with spirituality in different ways. She demonstrated how multiple aspects of modern medicine were creatively mixed with traditional healing techniques relying on the support of ancestors and helper spirits.

In conclusion, this short overview suggests that studies of Charismatic Christianity are of crucial importance for several fundamental methodological

issues of cultural and social anthropology. Hot topics of the contemporary anthropological research on Christianity were prominently presented and thoroughly discussed at the Annual Meeting, with contributions from several major scholars of the field (for example, Simon Coleman, Webb Keane, Joel Robbins and others).

Many scholars in the field of urban anthropology used the Annual Meeting's general theme "Circulation" to explore links between the production of space and the formation of subjectivities and national identities. As Michael Herzfeld noted in his introduction to the panel, *Seeing Like a City: The Anthropology of Urban Planning*, no system can be perfect or better than people who put it into practice. Therefore, although Western modernist thinking emphasizes rationalism and efficiency in the use of urban space, built environment and its re-workings are always shaped by religious and other factors specific to the given culture. Several papers in this panel looked at instances in different countries whereby immigrant communities were invited to participate in town planning and came up with solutions that made visible and challenged the values and norms promoted by the nation state. For example, while urban planning in Sweden seeks to build sameness, the diasporic Syriac Orthodox Christians of Södertälje adopted the strategy of self-segregation by designing houses that differ from the "typically Swedish", but correspond to their family-centered and communal life style.

The panel titled *Between Governmentality and State Coercion: Governing Bodies in Space* focused more directly on struggles over public urban spaces and on spatial techniques used by states to reinforce their presence as well as to govern marginal groups deemed as a threat. The paper by Ilgin Erdem on the efforts of the Turkish state to suppress commemorative gatherings on one of Istanbul's central squares provided particularly interesting parallels with the Estonian 2007 Bronze Soldier crisis: in both cases the government sought to discipline citizens by appropriating a place and de-sacralizing it.

Another panel bearing the title of *Strangers and Neighbours* approached urban spaces and life from the perspective of the intertwined concepts of strangeness and intimacy. Panelists explored various practices through which intimacy is performed (e.g. distinction made in Italy between immigrant caretakers of the elderly and volunteers of Italian background who mimic the familiar care) or engineered by means of town planning, though in actuality, urban communities are more likely to emerge from situations of conflict where residents join forces in order to confront officials and make claims.

These and many other panels and papers in the broad field of urban ethnography demonstrated that rather than being just a setting in which social processes unfold and research takes place, space is a physical product of the work

of particular actors, a site of constant struggles and negotiations as well as a means of producing and resisting particular distinctions and subject positions. As a city and community that is still in the process of rebuilding itself after hurricane Katrina, New Orleans provided a symbolically laden venue for exploring these and other core questions of anthropology and related fields.

## **NOTES**

- <sup>1</sup> This research was supported by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (Center of Excellence CECT), Estonian Science Foundation (Grant No. 8335) and the Center for the Study of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements in Russia.



## MOSCOW CONFERENCES ON BALKAN STUDIES

*Irina Sedakova*

Since 1990, the Institute for Slavic Studies (Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow) has organized biennial linguo-cultural conferences on the Balkan area, covering Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia (and some other countries of former Yugoslavia), Greece, Romania, Albania and part of Turkey<sup>1</sup>. Slavic and Baltic studies are sometimes included in the agenda, which immensely broadens the research area and the comparative resources. I will review the topics and the academic problems discussed during the conferences and the publications prepared before (*Balkanskie chteniia 1–11*) and after (*Obraz mira* 1993; *Znaki Balkan* 1994; *Simvolicheskii* 1994; *Vremia v prostranstve Balkan* 1994; *Slavianskoe* 1977; *Vostok i Zapad: 2007*)<sup>2</sup> the academic meetings.

The Balkan conferences and corresponding books focus on languages, folklore and rituals of the region. Problems of the archaic *Weltanschauung*, folk axiology, etc. are being studied within the semiotic methodology and are discovered not only in the mentioned languages, ethnological and folklore data, but also in history, visual arts, literary works, etc. Many of the ideas initially discussed during the Balkan conferences developed into serious monographs, and were also used in the volumes of the fundamental ethno-linguistic dictionary on Slavic antiquities (*Slavianskie drevnosti* 1995–2009).

The very idea of such academic gatherings, uniting specialists in ancient studies to discuss the problems of the Balkan Linguistic League, mythology, folklore, material culture, literature and arts of the Balkans, was verbalized by the founders of the Moscow semiotic circle (*Iz rabot Moskovskogo semioticheskogo kruga: 1997*) Viacheslav Ivanov, Vladimir Toporov, Tatiana Nikolaeva and Tatiana Tsivian, who were close colleagues with Mikhail Lotman and the semiotic school of Tartu.

The research ground for the modern conferences was laid during the first Balkan symposia in the early 1970s (*Pervyi simpozium* 1972; *Balcano – Balto – Slavica* 1979; *Struktura teksta–81* 1981), the scope of the problems for further

discussions was clarified at the very first academic meeting (*Pervyi simpozium* 1972: 3). The first conferences and publications (to mention some of them: *Balkany* 1986; *Slavianskoe* 1977; *Balcanica* 1979; *Paleobalkanistika* 1989) have broadened the initial tasks and moved towards the studies of the Balkan model of the world through linguistics and structure of the text.

The 1st and 2nd Balkan conferences (1990, 1992) did not have a title and were dedicated to the general problems of the text structure. Starting from the 3rd Balkan Conference, a particular problem was chosen to be considered during the sessions. Thus the 3rd Balkan Conference (1994) was an arena for discussing the linguo-ethno-cultural history of the Balkans. The 4th conference (1997) concentrated on Greece and Greek language, literature and folk culture. The main theme for the 5th Balkan Conference (1999) was *In Search for Balkanisms in the Balkans*, addressing the core question of and the grounds for the very notion of the Balkan linguistic and ethnocultural league.

The 6th Balkan Conference was titled *HOMO BALCANICUS: Behavioral Scenario and Cultural Roles*. The subject matter of the 7th Balkan Conference (2003), *In Search for Oriental Issues in the Balkans*, and that of the 8th conference (2005), *In Search for the Western Issues in the Balkans*, attracted a number of scholars as the questions of interference and influence are very significant for the multilingual and multicultural Balkans.

The 9th Balkan Conference (2007) was dedicated to the jubilee of the distinguished balkanist Tatiana Tsivian. The festschrift, *Terra Balcanica. Terra Slavica*, was published for that occasion and comprised the presentations of the conference as well as other articles in honor of the scholar (*Balkanskie chteniia* 9). The 10th Balkan Conference was dedicated to another important date – centenary of the publication of A. van Gennep's book *Rites de Passage*, which turned into a classic handbook for the ethnologists and culturologists. The topic of the conference, *Transitions. Transit. Transformations*, appealed to those who are interested in the development of the concept of transition and its stages in the languages, folklore pieces and rituals in the Balkans from ancient times up until today (*Balkanskie chteniia* 10).

The 11th Balkan conference, *Balkan Spectrum: from Light to Color*, took place at the institute on March 22–24, 2011. The book of preliminary materials with 40 papers was published prior to the conference which was indeed an international event – with presentations delivered by 15 scholars from 9 countries. Joseph Brian (USA) discussed the problems concerning the sound symbolism of words denoting “light and fire” in Albanian and Greek languages. Symbols related to the color of the skin, as a marker of beautiful (our own, familiar) and ugly (somebody else's, unknown) persons in Balkan folklore was

the subject matter raised by Victor Friedman (USA). General symbolic features of the Slovenian folklore spectrum were reviewed by Zmago Šmitek (Slovenia). The Balkan Slavic specific of the color semantics in the Slavic traditional cultures was revealed by Olga Belova (Russia). Anton Tunin (Russia) shed light on the role of color in modern Greek riddles, and classified color epithets according to their pragmatics.

The archaic color triangle “white-red-black” (determined by Victor Turner) proved to be in the core of Balkan traditional culture, as Denis Ermolin (Russia), Agata Iakimova (Russia), Aleksander Novik (Russia) showed in their papers on funeral rites and national costumes in the Balkan countries. The opposites – white and black – in various contexts can develop ambivalent connotations and even turn into synonyms in folk beliefs, as Irina Sedakova (Russia) showed in her essay on the Macedonian prose of magic realism. The red color amplifies the essence of life, being connected to the color of blood, as Ljubinko Radenkovic (Serbia) and Natalia Golant (Russia) showed. Anna Plotnikova discussed different colors of the caul of a baby which predict the demonic qualities for the newly born. These beliefs are prevalent only in the western part of the Balkans which can be explained by the Roman substrate.

Light in the Balkan folk culture is perceived as one of the forms of a soul, so the demonic lights which move in the dark and are described as spirits are connected with the ideas of the cult of the dead and the other world (Mirjam Mencej, Slovenia; Ludmila Vinogradova, Russia).

Ethnobotanics, which is quickly developing nowadays in Russia, added some new perspectives to the investigations of light and color in the Balkans. Aleksandra Ippolitova (Russia) compared the pictures of plants with their description in the medieval herbals, showing the conventionality between the picture and the color in the definition. Valeria Kolosova (Russia) studied the herbal terminology with the idea of fire and showed that in a phytonym various aspects of the concept of fire can be reflected: the light, bright color, or the bitter taste (\*gor-) of the plant, etc.

Discussion during the conferences touched upon many other characteristics and features of the light and color: the history of the terms, the phenomenon of the fashion, the “pure linguistic” and metaphoric development of the concepts, etc.

Besides the biennial Balkan conferences, the Center for Linguo-cultural Studies organizes round tables on various fragments of the Balkan cultures. The first one, held in 2008, was dedicated to the calendric rituals, folklore and mythology regarding the month of March, and was titled *Маргеница. Mărțișor*

Μαρτ΄ς. Verore.... The proceedings of this round table were published in a separate edition (Martenitsa 2009). *Martenitsa*, an artifact made of white and red yarn, is used as a gift on the 1st of March in many Balkan countries. The modern development of traditional customs, and the celebration of the 1st of March as well, shows the growth of commercialism, ornamentality and the lust for entertainment. The rituals of the 1st of March are only a small part of other calendric festivities in the Balkans. March itself is a mythological hero, who is ambivalent and can be depicted as an old woman or a man with a wild temper.

In 2010, a round table “Цветница. Diela e lulevet. Duminica florilor. Βαγιοτσυριασση.. Vegetative code of Palm Sunday in the Balkan-Baltic-Slavic area” was organized to discuss the terminology of the feast, the scope of the plants used in and outside the church, and the development of relevant magical practices and beliefs. The proceedings were published in 2010, in vol. 6 of the journal of traditional culture *Traditsionnaia kul'tura*.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> In 2008 the Center for Linguo-cultural Studies, BALCANICA, was established in the Institute for Slavic Studies (Russian Academy of Sciences). Before that, Balkan Studies were dealt with in many departments of the Institute and the Balkan conferences were regularly held, see ([www.inslav.ru](http://www.inslav.ru)).

<sup>2</sup> A detailed review of the folklore related problems discussed during the 1st–8th Balkan conferences, and the list of papers delivered, see in Sedakova 2006.

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*Irina Sedakova*

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### REVIEW, COMMENTS AND PERSPECTIVES WITH REGARD TO RENATA SÕUKAND'S DOCTORAL DISSERTATION *HERBAL LANDSCAPE*

Renata Sõukand's dissertation is composed of six articles based on the concept of herbal landscape, on the role of folk medicine in Estonia during a long period of time, and on the use of plants as insect repellents.

During the period 2004–2010, Renata collected a great amount of information on plants used in popular medicine adopting ecosemiotic and ethnobotanic methods across descriptive, comparative, quantitative and theoretical approaches.

The thesis has been developed in four main directions:

- a. To present an overview of plant collection;
- b. To integrate the ethnobotanical framework adopting an ecosemiotic approach;
- c. To adapt the notion of perceived herbal landscape to the folklore data;
- d. To verify how there could be an improvement in the ethnobotanical research with the approaches proposed by Renata.

The herbal landscape is a very attractive concept that opens new perspectives in terms of folklore development not only in Estonia but across Europe as well. Renata Sõukand has demonstrated great competency in different sectors of the herbal landscape from bibliographic research to data set handling. The cultural heritage of Estonian herbal landscape has been underlined and discussed in details and reinforced by a rich bibliographic review.

How to conserve the human and social capital of herbal landscape and how to improve this cultural richness appears as a goal for the author. The presentation of different case studies, juxtaposed to a semiotic approach, is a fine example of integration between epistemological and empirical vision of the complexity. The herbal landscape seems an occasion to demonstrate the changes occurring in the last years in Estonian society, changes that can be found across all of Europe.

The relationship between medical plants and the concept of biodiversity could be a relevant topic to be questioned as often biodiversity is considered as a natural element far from human context, when in reality biodiversity means diversity of meaningful information of human surroundings.

Medical plants appear along the different papers that composed Renata Sõukand's thesis as an integrated resource involving beliefs, traditions, religious and medical properties.

The utilization of an ecosemiotic approach opens new perspectives also to other related fields like food products and local tradition, biodiversity perception and education. For these reasons I consider relevant the epistemological and cultural contribution that Renata Sõukand has offered in this PhD thesis and a clear example of application of ecosemiotic principles to the "real world".

Conserving biodiversity means not only preventing environmental degradation and species extinction but also means maintaining active knowledge and the related semi-

otic mechanisms. Biodiversity, as implicitly demonstrated by Sõukand's thesis is not an external natural element separated by human context but is a strictly interacting component of everyday living.

Extending the approach presented in Sõukand's thesis to other components of human context like the sound-scape or the heritage-scape seems a very promising innovative approach to guarantee human wellbeing on the local, regional and continental scale.

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## THESIS DEFENCE: ANNELI BARAN

### *POSSIBILITIES FOR STUDYING SEMANTICS IN PHRASEOLOGY*

On the 15th of March 2011, Anneli Baran defended her PhD thesis *Fraseologismide semantika uurimisvõimalused* [*Possibilities for Studying Semantics in Phraseology*] at the University of Tartu. The opponent could point out that Baran had taken on a challenging task when she, as a philologist and folklorist, had searched for new approaches to semantics in phraseology. One aim of Baran's dissertation is to prove how the psycholinguistic and cultural approach increases explanatory capacity in linguistics when semantics of phraseologisms are concerned. Beside the theoretical discussion about the possibilities for studying semantics in phraseology she bases her own conclusions on experience with Estonian phraseology during the construction of the database and also on results of queries among Estonian schoolchildren. She has also discussed experiments to use data from the Internet.

Baran seizes the problem of the lack of reciprocal discussion between phraseologists and psycholinguists interested in relevant questions of phraseology. She shows the history and mainstreams of different scholarly approaches in studying semantics in phraseology, the development of defining concepts by some predominant researchers, key persons' personal correcting movements (e.g. Raymond Gibbs). Baran analyzes the key concepts considered to be crucial for understanding semantics of phraseologisms. She debates approaches that are too narrow. For that she uses her own results reported in the articles and finds support from other research outcomes.

I recommend reading an important earlier article *The Compilation of the Database of Estonian Phrases* (2004) which has Baran as one of the authors (published in journal *Folklore* 25). The article and orientation to the database of Estonian phrases give a better comprehension in reading her theoretical discussion. In her dissertation Baran opens the central constructs of phraseology: permanence, iconographic/symbolic/metaphoric quality, motivation and idiomaticity in the light of psycholinguistic research. Linguistic "motivation" has been the most central term after Russian linguist V. V. Vinogradov's (1947) criteria for the classification of phraseological items, where phraseologisms without motivation are most idiomatic. It is quite natural that Baran also starts from the motivation-related problems concerning phraseologisms. She finds a new clue for motivation research from Dmitrij Dobrovolskij's studies with Elisabeth

Piirainen (e.g. 1996, 2009) and with Anatoli Baranov (2008), in which the observation of two types of motivation – iconic or metaphoric and symbolic or cultural – does not exclude the units with a smooth transmission.

It is also necessary to go deeply into Baran's six articles in order to understand her convinced attitude towards cultural preconditions for use of phrases and phraseological competence.

In her first article in which she deals with the length of sayings, she writes about the archival material: "Phraseological fixed expressions/idioms reflect historical facts, biblical themes, folk culture and folk wisdom, superstition and facts from various areas of life involved in fostering material values. The collected material of short forms tends to be characteristically laconic." She gives interesting examples of diachronic changes in Estonian phrases. For example, she writes about the association of *valge hobune* 'a white horse' with *vale* or *valetamine* 'a lie', or 'lying'. By these examples she points out how the structure of a saying, i.e. its components and the overall meaning of the phrase, are closely interrelated.

In Baran's second article she displays more about the religious background of Estonian phrases by going through the history of translation loans of German phrases. She makes a remark that it is impossible to prove which Estonian phrases entered the tradition due to the influence of religious literature and which phrases were actually adopted by the church from Estonian phraseology. "The first texts recorded in Estonian language were not created by ethnic Estonians, but were created for them, in order to provide guidance," comments Baran.

The third article concentrates on the role of phraseologisms in the language used by Estonian youth; in the fourth we become acquainted with the slurs containing names of animals in Estonian phraseology and the fifth article studies the use of Estonian hyperbolic phrases on the Internet. Baran finds the material of hyperboles as an excellent opportunity to study creativity in verbal expression.

Baran's last article can be considered the key text of the dissertation. She finds the question of semantic ambiguity of phraseologisms the most fascinating phenomenon for a researcher in the field. She arranged an inquiry among students of two upper secondary schools in Estonia, 147 students, aged 16–18. For a questionnaire she had to screen 35 expressions from the 170,000 texts. First and foremost, the questionnaire aimed at ascertaining whether the fixed linguistic expressions have a place in the vocabulary (lexicon related knowledge) of today's school-leavers, and how the use of such expressions has altered. Thus, Baran purposefully did not present the expressions in any context. As a result she found many psycholinguistically interesting things.

She noticed a trend to explicate the phrase with another expression. But as a phraseologist Baran considers the so-called wrong answers as the most interesting ones. There were answers showing that an expression was understood only in its direct meaning. For Baran these answers were important evidence to be able to see the ratio of the phraseological meaning and direct meaning. She knew that the discrepancy, non-compatibility and contradiction of these two meanings condition the (semantic) idiomaticity of the expression. Now she noticed that when there is no knowledge of the idiomaticity, the salient meaning is the direct one.

The most fruitful answers in Baran's point of view were those with altered meaning of the expression. She presents fourteen expressions with a number of similar answers where a semantic change had taken place. These were the phrases with a slightly

deviant variation from the conventional meaning and their interpretation was based on the salient direct meaning or associating connections.

In Baran's dissertation the construct of salience turned out to be crucial for her pointing out the possibilities for studying semantics in phraseology. Salient features have obviously gained their always accessible status in our memory through frequent use and special contexts. "This concept is of relevance in the research concerning the understanding of phraseological units as reproduction units," writes Baran in the last chapter of the theoretical part of her dissertation.

For Baran the idea that the subject matter of phraseology is a continuum of varied units rather than homogeneous ones seems to open new ways to broaden the opportunities to make phraseological research. She criticizes, with good reason, scholars persisting in artificial classifications and shows the importance of cultural knowledge behind the interpretation process. "Figurative expressions cannot be treated as bare texts owned and used by all language users in the same way," writes Baran.

More research should also be done to really find out the role of the context in understanding a figurative unit. Thus, folkloristics, cognitive science and social psychology prove to be necessary contributors to linguistics in order to get an overall impression of these questions. Baran has already taken part in the international discussion with her presentations in conferences and with these six articles. I hope she will use her recent theoretical apparatus and continue presenting evidence for her integrative approach.

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Finnish Literature Society in Helsinki

## **PRESIDENT'S FOLKLORE AWARDS AND ARCHIVAL YEAR OF 2010**

On March 14, the Day of Mother Tongue, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, the President of the Republic of Estonia, presented awards to the best folklore collectors of 2010. During the festive gathering in the Estonian Literary Museum, prizes were also handed over to those contributing to the Estonian Folklore Archives and the best collectors of kindergarten lore.

Prize-winners – Maire Sala, Anni Oraveer and Ellen Randoja – received the President's Folklore Award for their thematic collections donated to the archives in 2010.

Maire Sala's collection of burial customs and graveyard culture, gathered and put together during 1997–2010, comprises systemised black-and-white and original colour photographs (1,228) with relevant data, recordings of beliefs and customs, rhyme-books, original documents and copies thereof, and other manuscripts (900 pages), small printed matter (1,304 song sheets), newspaper clippings, film strips, etc. The material from Viljandi County of Estonia (cemeteries and churches in Halliste and Karksi areas) forms the largest part of the collection. Maire Sala lives and works in the vicinity, in Karksi-Nuia, where she runs a funeral home. It is her dearly cherished mission to record and preserve the tradition and artefacts associated with Estonian burial culture, and she has compiled a book *To Eternity: Estonian Burial Traditions and*

Prize-winners Ellen Randoja, Anni Oraveer, Maire Sala, and President Toomas Hendrik Ilves. Photo by Alar Madisson 2011.

Today, *Design of Graves and the History of Graveyards in Viljandi County*. The exhibition, *Estonian Funerals. Burial and Graveyard Tradition in Estonia*, put together by Maire Sala, was displayed in the Estonian National Museum in 2010.

During the years 2007–2010, Anni Oraveer has sent 712 pages of written data and approximately 20 hours of sound recordings to the archives, containing the tradition and oral history of the Estonian Blind community: jokes, stories, anecdotes, family tradition, feasts-related customs, songs and instrumental music, personal and biographical data. Another part of her collection includes dialectal stories based on the folk tradition of Seto people, equipped with comments for the archive. Anni Oraveer was born in 1942 in the Seto area; she does not see and uses the computer-based speech programme meant for the visually impaired, and sends her contributions to the archive either by e-mail or on discs. Anni Oraveer has also published a number of books in Estonian, e.g. *Hedgehog and Rabbit* and *Action and Consequence* (also published in Braille), and in the Seto dialect, *Seto rahvas murrõh ja rõõmuh* [The Joys and Sorrows of the Seto People].

Ellen Randoja's contribution comprises 188 pages of written oral history, from her grandparents, born in the 19th century, her parents and other relatives and neighbours, heard as a child when growing up in the northern part of Tartu County: folk songs and tales (fairy-tales, narrated history concerning manors, jokes, etc.), stories from the times of World War II and the post-war kolkhoz era (colourful narrations of local people, soldier songs, jokes and mock songs, anecdotes). Ellen Randoja has written of owls in folklore, within a vivid personal and life history related context. Ellen Randoja was born in 1929 and lives in Palamuse.

The total amount of contributions to the Estonian Folklore Archives in 2010 entailed 8,000 pages of written material, including 36 songbooks, 340 hours of sound recordings, approx. 170 hours of videos and more than 3,200 photographs.

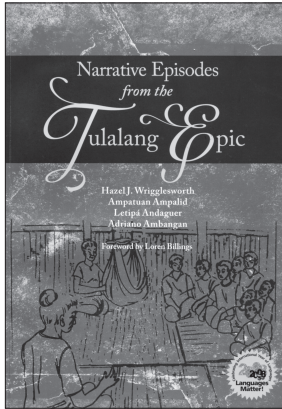
The ash cloud from the Icelandic volcano and the impact of this on the life of people all over the world inspired the employees of the Estonian Folklore Archives to create an institutional Facebook account on April 20, to increase the efficacy of relevant folklore collection – every day, the account presents to the public one of the archival records associated with the volcanic rupture and gives an overview of what is taking place in the archives. As similar collection campaigns were also initiated by a number of media channels, it was mainly the folklorists who responded to the appeal of the Estonian Folklore Archives – showing that troubles and accidents are immediately reflected in folklore, circulating as comical and jocular anecdotes and other short forms.

Astrid Tuisk



## BOOK REVIEW

### A POLYPHONIC COLLECTION OF NARRATIVES



*Narrative Episodes from the Tulalang Epic*. Hazel J. Wrigglesworth (comp. & transl.), Ampatuan Ampalid, Letipá Andaguer, Adriano Ambangan. Manila: Linguistic Society of the Philippines, 2008. 274 pp.

Hazel J. Wrigglesworth has compiled a number of publications of folk tales – more general anthologies (1981) and collections consolidating the variants of one plot (e.g. Wrigglesworth 1991), or the stories of one narrator (e.g. Wrigglesworth & Mengsenggilid 1993). The guarantee for the coherence of the current collection is the common theme – encompassing stories delivering the narrative episodes of one of the most popular – Tulelangan – epics of the Ilianen Manobo.

The book, comprising four tales recorded during 1962–1995, by narrators Ampatuan Ampalid, Letipá Andaguer and Adriano Ambangan, is in two languages, with the original in the Ilianen Manobo, on the left, and the English translation on the right, equipped with footnotes explicating the linguistic, rhetoric and cultural nuances. In addition, there are references to the type catalogue of tales and to motif numbers (proceeding from AT, not the ATU catalogue), to relate the stories to a wider international context. However, the publisher also gives a warning not to expect the genre definition from the type numbers – although the reference to folktale catalogue associates the stories with fairy-tales, i.e. with the genre not related to beliefs, the Ilianen Manobo themselves actually regard the tales as part of their oral history (see, e.g., p. 7).

Wrigglesworth notes, in the introduction, that Tulelangan – the story of the immortal hero Tulalang – is one of the two major epics of the Ilianen Manobo. Yet differently from the *Ulahingan* epic cycle, relatively difficult to be understood for modern readers due to the archaic language, Tulelangan, with more up-to-date language use, continues to be popular among the older as well as the younger generation. Still, the presenting in song of the Tulelangan happens on rare occasions, as there are not enough professional singers and the process would be too time-consuming (see p. 2); formal storytelling of the epic continues to be topical “in recalling the precedents in the formal settling of Manobo “custom law” cases, *kukuman*” (p. 3). Indeed, the current collection mainly comprises the prose tales, although there are unfortunately no comments concerning the fact whether any of these stories have actually been a reason for a court case.

In general, the entire collection could be reproached for being somewhat contextually idealised – there is absolutely no information about the recording context or the background of the storytellers, with only a pencil picture of a typical narrating situation depicted on the cover of the book. Even the comments added to the tales are not focusing on the specificity of the concrete storytelling situation but instead, describe



the general rhetoric devices, and the potential ways of using them. (In addition, it tends to be tedious to read the recurrent verbatim comments on rhetoric devices during a longer period of reading).

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Irrespective of what is said above, it was indeed a positive experience for me to read the book; one of the features I really liked (and which also somewhat alleviated the lack of context with regard to the stories) was the fact that, in addition to the narrator's tale and the comments by the researcher, there was also a third voice: interjections by the listeners, giving a dramatic nuance to the written tales and reminding *the reader* that an oral narrative is never a mere text, instead, the entire event as a communicative integrity is of relevance. "The telling is the tale; therefore, the narrator, his story, and his audience are all related to each other as components of a single continuum which is the communicative event." (Ben-Amos 1971: 10) Highlighting of this communicative component makes it possible to see what makes the stories significant for the narrators and for the listeners.

Likewise, the diversity of the communicative situation becomes more distinct: some of the comments are targeted at the narrator and others at the characters in the story, and the third ones evaluate the behaviour of characters. The aim of the first is to convince the storyteller to continue, confirming that the listeners are still there, following the story with great attention: *Nè be!* – 'Keep going (don't stop here)!' (33); *Hedù!* – 'Keep on! [You're telling it just like it happened.]' (103), and other comments refer to how a good storyteller can make the listeners become participants in his narration, creating a feeling in the listeners as if they could make direct contact with the characters: *Nè, nè, nè!* – 'Watch out!' (27); *Ey, Pilas, netuen ke en!* – 'Ey, Monkey, you've been discovered!' (29); *Uya, su ayan dè ma mulà.* – 'Yes, but that's only what he was pretending to do.' (97). The third type of comments are part of intra-community communication – by way of judging the behaviour of the characters, the listeners verify to each other the validity of certain collectively accepted norms. *Midtantu ve iya ini se datù.* – 'This chief really overdid his eating.' (27); *Metekudi imbe ne mence kenakan!* – 'Really shameful young-men!' (59); *Aday, tarù din an.* – 'Aday, he's lying.' (113).

Moreover – besides stressing the narrative, oral and communicative nature of what is written, these comments obtain a totally new communicative task in the book context – when set in the position of a title, these comments become the initial guide for the *readers* of the book. For instance, the title of the first story, *The Famous Young-man who Disguised himself as a Monkey*, originates from a comment in the beginning of the story: "Keep on, for this is the Famous Young-man who disguised himself as a young monkey." (11). In narration context, the aim of this utterance is to encourage the narrator to go on and also to confirm (for the narrator and the co-listeners) that the story and the character have been recognised. The latter is important as usually, the name of the main character is not used until the very end of the tale – the same goes for this story, at first the narrator talks about the monkey, whereas the one who made the comment, indicates that he had understood that this story belongs within the Tulelangan cycle – *The Famous Young-man* is one of the most prevalent name shapes for Tulalang (although the narrator refers to the name of the character only on page 71). Yet now, when

used as the title, the comment becomes positioned in a relatively different communicative situation – it ceases to be the feedback given to the storyteller but instead is a hint given to the reader (who remains outside the group), to understand the story more adequately.

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Wrigglesworth notes in the beginning of the book that the initiative to record and publish the tales actually came from the Manobo themselves who realised, as the number of dedicated storytellers is constantly decreasing, that there is a need to find other possibilities to pass on the stories to future generations: “For, as they explained, these narratives embody the very Manobo cultural heritage that has thus far been successfully preserved *rut te kelukesan te enenayan ne melimbag rut te langun dut te sikami ne Manuvù* ‘from our very first ancestors created down to all of us Manobos today.’” (ix) In addition, Wrigglesworth underlines the wish of storytellers to publish their repertoire: “I am also grateful to the narrators represented in this volume for not giving up in their encouragement for me to publish narratives from their repertoires of Manobo Oral Literature.” (ix)

Although there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of these statements, they do raise certain questions. For instance, Lauri Honko has written: “Interest in such documentation is rare inside the oral cultures which produce epic performances as part of their annual cycle of feasts, rituals or working techniques.” (Honko 2000: 28) The reason for my question is not so much this generalisation given by Honko, but actually his personal experience of a totally opposite case – Gopala Naika, the presenter of the Siri epic was actively searching for someone who would be able to record his knowledge. At the same time, Honko also highlights that the songster wanted to record his wisdom but he was in great difficulties to imagine his performance in the form of a book: “The performative and referential elements abolished in the process seemed so essential to him.” (Honko 2000: 34) Thus, Honko sees the compilation of the book as an inter-semiotic translation process the aim of which, instead of reconstructing the initial storytelling-situation, is readable text, which would fit into the literary context of other textualised epics (meant to be read): “If the oral text has any literary value, it will, after all, bloom, not wither, in writing.” (Honko 2000: 37)

In the light of such a directions towards literacy, Honko’s approach seems to be quite different from what Wrigglesworth seems to strive for; another marked difference is also the fact that Honko has consciously not written any comments (Honko 2000: 38). Yet the main difference between the two is the fact that the Honko approach to the issue is in re-thought, with full consciousness about the contradictory nature of the process and its outcome, whereas Wrigglesworth does not pay attention to these matters.

Another relatively illustrative possibility for comparison concerns the attempts of Richard and Nora Marks Dauenhauer to compile a publication of Tlingit tales and do this “from a Tlingit point of view and in a way acceptable to the oral tradition bearers and the Tlingit community” (Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1995: 92). Similar to Honko and Wrigglesworth, the Dauenhauers also proceeded from the initiative of the tradition bearers. Yet contrary to Honko, who deemed it positive for such a text to appear in the literary sphere, the Dauenhauers aimed at avoiding the conventional literary canon.

Or, more precisely: one of the underlying motivational factors in their work was the dissatisfaction of (illiterate!) narrators with the earlier publications of Tlingit tales, which presented these folk tales as children's literature, with no references to the storytellers. Thus, the goal for the Dauenhauers was to issue a collection of tales that would please the bearers of tradition, whereas the target audience was supposed to be the younger generation of the Tlingit people.

These two aims, however, turned out to be incompatible: the grandchildren's generation, of the storytellers who had cooperated with the researchers, was not capable of relating to this publication: "The older generation of tradition bearers was disturbed that Tlingit literature in its written form would become too "bookish", too disembodied. But some of the younger generation are disturbed because it [...] does not follow the literary models and conventions of the contemporary children's literature in English with which they are raising their children." (Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1995: 100).

Bearing in mind the above examples it would now be appropriate to ask how did Wrigglesworth's informants construe the undertaking of the researcher (although in her case the question is ever more intriguing due to the fact that in addition to the narrator, the listeners also have a say in Wrigglesworth's book). One of the hints that their attitude was not always uniform (as revealed from Wrigglesworth's acknowledgement of gratitude), can be found in the foreword of the tale collection from 1991, *The Maiden of many Nations*, where Wrigglesworth notes that the peoples represented in the book with their tales "are presently living in a time of rapid social change that is affecting the basic traditions that have had a vital part in shaping their culture" (3).

The latter has brought about the situation where the attitudes, of the younger and older generation, to "oral literature" are quite different: if the older generation believes in the reality of these stories, then the younger generation – schooled and educated – can "distinguish almost without exception this folktale category of their oral literature as "make-believe."" (Wrigglesworth 1991: 3–4 It is highly unlikely that such an education related difference would not affect the understanding of different generations with regard to the nature and need of the work of a folklorist; or what kind of books should be compiled, for whom and for what purpose these books are published.

Another interesting quote by Wrigglesworth is from the collection, *Good Character and Bad Character: The Manobo Storytelling Audience As Society's Jurors* (1993), where she says how lack of school education had played an important role in Pengendà Mengsenggilid becoming an acknowledged storyteller (Wrigglesworth 1993: 5). Thus, the wish of Mengsenggilid to record and publish her narratives can also be regarded as her hope to enter the sphere of literacy, with a book of her own tales. At the same time, her intention should not be seen through the prism of literacy intrinsic of Western culture, but instead, through the personal understanding towards writing and the essence of books. The latter, however, would introduce a new domain referred to by different authors as *grassroot literacy* (Fabian 1993), *tin-trunk literacy* (Barber 2007) and *vernacular literacy* (Barton & Hamilton 2003) – all these authors have highlighted the inevitable connection of this phenomenon with what the researchers of culture do, namely the writing down of oral texts.

The issue concerning the differences in understanding and rendering value to writing, and books, becomes more complicated as the tales encompassed in the collection of

*Narrative Episodes from the Tulalang Epic* have been recorded for over more than 30 years (1962–1995); supposedly, the attitudes of the audience and these of the narrators have significantly altered in the course of time. On the one hand, these changes are certainly associated with general social development and changes in the availability of education yet on the other hand, the researchers have also had a (smaller or bigger) role in this – their interest in recording the narratives, and the books published as an outcome.

In conclusion, I hope that the next books compiled by Hazel J. Wrigglesworth will contain, in addition to fascinating narrations, some more references to the issues concerning the written recording of these oral texts, and the hopes and expectations of different parties involved.

Katre Kikas

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