

The 14th Annual Conference of the Centre of
Excellence in Estonian Studies



NATURE AND CULTURE IN THE RITUALS, NARRATIVES AND BELIEFS

**The 5th International Conference in the series
Balkan and Baltic States in United Europe:
History, Religion, and Culture**

September 18–22, 2022

Abstracts



Estonian Literary Museum
Centre of Excellence in Estonian Studies

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of Excellence in Estonian Studies
and
The 5th International Conference in the series
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**Nature and Culture in the
Rituals, Narratives and Beliefs**

September 18–22, 2022
Estonian Literary Museum
Tartu, Estonia

ABSTRACTS

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Organizers: the team of the Department of Folkloristics Estonian Literary Museum, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and the International Society of Balcan and Baltic Studies.

Organising committee:

Mare Kõiva, Ekaterina Anastasova, Svetoslava Toncheva, Anastasiya Fiadotava, Sergey Troitskiy, Maris Kuperjanov, Evgenia Troeva-Grigorova, Piret Voolaid, Milena Lubenova, Tõnno Jonuks, Reet Hiimäe

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DEAR PARTICIPANT,

On behalf of the Centre of Excellence in Estonian Studies we warmly welcome you to Tartu, both in person and online. We hope that your stay in Tartu will be a success and that you will take back many inspiring ideas and colourful memories.

Because of the increasingly acute challenges of climate change, and corresponding cultural attitudes towards nature, action and debate related to development and sustainability stand at the centre of contemporary rhetoric. Let us look at the more-than-human geography, multispecies ethnography, archaeology of fullness, etc., based on the theoretical visions of the world (J. Iggoe, W. Dressler, E. Kohn, E. Marris, B. Büscher and R. Fletcher, S. Toncheva and others). The study of nature and culture relationships became a broad interdisciplinary field the humanities and social sciences cooperate with Earth and environmental sciences, economics, health and food security, etc.

Meanwhile, our conference marks fourteen years of our meetings and discussions on the Balkans and the Baltic region. We can ask What has changed in the Balkan and Baltic regions during that period? How is history being interpreted and re-written? What is the situation with ethnic and religious communities? What new problems and topics have emerged in the Balkan and Baltic (and European and World) research areas?

The main topics will be:

- The Balkan and Baltic regions in the context of the nature–culture dichotomy: local and traditional ecological knowledge, environmental movements, European mechanisms for nature conservation,
- Economics and political economy, and human–nature coexistence,
- Traditional beliefs and practices and nature–culture correlation,
- Nature and culture in religion, festive rituals and everyday life,
- COVID-19 and art

- Climate, ecology and climate change in public and individual discourse.

We invite you to participate in the various conference events and attend the Ecology of Nature and Ecology of Culture preconference seminar.

Organizing committee

PLEANARY SPEAKERS



Yuri Berezkin

Museum of Anthropology &
Ethnography (Kunstkamera)

PREHISTORY IN THE LOOKING GLASS OF ORAL TRADITIONS (FOLLOWING TRACES OF ANCIENT MYTHOLOGIES IN POST 1500 FOLKLORE)

September 22nd 10:00 – 11:00

Yuri Berezkin, professor of the faculty of anthropology, European University at Saint Petersburg, and head of the American department of the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (Kunstkamera), Member of the Estonian Academy of Sciences. Professor Berezkin's main research areas are the history of cultural anthropology, political anthropology, folklore databases, comparative mythology and non-classical mythology, the peopling of America, prehistoric migrations and interactions spheres, and archaeology.

Selected publications

- 2022. Electronic Analytical Catalogue of Folklore and Mythological Motifs: Thematic Classification and Areal Distribution (ca. 70,000 text abstracts). Co-authored with Evgeny Duvakin. <http://www.ruthenia.ru/folklore/berezkin>.
- 2021. "Big history and big data in mythology and folklore" [Makro-istoria i bol'shiye dannye v mifologii i fol'klore], Steps. *The Journal of the School of Advanced Studies in the Humanities* 7 (2), 28–52.
- 2019. Athabaskan – Siberian folklore links: in search of Na-Dene origins. *Folklore* 130 (1), 31–47.
- 2018. A large-scale study of world myths. *Trames: Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 22 (72/67), 4, 407–424.
- 2017. How Did the First Humans Perceive the Starry Night? On the Pleiades. *The Retrospective Methods Network Newsletter* 12–13, 100–122.



Krzysztof Duda

Ignatianum Jesuit University, Krakow

HIGHLANDERS OF THE EASTERN AND WESTERN CARPATHIANS: NATURE–PEOPLE–CULTURE

September 19th 11:30 – 12:30

Krzysztof Duda is a researcher in the field of cultural science. He works at Ignatianum Jesuit University in Krakow, where he is head of the Department of Cultural Anthropology and Tourism at the Institute of Cultural Studies. He has been a member of the American Anthropological Association since 2018, a member of the history of science section of the Polish Academy of Sciences since 2020, and director of the Institute of Zootechnics in Krakow, also since 2020. He is a member of the Carpathian society, Res Carphatica and other societies. Dr Duda is also a Member of the Scientific Policy Committee affiliated with the Minister of Education and Science. He is the author of national and international publications in the field of cultural anthropology, the history of science, and culture.



Tõnno Jonuks

Estonian Literary Museum

NATURE, NATION AND RELIGION: THE APPEARANCE OF NATURE-RELIGION IN ESTONIA

September 19th 10:00 – 11:00

Tõnno Jonuks is an archaeologist who specialises in the materiality of religion and the history of Estonian religions. He has conducted a number of case studies to see how religion has been expressed in material form between the Early Mesolithic and Modern ages. Jonuks' study of the prehistoric materiality of religion has guided him to the modern reception of past beliefs, and he has developed scholarship on nature religions and contemporary paganism as continuations of previous more ancient belief.



Marju Kõivupuu

Tallinn University, Institute of Humanities, Centre for Landscape and Culture

NEOPAGANISM AND NATURE PROTECTION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

September 21st 14:30 – 15:30

Marju Kõivupuu is a folklorist and cultural historian. Her research interests at the Centre for Landscape and Culture are related to the relationship between humans and nature/landscape and the topic of cultural heritage. She also researches the culture of death and folk medicine. She has successfully supervised doctoral and masters students. Several of her monographs have received recognition at both the Tallinn University and national levels. She teaches Estonian and comparative folklore, as well as several special courses (worldviews and religions, landscape heritage and everyday culture, and others).

ABSTRACTS

DISEASES IN TRADITIONAL CULTURE AND CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY (SMALLPOX VARIOLA VERA AND MONKEYPOX)

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The paper is dedicated to the traditional beliefs and modern interpretations of issues associated with epidemic disease. These diseases occupy diverse space in the traditional image of the world and modern ideas, continuing to be one of the main challenges faced by humanity, reflecting the fundamental nature–culture opposition.

The paper analyses different ideas related to diseases in traditional culture: their anthropomorphisation, causal mechanisms, prevention and consequences (ritual and social norms, religious beliefs and practices). In modern ideas, despite the development of scientific knowledge, notions of epidemic infectious disease are increasingly explained by various conspiracy theories, giving rise to diverse social reactions.

The paper is a result of published and archive materials related to traditional beliefs about smallpox, as well as mass media sources and events, presenting the contemporary social discourse and reflecting on reactions to the novel topic of monkeypox.

CARTOONS AND MEMES: IMAGES FROM CHILDHOOD USED AS EXPRESSIONS IN ADULTHOOD

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As an established form of semiotic expression in the digital world, memes provide online users with the possibility to express diverse functions, including articulating shared norms and values. Memes function as multimodal signs, combining pre-existing visual elements with typically innovative textual components. Due to their dependence on current events, they tend to be ephemeral, serving to provide a topical – and often humorous – commentary and criticism on contemporary society. Drawing on the international database of COVID-related humor, this paper explores a hitherto overlooked area of research, specifically how memes draw on visual aspects of popular culture by incorporating well-known cartoons and animated movies in order to provide humorous social commentary on diverse aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on a social semiotic perspective, the research identifies how meme creators draw on globally as well as locally known cartoons, what humorous themes they employ, and what shared and newly constructed meanings they operate with. The findings indicate that the creative re-use of established intertextual references, manifested in humorous memes through the reworking of cartoon characters and animated films, is related, on the one hand, to the ‘hypermemonic logic’ (Shifman) of replicating images, and on other, to the focus on the ‘performative self’, with users reflecting on the contrast of their pre-pandemic lives (cued by childhood reminiscences associated with cartoon imagery) and the current reality.

LOVE MAGIC: SPELLS ON MENSTRUAL BLOOD IN LITHUANIA

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The belief that it is possible to put a spell on males using menstrual blood is the least-examined belief among menstrual superstitions circulating in Lithuania. The magic rite is simple: a few drops of blood must be secretly added to a drink or food intended for a male. Our paper describes and analyses this belief.

Analysis is based on individual interview data collected between 2000 and 2020. The number of (female) respondents totals 323. All were asked about the use of menstrual blood for love magic. Only 67 said that they know nothing about it. The rest were more or less informed.

Older respondents learned about blood spells in their youth. However, they stated that bewitchment was also discussed in their environment today with some saying they had heard rumours of bewitched neighbours. Some told us that their family members had fallen victim to bewitchment.

The attitude to spells was strictly negative. Those who thought that bewitchment was absolutely ineffective regarded it as a stupid and dirty occupation; those who believed in the power of menstrual blood magic thought that the spells were dangerous, immoral and equivalent to witchcraft.

Adding a few drops of menstrual blood to a glass of alcohol or other liquid is common practice in Lithuania. Less often blood is added to food.

The consequences are tragic: a handsome and bright youth becomes addicted to an old hag; a model husband and father leaves his family. Unfavourable physical effects are also common as the spells can trigger serious diseases. Relations with the those who cast such spells are unsuccessful.

Removal of a love spell using menstrual blood is complicated or even impossible. Techniques recorded by the authors are extremely complex, unhygienic and dangerous.

THE RITUAL OF ITU: MAKING SPACE FOR NATURE–CULTURE SYNTHESIS

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As a construct, rituals emerge out of the shared religious experiences of a particular ethnic group with the objective of wish fulfilment. At the same time, most ritual practices are also manifestations of a natural phenomenon often considered an integral part of ritual worship. With the help of one such folk ritual, namely the Itu Pujo – a household ritual observed by the women of Bengal during the months of October and November – along with the Brata-kathas, or ‘ritual tales’, associated with worship, this paper attempts to delve into the Nature–Culture equation from the perspective of ritual worship. The Itu ritual is a votive rite that brings prosperity, fertility, and harvest to the family. The ritual takes place during the harvest season and comprises worship of the Goddess Itu, the feminine form of the Sun God. The Itu Goddess (herself a symbol of fertility) is symbolised by a small pot with leaves and flowers dipped inside it which is immersed in water at the end of the ceremony. The ritual also consists of the planting of seeds in an earthen vessel which gradually grows into full length plants. Hence, the whole process involves the presence of all four natural elements leading to germination. When such a natural occurrence as germination is ritualised by ceremonial rules to make it a part of culture to ensure prosperous family life, it is suggestive of a Nature–Ritual–Culture paradigm with ritual located at the threshold of nature and culture. Through the varied motifs of the Itu ritual this paper tries to re-interpret how nature is contextualised to fit into a cultural space through the process of ritual worship thereby creating a symbiotic relationship between nature, ritual and culture not for cultural appropriation but for the purpose of survival.

PREHISTORY IN THE LOOKING GLASS OF ORAL TRADITION (BASED ON TRACES OF ANCIENT MYTHOLOGIES IN POST 1500 FOLKLORE)

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The results of research aimed at the integration of ancient Middle Eastern literatures into our database of mythology and folklore are presented. The occurrence of 3,000 narrative episodes and mythological images in 1,008 traditions around the world is traced. More than 500 of them are found in early texts from Greece, the Middle East, Iran and India.

Ancient mythologies do not contain many parallels in sub-Saharan Africa. The sets of motifs in question were formed after the out-of-Africa period. More analogies for Greek, Biblical, Ugaritic and Mesopotamian mythologies are registered in Central and Eastern Europe and in the Caucasus. Some of these motifs could have been brought to Europe as early as the time of its Neolithic colonisation, some others were borrowed via late Middle Eastern traditions.

Sets of motifs in the early and late South and East Asian traditions are similar, but in Europe and the Middle East such sets are different (computed using factor analysis, early and late traditions receive the opposite, plus vs. minus, signs). This fact can be explained by the Steppe influence on the European (and Middle Eastern?) folklore in the post-Antique period (Berezkin 2015), although other processes (related to the spread of the Abrahamic religions?) are possible.

Ancient Greek tradition demonstrates more parallels in America than in Asian mythology. Such links must be very early (Berezkin 2022). Ancient Greek tradition also contains parallels with traditions of south Siberia and Central Asia, evidence in favour of trans-Eurasian contact preceding the Turkic-Mongolian migrations.

The written Indian tradition includes texts from the Veda to the Ocean of Stories. To select particular strata in this totality is hardly possible. The written Indian tradition shares more motifs with the ancient and recent traditions of the Middle East, Europe, China and north east India than with most of the Indo-Aryan and Dravidian traditions of Hindustan.

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RITUAL DIMENSIONS IN CALENDARICAL HOLIDAYS

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There is an obvious and important set of calendar rituals in nature. Calendar rites provide socially significant explanations for the flow of time, creating a constantly evolving circle of days, months, and years. This type of rite treats time as a series of eternal repetitions and re-beginnings arranged in sequence. Calendar rites take place periodically and predictably, accompanied by seasonal changes in daylight, weather, agriculture, and other social activities. Some rites are based on the solar calendar, so they take place on the same day each year, such as New Year's Day, which is celebrated on January 1, or Christmas, which is celebrated on December 25th. Other rites are calculated according to the lunar calendar and for this reason their date changes every year, such as Jewish New Year, Easter Sunday, or the lunar Chinese New Year.

The rites, which are cyclically repeated every year, are a large and important part of the cultural heritage of most communities. They are passed down from generation to generation through stories, through certain institutions, spatial maps, and the functions of ritual objects. The calendar and the holidays mentioned in it create a sense of social time that is much longer than a single life. Whether it is a commemoration of historical events or natural processes, they are equally important because they unite the past, the present and the future, uniting human values. Therefore, the aim of the presentation is to analyse the meaning of ritual in the customs of calendar holidays (based on the examples of Lithuanian customs) and to discuss the changes in rituals over time, i.e. the paper talks about tradition and transformation. The correlation between ritual and social structure could be treated as two interacting parts of the same social process. Thus, ritual can also be treated as a continuation of tradition that can provoke change.

MYTHOLOGEMS AND MOTIFS OF ATU 570* (THE PIED PIPER) PLOT TYPE IN THE TEXTS AND BELIEFS OF BELARUSIANS AND ESTONIANS. ZOOFOLKLORISTICS 5

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The report explores the mythologems and motifs in Belarusians and Estonians narratives (legends, folkloric accounts, commemoration of votive holidays) that correspond directly or indirectly to the ATU 570* (Pied Piper) plot type. Genre forms of the plot embodiment, mechanisms of distribution and adaptation of motifs to local realities, the reverse influence of printed sources on folklore, and the trans-media relations of motifs and images are analysed.

PLANTS AND MIGRATION

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The paper examines the functions of the plants that accompany Bulgarian migrants to their new homes. Some, perceived as traditional Bulgarian plants, are rediscovered or transferred to the receiving country and are present in the stories, rituals and everyday lives of migrants.

КОЛОРАТИВЫ С ДЕНДРОЛОГИЧЕСКИМ КОМПОНЕНТОМ КАК ПРОЕКЦИЯ КАРТИНЫ МИРА БЕЛОРУСОВ И ПОЛЯКОВ

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Цветовые номинации, образованные от тех или иных дендронимов, интересны как в отношении их внутренней формы, так и с точки зрения их этнокультурной мотивации, вписанности в комплекс народных представлений славян (в частности белорусов и поляков), поэтому настоящий доклад посвящён лингвистическим и экстра-лингвистическим особенностям образования таких названий.

CARVING A SACRED CANOPY: CONFLUENCE OF NATURE AND CULTURE IN THE MARWA RITUAL AND SONGS OF THE BHOJPURI COMMUNITY IN INDIA

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In Hinduism, marriage is a crucial rite of passage (samskara) for men and women. A marriage initiates a man into the household phase (grihastha jeevan). He becomes eligible to perform all of the sixteen samskaras. Marriage is the only rite of passage imperative for women. It elevates her position in the hierarchy and presents her with the status of ritual partner. Marriage consists of several rituals. This paper focuses on the Marwa ritual and its songs as performed by the Bhojpuri community in northern India. Marwa/Mandap is the space where all the marriage rituals occur. This sacred space is erected inside the courtyard of the bride's house. The marwa is carved out of five, seven, or nine bamboo sticks (baans) in the bride's house. A bamboo stick is planted with dried grass (kush) strains in the groom's house, also known as harish. The interior of the marwa contains a cluster of mango leaves (aam pallav) and four banana plants. The marwa becomes a site of confluence where nature and culture entwine to provide meaning to the community. This paper studies how the community's close association with nature shapes its culture through the marwa ritual and its songs. It also aims to decode the meaning of the ritual symbols based on ethnographic work conducted in the villages of Ghazipur in Uttar Pradesh and Buxar in Bihar. One of the songs collected from the field goes,

Hare hare hare baba baswa kataiha

Uche Uche marwa chawaiha ho

O father! Please cut green bamboo sticks

O father! Please erect long bamboo sticks to form the canopy

CONTAMINATING MYTHOLOGIES

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This research focuses on the relationship between radioactive contamination and the mythological image of the Sun Tree, Austras Koks, found in Latvian tradition. My project develops as artistic research that produces a re-interpretation of rituals, seeking a point of convergence between ancient mythological images related to specific territories and environmental contamination. I am researching radioactivity by looking for symbolic images from religion and folklore that could be part of a dialogue with infrastructure that is apt at containing or measuring this energy.

By looking at mythological narratives, my research intends to re-incorporate symbolic thinking into the reading of modern technologies and contaminated spaces, proposing that myths and beliefs can play a role in reimagining the relationship between humans and environmental space. Starting from a *daina*, an ancient form of poetry singing that represents one of the few documents available to reconstruct Latvian mythology, my research develops through a process of translation, or decodification, of the song by means of a formula describing radioactive decay. For this purpose, I am currently looking at Latvian lighthouses that functioned using radioisotope thermoelectric generators (RTG), and the nuclear missile base at Zeltiņi.

Far from being a mere derivative of religion, humans' sense of the sacred relates to a way of reading environmental space as inhabited by mythical presences that is untouchable (Eliade 1987): the concept of the sacred in many societies is found in an ambiguous position between respect for what transcends the ordinary, and fear (Douglas 2002). Considering the world as we see and perceive it as a result of different thought processes, I postulate that specific archetypal images may be linked to the state of environmental pollution caused by human intervention. This research proposes to search for a way to reconnect these images to contaminated spaces, through art practice.

Research question: Can ancient traditions and mythological images introduce a new way of relating to natural space?

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A STUDY OF DIVINATION TECHNOLOGIES TO ENHANCE DEEP LISTENING TO NATURE

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Technologically driven divinatory practices prevail today as artistic and cultural manifestations.

Either as every day or as ritualistic events, they are evidence of media, nature, and culture merging. Among these practices, augury reads natural signs as a premonitory narrative by attuning humans to other organisms and environments. Auspices refer to sounds and movements made by birds as a set of different meanings and interpretations according to environmental conditions.

Former ancient temples and observatories were spaces for contemplation and consideration: for reading the sky, translating omens, and discerning time and weather. In comparison, modern communication technologies, such as remote sensing systems (telegraph, satellites, radio towers), took the place of observation of the sky and measuring ground-level events for terraforming and geological study.

Deep listening, a method proposed by Pauline Oliveros, is an artistic practice for attuning humans to their sonic environments, expanding the perception of sounds to include the whole space and time continuum of sound, including the human sensory beyond the short-term act of hearing. In addition, deep listening experimented with sensing and transmission technologies enhances perception of the environment at both micro and planetary scale. Ordinary human listening is already a complex practice, however non-human perception of sound, especially by other animals, is valued by Oliveros as a kind of deep listening. In this presentation, I elaborate on an art and technology approach to the ritual of augury from the bird's point of view in order to deep listen to nature, and recognise the involvement of nature and culture implied in these practices.

HIGHLANDERS OF THE EASTERN AND WESTERN CARPATHIANS: NATURE–PEOPLE–CULTURE

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The Carpathians are a mountain range stretching through eight European countries. The first description of it was given by Ptolemy in the 2nd century AD.

In this work, we want to present the narrower area of the eastern and western Carpathians. From the anthropological point of view, this area is extremely interesting because its fuller settlement took place in the 15th-16th centuries during the so-called Wallachian migration. This is a clear border because the research can rely on written sources. When pastoral peoples moved they combined their culture with the culture of the indigenous people who had previously inhabited these areas. The culture of free Carpathian shepherds influenced the entire region, today located in Romania, Ukraine, Slovakia, Poland and the Czech Republic. It is a living example of the preservation and cultivation of a tradition that has endured over five hundred years. Inhabitants of these regions still – although not so intensely – practice traditional pastoral economy, at the same time retaining rituals and customs and showing a strong attachment to the values that define their identity. Hutsuls, Boykos, Rusyns, Lemkos, Polish Highlanders and Walasi also form an association that recreates Carpathian traditions and tries to promote the Carpathian region and culture.

Variant 2. The Carpathian Mountains are a mountain chain that stretches across eight European countries. It was first described by Ptolemy in the 2nd century AD. In this paper, we want to take a closer look at the narrower area of the eastern and western Carpathians. This area is extremely interesting from an anthropological point of view because its population was quite extensively displaced during the 15th and 16th centuries, in the so-called Vlach migration. This is a fairly clear boundary and means that in the research we can rely on written sources.

Pastoral peoples moving around combined their culture with the cultures of the indigenous peoples who had previously inhabited these areas. The culture of the free Carpathian shepherds influenced the entire region, which is now situated in Romania, Ukraine, Slovakia, Poland and the Czech Republic. This is a living example of the preservation and

cultivation of tradition that has lasted over five hundred years. The inhabitants of these regions continue – albeit not so intensively – to practice pastoralism while retaining their rituals and customs and showing a strong attachment to the values that determine their identity. The Hutsuls, Boykos, Ruthenians, Lemkos, Polish Highlanders and Vlachs also come together to form associations that recreate Carpathian traditions and seek to promote the Carpathian region as well as culture.

MORDVA (ERSA) MATERIAL IN ESTONIAN COLLECTIONS AND ERSA-MOKSHA COMMUNITIES IN ESTONIA

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The presentation is not only a retrospective view of Ersa lore, but also discusses the current state of folklore and Ersa-Moksha communities living in Estonia. These communities can be studied by analysing the data in archives concerning repertoire, performers and social activities.

The Estonian Folklore Archives hold an estimated few hundred pages of Viktor Danilov's manuscript material and sound recordings; a large part of the collections of Ersa material was perpetuated by him. In total, 2,450 songs and about 50 stories and beliefs were recorded. This indicates the need to collect additional data based on songs and other song culture phenomena, as well as to add data specifically on customs and narratives.

Viktor Danilov collected the lore of a particular region, i.e. the village of Ohonkino in Tatarstan and its surroundings. The material, collected in the 1960s and 1970s, is very rich. At that time, the folkloric tradition was strong, although opportunities available in the Mordovian ANSV at the time did not allow recordings to be made everywhere.

Other materials are stored in the Estonian National Museum, the Institute of the Estonian Language, the University of Tartu and the archives of various societies.

Disclosure of material is important because Mordovian literary culture is young, and oral heritage is a very important part of culture. The material stored in the Estonian Archives is of great interest because of its authenticity. It provides valuable information to folklorists and other researchers in the field and is also used in the education system.

FROM VENUS DE MILO TO NIKE ADS: THE GLOCALISATION OF ART REFERENCES IN COVID-19 HUMOUR IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

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This study examines the role of art references in the production of humorous COVID-19 internet memes. Taking a broad understanding of art (including classical and popular culture references), we ask how local, regional, and transnational art references bring together the realm of art, traditionally regarded as enabling temporary moments of detachment from reality, with the realm of the mundane. Such humor, we argue, joins the political and the cultural, the ‘old’ (pre-pandemic) with the ‘new normal’, and the lasting (art) with the transient (pandemic). Data comes from 189 jokes circulated online in Poland, Romania and Belarus during the first wave of the pandemic (March-June 2020). Data is qualitatively analysed by focusing on the role of local cultural references in producing humour (Dumitrica 2021), the type of contextual knowledge required to understand the joke, and the degree of sophistication of the joke. Findings suggest that art references localise and domesticate the pandemic, constructing a shared imaginary of ‘local’ life in the time of the global COVID-19 crisis. However, local, regional, and transnational art references entail different forms of ‘recognition’ on the part of the implied reader. We discuss how this relates to the sophistication of humour and its ability to inscribe pandemic-related anxieties with an allegedly universal quality.

BALTIC-BALKAN ENCOUNTERS IN THE BOOK-MIGRATION: THE GRAND DUCHY OF LITHUANIA AS A PROVIDER BY LITURGICAL BOOKS THE ETHNICITIES OF BYZANTINE RITE IN THE HUNGARIAN KINGDOM

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A dichotomy between nature and culture appeared in Cyrillic book culture in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania; which was *ex natura* is of Byzantine “nature”, but was also influenced by Western European baroque culture. The engraving of the title-page of Luther’s Bible (the tipping point for printing in people’s mother tongues, Nürnberg, 1524) appeared in the title-pages of the Lithuanian Catholic Postilla by Daukša, the Jesuit monk (1599), and in the Lithuanian Lutheran Postilla by Morkūnas (1600). These engravings were identical to ornaments in title of the first printed Cyrillic book in Ukrain, too, the Apostle in Lviv (1574), and the ornamental shape of the first complete printed Bible in Cyrillic, the Ostrog-Bible (1581) (Gronek 2016; Makarenko 1926). The culture of printing was at a much higher level here, in the so-called Lithuanian Ruś, than in the Moscovian Ruś.

Even a Russian historian in the Brezhnev era, a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences who was far from friendly towards Ukraine, professor Sidoroff, stated: “The comparison of the Ukrainian ornaments of books with that of Moscow is clear... Socio-economic background: the monopoly of the hierarchy of the state and Church in Moscow, and... private entrepreneurship in Ukraine. In Ukraine, private... ‘patronage’ or the financial support of printing houses and publishers gave rise to a new thematic, unthinkable in Moscow...” (Sidoroff 1976: 5, 6). This Soviet historian talked about “Ukrainian territories in the 16th century”, thus recognising Ukraine as an independent cultural, language and ethnic unit. Interference from both Western and Eastern Europe were reflected in the Monteverdi-style madrigals sung in Church Slavic and adapted for Byzantine paraliturgical singing. Western Christian motifs of the heart of Jesus appeared in the headers (заставка) of the Byzantine-rite Cyrillic books. The technique of copper engraving

appeared in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and from here spread south and east (Šustova 2013, 2015, 2021).

This Western part of the East-Slavic Byzantine-Rite cultural sphere provided by liturgical books the South-Slavic peoples of the Balkan, too (Földvári 2014, 2014a). The latter lost their earlier printing culture with the Turkish occupation, and the Greek Orthodox church leaders prohibited the usage of the Slavic books as well (Jireček 1876: 507–516). Bulgarian and Serbian priests were forced to study Greek and the Cyrillic books and manuscripts, written in the Church Slavonic, were destroyed. All the Orthodox Christians were inhabitants of the Orthodox Christian “millet” of the Turkish Ottoman Empire (Strauss 1995: 189–249), headed by the Patriarch of Constantinople, who was always Greek. He was often supported by the Greek Phanariotes, who kept the church elites under control via this financial aid (Roucek 1946: 370). The Greek Patriarch appointed his Greek familiars (those were proposed by the Phanariotes) to church positions in the Balkans and forcefully either replaced the Slavic clergy with Greeks or forced them to be Graecised (Temperley 1969 [1917]: 123, 163–166; Jireček 1876: 466–467). In these circumstances, the Serbs who immigrated into the Hungarian Kingdom lived in relative freedom. They used Slavic books for their Liturgy and imported Cyrillic books from the Ukrainian territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Kostić 1910/1911, 1912; Костић 1923/2001; Földvári 2013, 2014a). The Orthodox Serbs, and the Orthodox Rumanians, too (who also suffered with the Greek Phanariotes), imported books from the Ukrainian and (in to a lesser extent) Belarusian typographies. (Deletant 1980; Deletant 1982–1983) The typographies in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were managed by Ukrainian and Belarusian brotherhoods (Isaevych 1993, 1994, 2006). These brotherhoods were civil associations of citizens, and played significant role in the shaping of the national identity of the Serbs and of other Slavic peoples inhabited by the Habsburg Empire. As Isaevych states: “Thus, in the confraternity’s seventeenth-century records, we encounter entries concerning aid given to..., and to foreign visitors – Greeks, Serbs, Moldavians, and Russians” (Isaevich 2006: 64). A general picture of the role of these books in the confessionalisation of Slavic peoples living on the territory of the Habsburg Empire and on the Balkan Peninsula, is to be given in this paper. (Antecedents of this are Földvári 2020, 2022.) While Riccardo Picchio divided the Slavic cultures into “*Slavia orthodoxa*” and “*Slavia romana*”, it is also necessary to study those Slavic enclaves of the Byzantine confession, which lived amid the sea of Western Christianity (Picchio

2003: 3–81). Hence, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Ukrainian territories in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth played a significant role in the cultural development of these Byzanto-Slavic enclaves in the Catholic Habsburg Empire.

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DANURBANITY: VALORISATION OF LOCAL HERITAGE IN THE ULPia ESCUS-NOVAE BG REGION (BELENE, NIKOPOL, GULYANTSII, SVISHTOV)

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The valorisation of local cultural heritage is the core value of DANURB projects. The Ulpia Escus-Novae region is an interesting mixture of different ethnic groups which relate to local traditions and economic and ecological coexistence. In the post-COVID situation, and with difficult energy supplies due to the war in Ukraine, the local communities are living in the most underdeveloped area of the EU. What will be the near future of the second Bulgarian nuclear station, in Belene, which has been under construction since 1980? How will this affect resources in the Persina natural park, the only protected area on the Danube, which two towns are part of? The Danurbanity cultural promenade is another point of view for the local communities, correlating to Appadurai's scapes theory.

NEW SITES AND RITUALS THAT RECALL VANISHED CULTURAL LANDSCAPES (VILLAGES UNDER RESERVOIR WATERS IN BULGARIA)

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In the 20th century in Bulgaria, in the course of constructing about 20 dams, dozens of settlements large and small were lost. Cultural landscapes that had formed the world of the peasants and were important for their livelihood and for many holidays and rituals, were completely changed or erased. However, cultural landscapes remained in the memories of the displaced people and are being passed down through the generations in various ways. In the report, I study these ways of remembering the cultural landscape in the context of migrant community meetings and family memorial visits to the home area. The choice of a place to organise annual gathering of migrants is interesting. Sometimes this was done on a hill where they had gathered on holidays in the past; in other cases a distant place to where the cemetery had been moved during the eviction; or a new place specifically established for this purpose. Some communities have established rituals to remember and transmit the memory of the cultural landscape that has been vanished during the construction of the dam. This complex of practices recalling and remembering some elements of the landscape and linking them with the narrative of the displaced village is an important part of the process of constructing submerged heritage and supporting the existence of the community of displaced people and their descendants.

The presentation is based on a study of several cases (dams at Zhrebchevo, Studen Kladenets, Ivaylovgrad, Borovitsa, Koprinka and Iskar) during the 2019–2022 period and is part of the Submerged Heritage. A Village at the Bottom of the Reservoir: Migrations, Memory, Cultural Practices project supported by the Bulgarian National Science Fund.

THE SUBMERGED CHURCH AT ZHREBCHEVO DAM: SACRED SITE, CENTRE, SCENE

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A number of settlements were evicted and lost along with their public, religious, cultural and historical sites during the construction of various dams. However, some of them have not been completely forgotten and often their remains attract tourists, artists, and the media.

The main focus of the paper is the church St John of Rila in the vanished village Zapalnya, and its construction as cultural heritage with typical religious, cultural and natural features. Zapalnya and its church, submerged during the building of the Zhrebchevo Dam in southern Bulgaria, is extremely interesting in terms of its unusual disappearance and reappearance, which depend on the water level in the reservoir. Being an almost lost religious site until recently, today because of various events, activities, projects (feasts, media reports, movies, etc.) and actors (settlers, municipal officials, church representatives, tourists, etc.), we are witnessing the resumption and revitalisation of the church. At present, its uses are divergent, ranging from a meeting place for displaced former residents from the two submerged villages Zapalnya and Zhrebchevo, through to a reviving religious center, music video favorite backdrop and individual and collective tourist route.

The paper is based on fieldwork conducted between 2019 and 2021 and archive and bibliography research implemented within the Submerged Heritage. A Village at the Bottom of the Reservoir: Migrations, Memory, Cultural Practices project supported by the Bulgarian National Science Fund.

CELEBRATING NATURE: CIVIC HOLIDAYS IN THE THIRD BULGARIAN KINGDOM (1878–1944)

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The festive calendar of the Third Bulgarian Kingdom (1878–1944) included three civic holidays focusing on nature and its use:

1. The Day of Flowers (1894–1943), celebrated on April 18th, or at times May 1st, as a school holiday on which schoolchildren would go out into the countryside and come back adorned with flowers. The day was a specific holiday to welcome spring.
2. The Day of Forestation (1904, 1925–1927, 1939–1944 renamed Week of the Forest), celebrated on the eve of the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25th or April 7th). On this day school groups were organised to plant trees and talks on the significance of forests were given. The holiday aimed to cultivate love of nature.
3. The Day of the Bulgarian Land (1930, 1940–1949), celebrated on the day of St Simeon (September 14th), or on the Day of the Holy Cross (September 27th) after 1944. On this day, marking the end of the agricultural season, the minister of agriculture would make a public report on the achievements of the past year; the plans for the coming year would be announced. The holiday was devised as an occasion to reflect on good economic use of the land.

The three cases outline above illustrate two aspects of nature. On the one hand, when it comes to the nature–culture opposition, the major function of the three holidays was to promote love for wild nature (the Day of Flowers), investing in nature (the Day of Forestation), and good economic use of natural resources (the Day of the Bulgarian Land). On the other hand, the three celebrations offer three specific cases of

political use of holidays, proclaimed as apolitical. Whereas the Day of Forestation was supposedly politically neutral, both the Day of Flowers and the Day of the Bulgarian Land served an overt political function. The Day of Flowers was introduced with the purpose of undermining the socialist Labour Day, celebrated on the same day. The Day of the Bulgarian Land, launched without much success in the 1930s, was re-stored in 1940, this time taking hold largely thanks to the coinciding of the date with the name day of the successor to the Bulgarian throne prince Simeon II. After the establishment of the Bulgarian communist state, the holiday – re-fashioned as a celebration of agricultural labour – was further instrumentalised in the propaganda campaign to encourage people to join land cooperatives. Its ‘monarchist’ past, however, was the reason it was eventually discontinued in the late 1940s.

THE TRIBAL NARRATIVE OF REVERENCE AND RESILIENCE: A STUDY OF THE ENTANGLED NATURE–CULTURE RELATIONSHIP IN THE FOLKLORE OF THE GUJJAR AND BAKERWAL TRIBE OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

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The proposed research paper intends to explore how tribal groups in India view both themselves and nature as part of an extended ecological symbiotic association. Tribals in India relate to their natural world by expressing their gratitude through such functions as customs, beliefs, practices, rituals and traditions relating to non-humans. This very equation is under threat due to the policies of forced assimilation, absorption and dislocation, which are byproducts of global cosmopolitics under the postmodern society. The paper aims to study the practices and customs of the indigenous tribes of Jammu and Kashmir, namely the Gujjar and Bakerwal. The cardinal focus is to highlight two notions: reverence towards nature and resilience against mainstream culture. These nomadic tribes articulate co-evolutionary concepts of reverence towards nature through their folklores in the form of rituals, customs and traditions passed down from bygone eras to the 21st century. And as to the second notion, the nomadic tribes have begun to articulate responses to various politically enforced extermination, assimilation and marginalisation.

The first objective of the study foregrounds how in the lives of tribes, nature is culturally constructed. The second objective of the study is to underscore collective continuance of various traditional tribal cultural customs that embody sustainable approaches to the natural world. The third objective of the research is to analyse the resilience manifested by the tribals to rescue the vernacular voices about the seasons, rivers, hills, forests, and animals that eventually dovetail with the making of tribal identity.

From a theoretical standpoint the research aims to highlight Adamson and Monani's correlational association of culture and nature as envisaged in the precepts of third-wave ecocriticism. The focus will be to examine the entangled relational responsibilities of the nomadic tribe towards nonhuman nature through which the 'cosmovision' conception of nature culture is mutually observed.

THE FESTIVAL OF THE FINDING OF THE HOLY ICON ('EORTĒ AGIAS EURESEŌS) OR THE LANTERNS (PHANARAKIA), TINOS, GREECE

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After several mystical visions of the nun, Pelagia, the holy icon of the Annunciation of the Panagia ('the All-Holy One'), who is the Virgin Mary, was found on the island of Tinos in 1823. According to tradition, Pelagia repeatedly witnessed the Panagia in visions where she received orders to find the icon of the Panagia and also to build a church dedicated to her. 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 tenth 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 Annunciation of the Panagia, the enormous crowds of pilgrims and all the miracles worked by the icon, contributed to the island being declared a sacred island, and Pelagia becoming sanctified.

The ritual year of the miraculous icon on Tinos starts on 30 January with the festival dedicated to The Finding of the Holy Icon, at which the finding is ritually re-enacted before being carried in a procession repeating the first procession after the finding. After worshipping the tombs of the builders of the church, the celebration terminates with a popular ritual called the Phanarakia (lanterns), in which children are the main participants, running around in the streets of Tinos town while holding multicoloured lamps, and singing hymns commemorating the finding of the holy icon. The paper presents the festival and delves into its meaning and importance for the Greek people.

WATER SOURCES AND THE SACRED IN MODERN AND ANCIENT GREECE

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Focusing on springs within caves, this paper considers contemporary Greek water rituals and their relation to ancient pre-Christian traditions and sites. Formerly springs represented water nymphs, and today are dedicated to the Panagia (“the All-Holy One” from Pan: all and Agia: holy), who is the Virgin Mary in her identity as Zōodochos Pēgē (that is, the Life-giving Spring). The water is thought to be particularly healing and purifying during festivals dedicated to the Panagia, such as the contemporary celebration of the “Life-giving Spring” on the first Friday after Easter Sunday. During this celebration Athenians come to the Panagia’s chapel inside an ancient circular spring house that was hewn from the rock on the southern slope of the Akropolis to fetch “life-giving water”. The sacred spring is situated inside a cave over which a church was constructed. Comparing the modern practices with ancient evidence, this essay argues for a continual association of water sources with the sacred in Greece.

ESTONIAN CONTEMPORARY BELIEFS AND NARRATIVES ABOUT PERPETUAL MOTION MACHINES

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In the context of contemporary human–environment relations and the energy crisis, people’s beliefs in the possibility of totally new, clean, and affordable energy solutions are very topical.

The presentation gives an overview of beliefs and narratives related to unusual and unconventional sources of energy in Estonia (with some international parallels). As a basis, we used the search phrase *perpetuum mobile* in mainstream public discourse as found in Estonian online technology forums (group 1), compared to similar conversations in some in-groups (online and offline) that are focused on DIY, the esoteric, and sustainable development (group 2).

Our research shows that most people in group 1 ridicule and reject the idea of *perpetuum mobile* types of energy generator. People in group 2, on the other hand, are open to the idea and think that its realisation is possible. There is a big difference in beliefs and narratives between the two groups, correlating with their other beliefs and values.

Group 1 tends to believe that “our civilisation can’t invent something absolutely new in the field of energy” and that “the physics have proven that such things are impossible”. People in the group 2 are positive about the idea, although they admit that they have not seen such a device working. They also tend to believe that such technologies could be systematically suppressed, hidden and/or ridiculed by some social institutions.

Our results offer novel ideas for further research and understanding of how and why such beliefs and narratives form among various societal groups.

MONA LOCKDOWN: THE USE OF INTERNET MEMES IN HUMOROUS COVID-19 DISCOURSE

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With the COVID pandemic, the relationship between humour and disaster has become explorable on a broad international scale. Our proposal builds upon an international collaboration of researchers on the study of humour in the pandemic and focuses on COVID internet memes that refer to canonical works of art (for example the Mona Lisa with a face-mask, the Zoom Last Supper). We investigate how they are transformed for humorous purposes and cross-culturally repackaged to thematise various aspects of the pandemic experience.

We provide an overview of visual art memes in the Leuven International Coronavirus Humour Corpus, subdividing them according to the dominant theme into: emptiness memes, indirectness memes, entrapment memes, law enforcement memes, transformation memes, COVID precaution memes and revaluation memes.

By adapting the categories of the General Theory of Verbal Humour to the requirements of multimodal humour, we analyse the collected materials in terms of specific dimensions of humour communication: script opposition (for example before/after COVID; exceptional/normal), logical mechanism, situation, target (for example police intervention, lockdown behaviour), narrative strategy and language. We redefine the last two as “communication strategy” and “semiotic resources”, reflecting on the memes’ relationship to the original artwork: the type of intertextuality involved (for example motif, parody, contrafactum) and the type of visual manipulation employed (for example single-technique morphing, mixed-technique collage).

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СЕРГЕЙ СМІРНОВ О РЕЛИКВИЯХ В СЕРБИИ

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Сергей Николаевич Смирнов (1877, Санкт-Петербург – 1958, Монтевидео) был потомственным дворянином, сыном инженера полковника Николая Васильевича Смирнова, получившего известность как реставратор Таврического дворца. Круг профессиональных интересов Сергея Николаевича был довольно широким: инженер, строитель, искусствовед, археолог, нумизмат, стекольщик, библиотекарь, коллекционер, писатель. Благодаря ему в 1918 г. была спасена от верной гибели сербская принцесса, русская княгиня Елена Петровна Романова, а также несколько человек Сербской военной миссии. Находясь в Сербии с 1919, С. Н. Смирнов занимался строительными и реставрационными работами, исследовал русское и сербское культурное наследие. В докладе нам бы хотелось показать, как бывший управляющий города Павловска С. Н. Смирнов размышляет о культурных реликвиях двух дворцовых комплексов – в Павловске и в Белграде.

NATURE, NATION AND RELIGION: THE APPEARANCE OF NATURE-RELIGION IN ESTONIA

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Estonia, one of the least religious countries in Europe, has also been described as a country that “follow[s] nature-loving precepts of neo-paganism” (The Economist 6/07/2017). To understand how such opposing concepts come together in one society I wish to explore the history of religion in Estonia during the 20th and 21st centuries with special focus on the position of nature. I am interested in how and why nature has started to play an important position in religion, which traditionally emphasised the human and human culture. I am also interested in the process by which contemporary Estonian pagan religion has “market-ed” itself so well that majority of Estonian population is supporting it. As a result, I wish to reach to this very day and observe what are the relations of religion, nationality, and nature in present and if this, what is described as nature-religion is really a religion?

MEN'S STORIES: MILITARY LEGENDS IN ESTONIAN FOLKLORE

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Local Estonian folklore still includes legends from World War II about tanks sinking into the bog, aeroplanes falling into lakes, and machine guns hidden in lone farms in the forest being used to threaten unsuspecting burglars. Those stories are mainly told amongst men. This especially masculine world is also described in the legends and rumours spread by Estonian conscripts who served in the Soviet army.

Several military legends have spread out of soldiers' lore and become common knowledge: material for literary creation or objects of political manipulation? Amongst such tales are, for example "A Snake Saves a Boy" (Kalmre 2018) and "White Tights" (Regamey 2017).

The Soviet army was an obligation, a punishment, a scary and unique challenge for young Estonian men who would remember it for the rest of their lives. Conscript service meant coping with a foreign language, surroundings, debilitating discipline and ideology hundreds, even thousands, of kilometres away from home.

The presentation focusses on the legends and rumours spread among young Estonian men who served in the Soviet army as conscripts. These stories, which used to foster a sense of community, have been relayed orally, and naturally they were not collected at the time they spread. Now, we can catch a glimpse of this folklore via special forums for internet communities with military interests, which serve as a natural forum through which men who have served in the army can narrate their stories. The legends and rumours of former soldiers focus on discipline, military hierarchy, sex, women, fate, and lucky escapes, as well as particular local objects (bridges, secret paths, etc.).

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WALKING AS ARTISTIC RESEARCH: MORE-THAN-HUMAN AGENCY IN A PERFORMATIVE RITUAL

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In times of crisis such as ecological catastrophes, people tend to practice more rituals (Xygalatas 2020). For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic ritualistic activities were created such as singing together on balconies while isolated in urban environments. These types of ritual could be defined as new. However, they may also be informed and affected by the rituals of the past. Many rituals link to the ecology and ecosystems that humans live within, and new rituals related to ecological catastrophes often focus on environmental anxiety and mourning of loss (Pihkala 2021). These types of ritual seem to have a human-centric approach and aim to aid humans in their agony. What kinds of ritual could look beyond the anthropocentric experience?

This artistic research and research creation focuses on existing ritualistic activities and features (Grimes 2014) related to the environment in the sub-Arctic Abisko area in Sami, Sweden and leans on feminist more-than-human epistemology. The different intersecting groups of people in Abisko are Sami and other locals, people in the Abisko polar research station and visiting tourists. The research uses ‘walking with’ methodology (e.g. Springgay & Truman 2017); interviews are conducted as a walk to a special and often-visited place that the interviewee had chosen and an audio recorded sensorial interview after the walk. This paper discusses through the collected material the relations, traditional ecological knowledge and interdependencies humans have in the environment. Based on these, it attempts to sketch how they could be manifested in an artistic performative ritual that could possibly emphasise the more-than-human and a shift in perspective.

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THE NATURE OF CULTURE: RITES OF INTERACTION BETWEEN UKRAINIAN REFUGEES AND SOCIETY IN LATVIA (2022)

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The division of the West between culture and nature is an illusion, is yet another approach - nature as the very existence or characteristic of culture. After the Russian invasion of Ukraine, on February 24, 2022, refugees from Ukraine arrived in many European Union countries, including Latvia. To date in Latvia their number is estimated at around 40,000, and the flow has increased as war activities have moved to eastern Ukraine. Therefore, there was an unexpected need for rituals of interaction between this new cultural community and Latvian society. In this interaction, both parties develop rituals that allow them to form understandable attitudes to each other, because in rituals our mental relations to other human beings are externalised. A ritual event cannot be grasped through a single lens. Instead it must be understood as absorbing and disseminating meanings that persuade at different levels of perception, which themselves intersect in order to catalyse recognition for all actors. In sudden and intense communication, different interactive processes take place involving the deconstruction of a narrative about the other that comes from earlier times and presupposes a certain perception. Particular attention is paid to the role of religious communities in initiating this interaction, especially the experience of the Greek Catholic Church in Riga, the Caritas Mentors Project, Sacred Family Home activities, and analysis of different communication practices. Additional study is devoted to a content analysis of drawings by child war refugees. Human geography research on migration complements the research methodology.

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LIFE BY THE LAKE: LUBANA REGION AND ITS PEOPLE IN NATURE, HISTORY AND CULTURE

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The report looks at relations between people with nature in the Lubana region in the east of Latvia. Using information from archaeological and ethnographic research and a recent environmental management study, the peculiarities of the people's lifestyle and attitude towards nature, which have developed due to proximity to the lake, will be described. This research used interdisciplinary methods from the humanities and environmental sciences.

Lake Lubans is the largest lake in Latvia. With their unique hydrological system, this lake and its wetlands have historically been one of the oldest settlements in the territory of Latvia. During spring, most of the region was flooded and fertile land formed near the lake, encouraging human habitation in this area since the Stone Age, when the first fishing villages were established. Relations with the lake created a peculiar rhythm of life, which adapted to the lake's annual life cycle.

This continued until the 19th century, when the shores of the lake began to be transformed with the creation of a system of dams and canals. This active human intervention in the natural ecosystem has reduced the likelihood of flooding. However, the fertility of the agricultural land has declined over time, and as the water flow changes, the lake is gradually becoming a swamp. Currently, agriculture near the lake has decreased and only one fishing village remains.

Today, Lake Lubans and the surrounding wetlands are very popular among nature tourists and bird watchers, due to the large numbers of water birds, including sea eagles, that feed in the lake. In turn, the task of environmental specialists is to try to find a way to limit the overgrowth of the lake and reduce the man-made disturbance to the existence of the lake.

COLOURS IN BELIEF NARRATIVES

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The Folkloristics Department of the ELM has entered more than 150,000 religious texts with the support of various projects. A so-called virtual Werewolf Corpus consisting of 1,650 texts has been formed, which is small enough on the one hand, but at the same time concise enough to test the possibilities of processing the material. In this report, I will look at the colours (their use and meaning) in these texts based on the distribution of werewolf texts.

In this experiment, all colours are considered, i.e. if there are several different subtexts in the text, then those not related to werewolves are also taken into account as background information.

ДВУАЗЫЧНЫЕ ЧАСТУШКИ В СОВРЕМЕННОЙ ЖИЗНИ УДМУРТОВ Д. ДЫРДАШУР (ГОП) ШАРКАНСКОГО РАЙОНА УР.

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В современное время наблюдается значительный интерес к народному творчеству и традиционной культуре, о чем свидетельствует увеличение числа фольклорных коллективов, заинтересованность в изучении и пополнении местного архива фольклорными материалами, различные проекты, связанные с продвижением традиционной культуры на местах. Эти же процессы наблюдаются и в муниципальных районах Удмуртской Республики (далее – УР). В представленном докладе внимание сфокусировано на бытовании песенной традиции в д. Дырдашур Шарканского района УР в современном пространстве. В деревне исполняется много песен и частушек как на удмуртском, так и на русском языках. Они звучат на разных мероприятиях – это семейные и деревенские праздники, концерты. Наше внимание привлекли частушки как наиболее популярный жанр местной традиции, отражающий взаимодействие удмуртского и русского языков. Функционирование песенных жанров, а именно жанра частушки, на двух языках (русском и национальном) характерно для всех национальных регионов, так как русский язык является государственным языком общения для всех народов, проживающих на территории России. В Шарканском районе Удмуртской Республики русское население проживает со второй половины XIX века, что неизбежно повлекло за собой необходимость коммуникации удмуртов на русском языке. Анализ поэтического текста позволил выделить три группы частушек, различающихся между собой не только содержанием, но и степенью концентрации ресурсов родного и русского языков, характером заимствования русской лексики, отношением к ней, функциональными свойствами заимствованного слова в языке-реципиенте.

WATER HORSES IN BELIEF NARRATIVES

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The presentation looks at the tradition of water horses in Estonian folk religion and legends with particular reference to parallels between Celtic and European indigenous peoples. The Folkloristics Department at the ELM has catalogued more than 150,000 religious texts with the support of various projects. The Estonian tradition knows both sea-dwelling horses and, to a lesser extent, lake-dwelling and river-dwelling horses, which have some common features with water fairies and water spirits or their horses. At the same time, water horses are associated with belief narratives about a person's fate, although the person often acts impulsively while part of the 'great network of life'.

In the study of religion, representatives of the environmental-ecological school (Paulson 1958) interpret animals and fish as being part of an interrelated religious, economic and ecological whole. The same text corpora and characters were treated as part of mythology (e.g., Loorits 1926a, 1926b, 1949 et seq.; Vèlius, 1996–2005) or as a subject related to Romanticism (Henderson 2007). The first modern study traces the location of water horses among fairy beliefs, their nature, main themes and motifs, interpretations in the study of belief narratives and folk religion, and water horses in modern culture.

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NEOPAGANISM AND NATURE PROTECTION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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The study of the relationship between landscape and tradition is a trending topic in Estonia in the 21st century. Various interest groups are engaged in researching and describing this subject area through oral history, the collection of local heritage, the appreciation and publication of texts reflecting local tradition, civic associations, the (re)vitalisation of beliefs and many others.

The National Heritage Board in Estonia manages the protection of natural sanctuaries. In order to obtain information on the location of natural sanctuaries and their importance and significance for the community, reliance is primarily placed on oral tradition. For the last twenty years, active efforts have been made to bring tradition back to the landscape through the systematic creation of an inventory of locations and by seeking to locate sanctuaries in landscapes, as described around the end of the 19th century in folklore and writing on folklore.

Historic natural sanctuaries are an important part of the cultural heritage and play an important role in the creation of (religious) identity as well as in cultural history in general. In addition to intangible, material and natural values, these sanctuaries also contain historical, archaeological, religious as well as folklore, ethnological and environmental values.

In my presentation, I discuss the significance of neopaganism as a worldview in contemporary nature conservation.

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HOLY PATRONS OF THE CITY AND THEIR RELICS: FROM THE MEDIEVAL TIME TO MODERNITY

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The paper analyses such phenomena as holy city patrons. St Nicholas, a holy patron of Bari and of Russia; St Euphemia, a holy patron of Rovinj; and the modern Saint Alexander Schmorell, a holy patron of the Russian diaspora in Munich, were taken as examples. In all the three cases the patronage is connected with their relics and in all the three cases the original town was changed: the relics of St Nicholas were transferred from Myra to Bari, St Euphemia was buried in Chalkidon but her relics mysteriously arrived in Rovinj, and Alexander Schmorell was born in Russia but moved to Germany, where his relics are at the cemetery in the vicinity of Russian Orthodox church. In the cases of St Nicholas and St. Euphemia the tradition of seeing them as patrons of their new towns and celebrating their feasts comes from medieval times, and Alexander Schmorell was canonised only in 2012, so the tradition of his veneration is very recent. The paper observes texts devoted to these saints and some modern traditions of their veneration.

THE BEAST WITH MANY FACES: BEARS IN MANSI FOLKLORE AND MYTHOLOGY

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In my presentation I will focus on appearances of the bear in Mansi folklore and mythology:

1. The bear as a disobedient child of the heavenly god Numi-Torum.
2. The bear as a mythological zoomorphic incarnation of a creature called the Sacred Town Elder.
3. The bear as an ancestor of the Por people.
4. The bear as the mightiest animal of the western Siberian taiga. Ob-Ugrians swore oaths on the name of bear and believed that bears punished liars.

THE HADRELEZ FEAST IN NORTHEASTERN BULGARIA

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The object of attention in the report is the Hadrelez feast (Haderlez, Ederlez), celebrated by muslim communities. The feast is typical to three alevis settlements in the Razgrad region (northeast Bulgaria), the villages of Bisertsi, Mudrevo and Sevar. The feast coincides with the Christian St George's Day (May 6) and symbolises the welcome of spring, when wishes for health, prosperity and wellbeing are made. A characteristic element of this feast are the masquerade games in which only women participate. The report will present the customs in the three villages, focusing on the Hadrelez feast in the village of Mudrevo, where an important element is the ritual practices for health and prosperity performed in the Duldul izi (Duldul's Step) area. According to legend, Duldul is Demir Baba's horse – an alevis saint who, when there was a drought in this region, reached into the bowels of the earth and made a spring appear. The local community from the village of Mudrevo believes that Demir Baba and his horse Duldul passed by their village and that stones there bear traces of their footsteps, which during the ritual help people to be healthy.

FOLK PERFORMANCE NARRATIVES IN KURUBARPET BEERESHWARA JATRE RITUALISES KURUBA IDENTITY

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Folk performance narratives play an important role in the study of indigenous culture. Lord Beereshwara is an incarnation of Lord Shiva. Lord Beereshwara is worshipped by the shepherd communities of Karnataka. Kurubas are one of the shepherd community whose traditional occupation was shepherding and weaving. This paper foregrounds the Dodda Devara Jatre carnival in Kurubarapet in Kolar as a cultural text that ritualises Kuruba identity. The Jatre highlights the lives and history of the community through an analysis of Beereshwara Jatre, which is celebrated for three days once every eleven years. This Jatre brings the individuals of the community together through rituals such as Kulastha Mahakoota, Naaga Devathe Thani, Bilvarchane, Meeludeepa Pooje and Tenginakai Pavada. During the Jatre other deities such as Battheshwara, Siddeshwara and Gurumurtheshwara are also worshipped. The paper further tries to examine the varied roles performed by individuals and groups of different communities and castes. The paper approaches Beereshwara Jatre as a narrative of cultural history and attempts to define the connection between folklore, identity, and community consciousness. The research focuses on historical and contemporary contexts of globalisation. Discourse analysis, folklore and performance studies constitute the methodology of research.

NATURE FOR PROTECTION, NATURE FOR SALE: CONSERVATION, LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIAL CONFLICT IN BOLATA BAY, BULGARIA

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The paper will examine the tensions and conflicts caused by conservation regimes and the perception of nature as a source of livelihoods, particularly as a resource for local tourist development. The case study of the Bolata bay near the village of Bulgarevo, Bulgaria, is the focus of the research. Until the middle of the 20th century, the bay and the swampy firth adjacent to it played an essential role in the locals' livelihood activities: the bay was a place for fishing, and the firth and the caves in the rocks nearby for some stock rearing activities. The inclusion of the area in the Kaliakra reserve, the establishment of socialist cooperative farms, and the building of a military base in the vicinity changed access to and the regime of land use in the area. After the collapse of the socialist state (1989), and especially over the last two decades, the bay's sandy beach gradually gained popularity as a tourist site.

Over the course of time many conflicts between various stakeholders (local entrepreneurs, the reserve administration, NGOs, tourists, etc.) arose regarding nature protection and the rising significance of tourism as a new source of livelihoods. Recently, as a result of local protests and negotiations with state authorities, the bay was taken out of the reserve.

The paper will take a close look at these processes on the basis of an ethnographic study within the scope of the research Life in Protected Zones and Areas: Challenges, Conflicts, Benefits project, supported by the National Science Fund of Bulgaria (KP-06-H40/12). We proceed from the conceptual framework that nature is considered as inhabited by humans and, simultaneously, is analysed as an emic category that various social actors use to express their attitudes and interpretations. This approach stems from the proposition that various actors may see and evaluate the same place in totally different ways.

FROM HEADSCARF TO HIJAB: MUSLIM ALBANIAN WOMEN'S HEADDRESSES IN THE CHANGING BALKANS OF THE 20TH AND EARLY 21ST CENTURIES

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The paper (mainly based on the field work materials of the author) analyses the transformation of headscarves among Balkan Muslim women using the example of Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia and the south of Montenegro. For many centuries, the headdress has been an indispensable element of the traditional costume of all the peoples of south-eastern Europe without exception. The spread of Islam, caused by the Ottoman conquest of large areas of the region, contributed to the expansion of the influence of oriental fashion, including women's head- and bodydresses, for example *ferexhe*, *çarçaf*, etc. Stormy events of the twentieth century made significant changes in the attitude of the Balkans to religion, tradition, stereotypes, moral and other foundations of society. In Albania, which built socialism "based on its own strength", these transformations were especially obvious. In recent years, after the democratic transformations in Albania and the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, there has been a revival of many religious practices, as well as a revitalisation of the rules that govern wearing a complex of conditionally 'traditional' costume by followers of Islam. On the streets of Balkan cities and villages, women in hijab began to appear more and more often, to ambiguous assessment in society. Many tend to see this phenomenon as threatening religious radicalisation in the countries of the western Balkans. Others consider the spread of Muslim fashion a manifestation of tolerance and multiculturalism in Balkan society. The analysis proposed by the author is an attempt to decipher the complex cultural code that originated in local history and adopted the traditions and attitudes of various ethnic and religious communities.

ПРАГМАТИЧЕСКАЯ ОСНОВА ТОПОНИМИЧЕСКОЙ ОБРАЗНОЙ НОМИНАЦИИ (НА ПРИМЕРЕ БЕЛОРУССКОЙ МИКРОТОПОНИМИИ)

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Образная номинация может быть характерна для языковых единиц любого уровня – апеллятивной и проприальной лексики, в том числе названий небольших географических объектов – микротопонимов. При этом формирование образных топонимов основано на способности человеческого сознания использовать предшествующий опыт для отождествления различных объектов. Анализ белорусских образных микротопонимов выявил несколько групп, которые так или иначе относятся к сфере отождествления “ЧЕЛОВЕК”, что позволяет говорить об антропоцентричности модели образной номинации в топонимии, ограниченной при этом рамками практического опыта номинатора.

AN APPETITE FOR SINGING: SINGING EXPERIENCES OF ELDERLY SINGERS IN ESTONIA IN THE CONTEXT OF HISTORICAL SINGING PRACTICES

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The benefits of singing for the elderly are increasingly talked about today in the context of healthy ageing. How do elderly women go about singing in contemporary Estonian society, and are women's experiences linked to attitudes and practices of the earlier traditional or pre-modern society? In my study, I focus on the motivation and opportunities of the elderly to sing in different situations and circumstances, and how they experience and interpret the effect of singing on their everyday lives, self-fulfillment, self-empowerment and physical wellbeing.

The study is based on qualitative in-depth semi-structured interviews with 12 women who are active singers in their elderly years. My interview partners were born between the 1930s and 1950s, and they have different social backgrounds and have practiced different musical styles. Next to the Estonians, there Seto women were also among the interviewees. The Seto have preserved a continuous oral singing tradition (included in the UNESCO Intangible Heritage List) as well as a more traditional mentality and lifestyle. In the analysis of the musical life stories of my interviewees, I use frameworks of both biographical and performance studies, as well as historical and comparative cultural perspectives.

The stories of the women reveal considerable similarities between their earlier lives – singing together in their communities and families –, and these have developed their “confidence in the power of the song” and their performers' skills. Especially in the recollections of members of the more traditional Seto community, the high status of elderly singers is evident. In older age, almost all of them have encountered some internal or external constraints connected to singing practices, which may be associated with the lower prestige of the elderly, and more generally with the behavioural models characteristic of modern society.

LIFE IN A CORONAVIRUS: LEISURE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE HOME SPACE IN LITHUANIA

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As Christian Fuchs mentioned, in the COVID crisis, humans are largely confined to the physical space of the home, for which certain organisational strategies are needed so that everyday life can be organised from there. Humans experience, conceptualise, live and thereby also produce social space-time in manners that make social spaces converge in the supra-timespace of the home. Communication technologies play a decisive role in organising everyday life from the locale of the home in the COVID crisis (Fuchs 2021: 19). The coronavirus crisis has suspended, shattered and necessitated the reorganisation of the practices, structures and routines of everyday life (Fuchs 2021: 22). My question is, how is family leisure time shaped outside the home? I intend to answer this question with a report describing the situation in Lithuania based on personal field research.

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THE RUPITE PROTECTED AREA, BULGARIA: SACRED LEGITIMISATION OF SECULAR INTERESTS

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The object of study in the paper here proposed is Rupite in south-west Bulgaria. It is part of Natura 2000 (Directive 79/409/EEC and Directive 92/43/EEC) and in 1980 was declared a protected area. Within the Rupite area there are hot mineral springs, the area around which has been a sanitary protection zone since 2019. The locality borders Kozhuh Height, which in 1962 received the status of natural landmark. The paper will examine the ways in which the sacred character of Rupite is used for legitimisation and as a source of symbolic capital in the realisation of various secular interests in the locality. In the course of its development, Rupite has developed a multi-layered character: it has great natural and ecological, historical, cultural and religious significance that goes beyond the local and even national community. Today, the locality has well-developed religious, pilgrimage, spa and cultural-historical tourism (the Vanga complex, the ancient city of Heraclea Sintica, hot mineral pools, the Rupite mineral baths). This leads to the intertwining of different interests, which make the area the subject of frequent conflict between institutions, environmentalists, businessmen, archaeologists and locals. Despite its various characteristics, Rupite is best known as a sacred and powerful energy place. The main credit for this goes to the prophetess Baba Vanga, who spent most of her time in Rupite and in 1994 built the St Paraskevi of Bulgaria church, around which a whole religious complex later developed. It is in Vanga's figure that various, often conflicting, interests and activities seek legitimacy.

“THERE IS (NO) SUCH BIRD OUT THERE”: CONFLICTING KNOWLEDGE IN THE DESIGNATION AND MANAGEMENT OF NATURA 2000 SITES

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For the past 25 years, the designation and the management of Natura 2000 sites have caused plenty of conflict between conservationists and local stakeholders (municipalities, landowners, farmers, other interest groups) in all countries of the EU. Most conflict arises from experienced or perceived infringement of property rights; the implementation of conservation measures that hinder local economic development or restrict existing local businesses; the penetration of nature protection NGOs into local affairs and – at the same time – the exclusion of local actors from decision-making processes; poor communication and lack of constructive cooperation between local and external actors; and so on. Conflict also results from actions informed by dubious knowledge (on both sides). Using data from questionable species surveys and/or outdated scientific literature leads to incorrect mapping or inadequate selection of areas to be designated as Natura sites. Among local people, the factual non-occurrence of particular protected species in proposed natural sites causes not only doubt about conservation scientists' and activists' knowledge, but also suspicion about their goals and motives when imposing protection measures that restrict human activities. At the same time, claims of non-occurrence can be a consequence of gaps in local ecological or environmental knowledge. In fact, the species to be protected is native to the meadows but their owners have never taken notice of its presence. My presentation will deal with conflicts of questionable knowledge (scientific and local), which usually cause further conflicts of other types or sharpen existing conflicts between conservationists from outside the area and local people. It draws on ethnographic fieldwork in settlements the arable land of which is included in Natura 2000 sites in Bulgaria that were designated to protect (supposed) habitats of a bird that has become emblematic of biodiversity conservation efforts in the EU, the corncrake (*Crec crex*).

SACRED FOOTWEAR: LATVIAN PERCEPTIONS IN THE 19TH CENTURY AND TODAY

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In the Latvian Folklore Archives there are four pieces of documented evidence from the Vidzeme region showing that in the 19th century people used to wear bast shoes for weddings because they were considered sacred, while leather shoes were not. These texts include explanations that help us understand that bast shoes made of linden trees were considered sacred, pure, and clean while shoes made of cattle leather were unclean and spoiled, or were even “a sin”. This allows us to conclude that the concept of sacred is viewed as clean/innocent vs dirty/damaged rather than as sacred vs profane. These texts also show that the natural death of the animal was considered dirty in opposition to slaughtering.

According to a survey, when asked about sacred shoes and clothing today, Latvians tend to have three different opinions. Some agree with the understanding of the 19th century, some see no difference in killing an animal or a tree, some do not see how footwear or clothing can be considered sacred. It appears that the first two groups look at the shoes and clothing in the category of clean/unclean, while the third group, sacred/profane. However, when asked about the sacred objects of nature, all respondents think in the category of sacred/profane. The results of the survey reveal that trees are considered sacred 10 times more often than household animals. We can also learn what makes clothing unclean/damaged and what practices are used to clean them. Comparison of the 19th and 21st century argumentation shows in which directions people's worldviews have developed and how durable some ideas are.

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ECOLOGICAL FUNERALS: NEW IDEAS IN CONTEMPORARY LITHUANIA

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The increasing challenges of climate change and consciousness concerning ecological matters are the main reasons motivating humanity to change stubborn customs and lifestyles. The ideas of an ecological lifestyle, which are becoming increasingly popular worldwide and which serve as an incentive to responsible consumption oriented towards preservation of nature, are gradually penetrating the sphere of the funeral. In the future, sustainable rituals preserving nature may become new habits and eventually become customs.

Today's post-modern society prefers ecological funeral rituals in which the ashes of the deceased are placed into ecological urns made of cellulose, coconut husk or pressed peat. Ecological awareness is the main reason people worldwide prefer 'green' funerals. This has led to a form of burial called the tree graveyards, in which the ashes of the deceased are placed in a biologically decomposable container mixed with seeds of a certain tree that will grow at the place of burial. One of the newest methods of ecological burial uses sublimation drying technology to reduce the remains to powder, which later becomes compost.

This paper aims to investigate the impact of ecological ideas on contemporary Lithuanian funeral traditions. We are interested in the problem of the change that has affected funeral customs in the latest decade and discuss the factors that have influenced this change. In addition, the author seeks to answer the question of what funeral changes are most sustainable ecologically.

Although funerals are perhaps the lifecycle rituals least susceptible to change, lately they have undergone drastic change inspired by the spread of ecological ideas. Cremation may serve as an example. Today 78% of the Lithuanian population consider cremation to be more aesthetic and ecological and less painful. More and more people want to make the urns or graves of their relatives more individual by adding personal traits. For example, the urn could be decorated with symbols reflecting the hobbies of the deceased. Lately funerals have become more flexible and open including innovative solutions such as urns made by means of 3D printer. People hope that in the near future they will be

allowed to print urns themselves, which will give way to more original designs and will also bring lower prices. Another change that occurred during the two years of the pandemic is broadcasting cremations and burials online. The newest information technologies enable relatives to watch the funeral ceremony online, substituting for their physical participation, which used to be considered of great importance. Watching the ceremony online is also a reasonable solution to the problem of expressing one's sympathy to distant relatives of the deceased.

MEDICINE IN GREECE AFTER THE GREEK WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

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The oldest university in the territory of present-day Estonia, the University of Tartu (Dorpat), was founded in 1632 and reopened in 1802 as the Imperial University of Dorpat. Doctoral theses were defended mainly in Latin in the first half of the 19th century. There is a Latin dissertation in Tartu from 1836, defended by Carl Gustav Thraemer under the title “De artis medicae in Graecia statu hodierno” (‘On the Art of Medicine in Greece Today’), in which the author describes medical conditions in newly independent Greece. Carl Gustav Thraemer spent five years in Greece as a naval physician; he praises the climate along with the herbs and abundant mineral springs.

The author’s main message seems to be that Europe’s affect had only lasted for a brief time and the young independent state was rather backward as compared to the rest of the continent. However, Carl Gustav Thraemer’s dissertation contains interesting facts and observations on Greece, the Greeks and their medical practices and beliefs 200 years ago.

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WOMEN'S EXTERNAL PIETIES AND ART: AN EXAMPLE FROM THE OLD BELIEVER JOURNAL RODNAIA STARINA (1927–1933)

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The interwar period (1918–1940) in the Baltics coincided with the rise of national identity. This was true not only for Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians but also for the Russian minority in the region. Russian Old Believers tried to use this period for their own benefit. In a sense, the idea of a nation is quite similar to any material invention of modernisation, such as an urban outfit, the popularity of which bothered Old Believer elders so much. One of the leaders of Old Belief in Riga, Ivan Zavoloko (1897–1984, see the vast literature on him in Vurgaft and Ushakov 1996: 109–110) actively participated in a new project of disseminating the old ways in a new form by publishing a journal called *Rodnaia Starina* (Native Customs) where he combined more traditional Old Believer homiletic texts and instructions for specific Old Believer practices (including stories on *lestovkas*, the tradition of singing, icon-painting, etc.) with professional articles on Russian culture, history, and art. Zavoloko managed to publish just a few issues between 1927 and 1933. However, it was an important instrument in the shaping of the Russian Old Believer identity in the Baltics at the time.

One issue of *Rodnaia Starina* gives special attention to the role of women in Old Belief and, in particular, to mastering external piety in women. Its authors discuss what could be called female agency in Old Belief. They were speculating on what spiritual role a woman could have in the older and contemporary Christian church and by what means she could fulfill this role. The journal provides visual examples of Russian national art that depict ‘traditional’ images of women, thus delving into the of women’s external pieties.

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THE BULGARIAN TOLSTOY COLONY (1906–1908): FOLLOWERS OF LEO TOLSTOY’S RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL DOCTRINE IN THE VILLAGE OF YASNA POLYANA, PRIMORSKO MUNICIPALITY, BULGARIA

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At the beginning of the 20th century in Bulgaria, in a village bearing the Turkish name Alan Kayryak (translated into Bulgarian as ‘a place of sunburn’), located at the foot of the mystical Strandzha Mountain, but also a few kilometers from the southern Bulgarian Black Sea coast, five Bulgarian intellectuals from different parts of Bulgaria, who completed their higher education in Western Europe, and a Russian count, established a Tolstoy colony in the village. They corresponded with Leo Tolstoy, visited him in Russia, translated some of his works into Bulgarian, and published them in the colony’s printing house. The young Tolstoyans also published their own newspaper, cultivated land donated to them by the mayor of the village for the needs of the colony, subsisted on agriculture and managed to integrate the colony into the life of the village.

This lecture aims to find answers to questions such as why was Bulgaria one of only two countries in Europe (after the Netherlands) in which Tolstoy’s philosophical ideas found fertile soil? Why was the village of Alan Kayrak renamed Yasna Polyana in 1934? And why in 1998 was the establishment in 1998 at the Leo N. Tolstoy Museum and the museum collection “Bulgarian Yasnaya Polyana” in the village, where its former Turkish name has long been forgotten, the trace of the Bulgarian Tolstoyan movement is still palpable, and the memory of religious and ethical doctrine of Leo Tolstoy – alive.

“IF GOD ASKS...”, HIDDEN EMOTIONS AND FOLK BELIEFS IN THE ‘MYTHICAL MEME’ OF THE PANDEMIC

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The creativity we find in COVID-19 memes isn't restricted to everyday themes and characters but is also reflected in the rich cycles of mythical memes: memes that are set in ancient times and describe the world of the gods and their hierarchical relationships with human beings. The emergence of the myth in the usually humorous framework of the meme may raise questions about how and why the archaic and the contemporary, the religious and the secular, or the ritual and the digital meet in this context.

A comparative reading of these narratives in their social as well as literary contexts (including samples from European as well as Israeli WhatsApp groups and websites) may teach us not only about the origins and characteristics of folk beliefs during the pandemic, but also about the function of memes as “expressive repertoires” – narrative accounts that reflect and stimulate collective emotions. The article demonstrates and explains how the distant and symbolic plot of the myth, a plot of struggles with primordial forces, allowed its audiences to express threatening feelings, while the humorous framework of the meme regulated these emotions and gave them perspective and legitimacy. The artistic language and the semiotic channels through which this hybrid genre gave expression to popular religious or religious-like conceptions exposes the diverse roots of folk religion as a belief system that crosses not only religions and ideologies but also canons and tastes and testifies to its universal as well as local roles.

THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF THE SNAKE IN BULGARIAN FOLKLORE AND RITUALS: A SEMIOTIC AND ETHNOLINGUISTIC APPROACH

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Snake lore is an important fragment of the traditional folk worldview all over the world, and in the Balcano–Balto–Slavic continuum especially. This paper presents a semiotic and ethnolinguistic study of the snake (as an animal rather than as a mythic flying dragon) based on Bulgarian linguistic, folkloric and ethnographic data. The aim of the investigation is to discover a correlation between the natural and cultural features of snakes and to display the mechanisms of mental transformation.

We discover cultural interpretations of the initially natural features of the snake (a limbless reptile, its form, the way it moves, the skin, venom, etc.) in the metaphorical usage of the corresponding lexical units, phraseology and proverbs. Natural and cultural characteristics are amalgamated in the calendric rituals, mainly in the spring when snakes are driven away. Folk medicine and oral incantations combine rational and irrational ideas about the snake and medicine using snake.

The Slavic змея is etymologically connected with зема, *zemja ‘earth’, while in Bulgarian dialects the forms of ‘earth’ and ‘snake’ coincide in one word, зъмя. This linguistic fact alludes to the natural properties of snakes and serves as a critical point for seeing the snake as a chthonic being that is related to the underworld and corresponding loci (cemetery, hollows, etc.). This association is relevant for the mythologic views of the snake as a cosmic mediator between the worlds, something that is traced in folk ballads and other texts and customs.

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FOLK CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS IN KOSOVO AND METOHİJA BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

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The area of Kosovo and Metohija in the period between the two world wars was characterised by a patriarchal way of life and thus a large number of folk customs and beliefs. In my paper, I will deal with the customs and beliefs that marked the daily life of the population in this area, based on ethnographic literature and the press from that period. Folk customs and beliefs have almost always accompanied many mysterious and mystical actions that people have performed on various occasions and for various reasons, so they are considered one term. The production cycle (ploughing, digging, sowing, harvesting, beekeeping, sheep shearing, etc.) was accompanied by many customs the goal of which was to ensure economic existence. The divine value of nature was believed. Each house had a domestic snake that guarded the house. Both Serbs and Albanians believed in supernatural beings, angels, witches, fairies, devils, plagues and others, and all this had elements of the pagan religion. The custom of wearing amulets was widespread, especially among the Muslim population. These were wolf and pig teeth, wolf claws, antique coins, etc. Inscriptions written by hedges were also worn as amulets, so they were placed in special triangular or cylindrical boxes and worn around the neck. There were various customs related to folk medicine, wedding and married life, holiday celebrations, as well as customs relating to death and funerals. In the house and family, it was the woman who kept the customs, faith and tradition. A good proportion of those customs and beliefs have been preserved to this day in Kosovo and Metohija.

NATURE IN THE RITUAL YEAR OF A VILLAGE FROM THE REGION OF TRANSYLVANIA

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Elements of nature were and are still present in the ritual year of a village in southern Transylvania, Gura Râului. The village is located in a multiethnic region, so it has very well preserved its traditions over time. The popular calendar here is closely related to the religious calendar and the agricultural calendar. Many of the traditions throughout the year are centered on elements of nature with various meanings. Why are the willow sprigs sanctified on the Lazarus Saturday and laid on graves or near icons? Why are people symbolically struck by the lovage on Ascension day? Why are wheat wreaths made at Pentecost and why is it good to have a wreath from the past year in the house, which has been in the church, at the church flags, all this time? Why are wheat grains consecrated on the feast of Saint Parascheva? What role do basil or apple sprigs play in the ritual year? What plants do women hold in their hands during Sunday and holiday service and why? Which are the elements of nature that are related to the rites of passage? This communication aims to answer all these questions through the voice of the field. It is fascinating how a traditional micro-society works in the 21st century, in a world where globalization is growing.

CROSSES AND FLOWERS OF THE FIELDS: A NEW FORM OF ROMANIAN RELIGIOUS FOLK ART

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In recent years, the traditional folk art market in Bucharest has witnessed the introduction of a new form of object: handmade wooden crosses of various shapes, bread seals, bowls and spoons, beautifully adorned with individually painted wild flowers, herbs, religious symbols, and brief religious and inspirational texts. These unique items are the creations of a secluded religious group, founded by an artist couple in the early 1990s and banned by the official Orthodox Church in 1997. The group consists of many gifted and educated artists, who work collectively to create these objects. Other group members are in charge of sales at various traditional fairs throughout the year. With great feeling, they provide anyone interested with information on the symbolism of each piece, enthusiastically chatting with customers on religious and life topics.

In order to respect the group's desire for privacy, the focus of this talk will be on the objects offered for sale, rather than their creators. Their particular symbolism will be decrypted, as well as the subtle connection between the paintings and the meaningful texts selected from or inspired by various religious and philosophical sources that accompanies them. Each item is hand carved from various woods and then hand painted. Even the threads on which the items are hung and the paper bags in which they are sold are hand made by the group, making hard work and sacrifice an inherent part of their art. The products, resulting from a collective creative process, represent a unique and original concept. Although consistent in style over time, it has evolved and adapted, in order to comply with the demands of less religious customers. The shape of the cross has become more fluid, and new shapes, such as trefoils, hearts, and even the Romanian map, have emerged, each still adorned with symbolic natural elements such as flowers, herbs, birds and water, that recall the Garden of Eden.

DEVELOPMENTALISM VS ENVIRONMENTALISM, OR HOW BIODIVERSITY AND LIVESTOCK HUSBANDRY COEXIST

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The Central Balkan National Park is one of the three national parks in Bulgaria. It was created in 1991 and is located in the highest parts of the Central Stara planina mountain. Within the boundaries of the national park, there are nine reserves. A special directorate manages the Park in order to preserve and maintain biodiversity and protect wildlife, to provide opportunities for scientific and educational activities and for the development of tourism and ecological livelihoods. Along with these activities the Park is used by locals for natural pasture for animals. South of the Park there are small towns and villages with a huge concentration of livestock husbandry farms. The increased number of farms is due to the possibilities for European subsidies. At the same time free pastures, allowed for use by the directorate, are reduced every year and are not enough for all the breeders. This results in a number of conflicts that make the coexistence of biodiversity and grazing livestock husbandry difficult.

The paper explores these conflicts and the question whether it is possible to create ecological livelihoods for local people. The analysis will follow Kottak's understanding of new ecological anthropology about recognising pervasive linkages and concomitant flows of people, technologies, images, and information, and acknowledging the impact of differential power and status in the postmodern world on local entities (Kottak 1999). The analysis is also based on Kottak's assumption of ethnoecological clashes between cultural models of developmentalism and environmentalism.

RULER VISIBILITY, THE PUBLIC SPHERE, AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES IN THE LATE RUSSIAN AND OTTOMAN EMPIRES: A FINNISH– BULGARIAN COMPARISON

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This paper proposes the hypothesis that multiplying and escalating public ruler celebrations (imperial tours, royal birthdays, accession and coronation anniversaries, etc.) across the Romanov and Ottoman Empires in the nineteenth century not only forged strong vertical ties of subject loyalty to each respective emperor in the short run, but also, and more importantly, stimulated the rise of the horizontal ties of (macro) group consciousness and ethnonational belonging in the long run.

The Finns and Bulgars, two seemingly unrelated groups-in-the-making turn out to be, upon closer scrutiny, quite similarly positioned vis-à-vis their imperial centres and respective cultural policies. Spatially, Finns and Bulgars were equidistant to their imperial capitals, their members – of predominantly peasant background – identifying themselves with an emperor of a different faith en route to highly successful imperial cults over loosely equivalent time periods. Finally, their ‘awakening’ as nations took place vis-à-vis culturally dominant, co-religious, but not co-linguistic ‘Others’ (the Swedes and the Greeks, respectively).

The process of each group’s symbolic engagement and accelerating interaction with the monarch relied on syncretic elements of integrative faith and universal rulership serving as the basis for intense devotion on a mass scale that is hard to imagine today. Yet a reconstruction of this vanished doctrine’s specificities and trajectories is vital to our understanding of the nature and rise of modern abstract (macro) group consciousness. Of central research interest therefore is the process of extension of long-standing localised micro forms of belonging and their linkage to the center for a macro form of belonging.

The ultimate goal is to create a flexible model for mapping sociocultural modernisation that can open new cognitive spaces, have multi-pronged applications in history, literary studies, sociology, anthropology, religious studies, and political science and help to push the study of modernity and nationalism further.

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ЭТНОБОТАНИЧЕСКИЙ АНАЛИЗ ТРУДОВ Г.Е. ВЕРЕЩАГИНА, ПОСВЯЩЕННЫХ ТРАДИЦИОННЫМ ХОЗЯЙСТВЕННЫМ ЗАНЯТИЯМ УДМУРТОВ

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Особенности использования растительных ресурсов удмуртским населением региона в конце XIX – начале XX вв. в той или иной мере нашли отражение в большинстве работ Г. Е. Верещагина (1851–1930). Информация о применении растений в традиционных занятиях удмуртов – охоте, рыболовстве и пчеловодстве зачастую имеет отрывочный и неточный по описанию характер, но представляет существенный интерес для этноботанических и этноэкологических исследований. При идентификации отмеченных в работах этнографа видов растений применялся комплексный анализ, при котором учитывались описание морфологических признаков и свойств, упоминание об условиях произрастания, сроки цветения, фитонимы.

Сведения этноботанического характера, относящиеся к охоте, в опубликованных работах немногочисленны. Роль охоты в системе жизнеобеспечения удмуртов в конце XIX в. уже незначительна вследствие интенсивной вырубki лесов в регионе и доминированию сельскохозяйственной деятельности. В этнографических очерках “Об охоте у вотяков Вотской области (Глазовский и Сарапульский уезды)” (2000) и “Охота на птиц и зверей” (1995) исследователь ограничился описанием способов использования в ловушках в качестве приманки плодов дикорастущих и культивируемых видов растений – рябины, калины и овса. При изготовлении разнообразных орудий лова на зверей применяли стволы, побеги, кору и древесину нескольких видов деревьев и кустарников.

Большее внимание в опубликованных рукописях «Рыбачество» и «Рыбачество у вотяков Поломского края Глазовского уезда» (2000) уделено вопросам рыболовства удмуртов, благодаря чему сохранились интересные сведения о рациональных и иррациональных (магических) способах использования растений.

Как и у других народов региона, большинство рыболовных снастей были самодельными. Сети плели из коноплянных и льняных

нитей, морды – из ивового прута, а поплавки вырезали из коры тополя чёрного (*Populus nigra* L.). В статьях указаны виды деревьев, из стволов которых изготавливали лодки (осина и ель), приведены сведения об использовании горячей бересты и смолистых дров при ночной ловле рыбы.

Г. Е. Верещагиным была зафиксирована информация о древнем способе ловли рыбы при помощи плодов растения с ихтиоцидными свойствами. Приведено крайне скудное описание плодов, но ботаническое название растения и удмуртский фитоним в статье отсутствуют. Комплексный этноботанический анализ позволил нам идентифицировать вид, о котором писал исследователь – это волдырник ягодный (*Cucubalus baccifer* L.), плоды которого содержат группу алкалоидов. Отмечен и магический прием использования рыбаками нескольких видов растений.

В очерке “Остатки древней религии” (1886) исследователь зафиксировал сведение об особом, почтительном отношении удмуртских крестьян к осоке, но далее констатации данный факт в его работах развития не получил. Между тем, данный факт связан, в т.ч. с рыболовством. Анализ этнографических и археоботанических материалов позволил нам предположить, что осока (несколько видов рода *Carex* с длинными и прочными побегами), играла важную роль в рыболовстве удмуртов в до- и раннеземледельческий период в качестве источника волокна для изготовления рыболовных снастей. Именно практическая значимость в древности определила положение осоки как одного из культовых атрибутов в куале (семейном и родовом святилище удмуртов).

В опубликованной рукописи “Пчеловодство у вотяков” Г. Е. Верещагиным (2000) описаны архаичные приемы использования удмуртами древесных растений для защиты бортей от диких животных и представления пчеловодов о влиянии растений на продуктивность пчелиных семей. Отметим, что в суждениях исследователя присутствует ошибочная попытка установления причинно-следственной связи между фенологическими фазами развития растений (*Sorbus aucuparia* L.) и здоровьем пчел. Согласно полученным нами экспедиционным данным, среди удмуртских и русских пчеловодов республики до настоящего времени бытует ошибочное представление о вредном влиянии рябины на пчел.

Описанное Г. Верещагиным использование в пчеловодстве удмуртов одного из видов орхидей можно расценивать как иррациональный способ животноводческой магии, не имеющего под собой

какого-либо реального обоснования. Идентификация вида растения (пальчатокоренник мясо-красный (*Dactylorhiza incarnata* (L.) Soo.) по представленным в работе морфологическим признакам и фитониму также потребовала комплексного исследования.

Данные, полученные нами в ходе экспедиционных исследований, позволяют утверждать, что многие способы ведения традиционных хозяйственных занятий, сведения о которых приведены в трудах Г. Верещагина, сохранялись до недавнего времени, но глубинный смысл возникновения обычаев и мифических образов, связанных с растениями, был во многом утерян.

В заключение отметим, что результаты этноботанического анализа могут быть использованы при реконструкции исторических этапов развития традиционных занятий удмуртов.

ESTONIAN REGILAU IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT: THE FOREST SONG FESTIVAL

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In social movements, important messages can be conveyed in a memorable way and people can be united through music, which is why songs, styles, places and rituals with the corresponding ideology are created. Musical events provide an emotionally charged ‘stage’ for the presentation of ideology. The Forest Song Festival, an event at which there is a joint singing of regilaul in nature, was started in 2018. In the presentation, I will analyse what kind of ideological and aesthetic beliefs appear at the Forest Song Festival and how the oldest Estonian folk song, regilaul, or runo song, has been adapted to its needs. To highlight the special nature of the Forest Song Festival, I draw parallels with the Estonian Song Festival held since 1869.

Music always starts from tradition, and through music a person reveals his or her sense of belonging, values, etc. The revival of (musical) folklore generally expresses dissatisfaction with some aspects of modern life, hinting that change is desired. Estonian folklore has been used and revived primarily in the interests of national ideology, but also within the framework of the Soviet, Christian, New Spiritualism, mind-set. The rise of former colonial peoples and Indigenous peoples (for example the “indigenous efflorescence” proposed by Gerald Roche 2018) and the spread of related cultural phenomena (World Music, New Spirituality) and environmentalism are global phenomena that have prompted Estonians to become aware of their own identity as an Indigenous people.

Today, indigenous peoples are identified by reference “to identities that predate historical encroachments by other groups and the ensuing histories that have wrought, and continue to bring, oppression against their cultural survival and self-determination as distinct peoples” (Anaya 2004). Estonia is now an independent nation state, but ethnic Estonians have lived in a situation of colonialism for so long (1227–1919; 1940–1991) that many have developed the attitudes usually attributed to indigenous people, such as a close emotional relationship with nature, concern for their language and traditional cultural expressions of

preservation, and a strained relationship with members of the former dominant nation.

The Forest Song Festival seeks to protect forests, to continue the archaic singing tradition, express a the close-to-nature identity of Indigenous people and communicate with nature. The lead singers choose songs according to their form (regilaul and spells) and content (nature) from the collections (publications) of the Estonian Folklore Archive or from the new oral tradition based on them. At the performance, the songs are varied, improvised and the singers' own compositions are performed, while also deviating from the poetics of the regilaul, combining elements of popular music and New Spirituality.

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CELEBRATION IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SPACES: THE LITHUANIAN RITUAL YEAR IN THREE SPECIFIC PERIODS

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In this report, I will analyse the Lithuanian ritual year by distinguishing between ritual actions performed at home and in public space (public here means outside the home, in nature or in a public building, except a church). I will choose three specific periods for the analysis of the ritual year: 1. 1920–1939, in the Polish-occupied Vilnius region, when public celebration was not tolerated and any public event required the permission of the administration; 2. the years of the Soviet occupation of 1945–1990, when new socialist public festivities were promoted (in order to avoid uncontrolled private celebrations) to control leisure time; and 3. the situation in 2020–2021, the time of COVID, when people belonging to different families were not allowed to meet to celebrate either in private or public.

CONVIVIAL CONSERVATION IN THEORY AND PRACTICE: HUMAN–BEAR COEXISTENCE IN THE MOUNTAINS OF BULGARIA

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The presentation discusses the novel approach of convivial conservation and the question of how to transform human–wildlife relations from conflict to coexistence using the example of human–bear coexistence in Bulgaria. It discusses the main principles of convivial conservation, proposed as a novel approach intended to transform conservation policy and practice beyond the nature–culture divide and mainstream neoliberal conservation. It also examines the practical application and potential of this approach to promote successful coexistence between humans and wild animals, analysing two cases from the Rodopi mountains of Bulgaria that evidence different degrees of conflict and coexistence between humans and brown bears. In doing so, the presentation reveals the main factors that lead to rather successful coexistence in the first case (the region of Yagodina), as well as those characterising the conflict in the second (three settlements along the Arda river). In this way, the presentation contributes to the major discussions on how to transform human–wildlife conflict into convivial coexistence (Büscher and Fletcher, 2020), demonstrating how attention to the immediate circumstances of human–wildlife encounter in such efforts should be complemented by promotion of more inclusive, democratic forms of decision-making and egalitarian distribution of economic resources.

OLD SHRINES, NEW WORSHIPERS: CULTURAL PRACTICES FOR CONNECTING WITH NATURE

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The research focuses on contemporary notions and rituals that aim to restore human connection with nature, with the hope of health, wellbeing and spiritual growth. Practices performed in holy places in Bulgaria from the period of antiquity and the early Middle Ages will be considered. They can be attributed to the field of neo-paganism and the New Age, including elements of Bulgarian traditional culture, explanatory models of esoteric teaching, parascientific and profane narrative of 'energies' and 'places of power'. Reconstructions, holidays, festivals, etc., organised at these holy places show the interweaving of eco-ideas in strategies for the development of cultural tourism.

GIULIO CLOVIO. THE “FOREIGNER”’S CREATIVITY

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Against the background of dramatic events that entail migration flows, we are looking for support in historical parallels. Among periods that can be called great migrations of artists is the 16th century, the century of the Reformation and wars. At that time, reasons for moving to another country could be different, from fulfilling a lucrative commission to finding a safe place to live and work. Among the travellers and settlers of the 16th century are such names as Leonardo da Vinci and Albrecht Durer, Hans Holbein Jr and El Greco, as well as dozens of lesser-known figures. The artistic manner and the style of the local painting school often influences the artist’s work in a new location, but often such a migrant also acts as a cultural mediator.

In our report, we will focus on the life circumstances of the Croatian miniaturist Giulio Clovio, who sought to achieve the Italian manner in his creations (and succeeded in this endeavour). Working under the patronage of the Venetian and Roman aristocracy, Clovio, as evidenced by the words Croat, Illyrian, Macedonian, remained a native of the Balkan peninsula. However, Clovio’s artistic contacts were much broader, including acquaintance and correspondence with Dutch masters, as well as support for the young Greek Theotokopoulos. These biographical aspects of the miniaturist’s creative life create a different image of the alien artist, presenting him as an active participant in the events of European Renaissance culture.

NATURE IN THE SERVICE OF SATIRE: ZOOMORPHIC CARICATURES IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE 1890–1905. THE BALKAN AND BALTIC CASE

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The report will show how images of animals were used in a censored political cartoon published in satirical magazines at the turn of the 20th century (1890–1905). During this period, great changes took place on the world map, new states appeared and old ones disappeared. All this was recorded by cartoonists from a certain angle, forming and maintaining a certain attitude towards the object of the image among readers of satirical publications. In order to achieve the desired effect with a minimum amount of funds, the caricature uses images of animals, famous characters, etc., whose established cultural reputation replaced the narrative. Animals in culture are very often markers of specific qualities, which makes it possible to use their images in visual rhetoric as a figure of speech. The report will show how this mechanism works based on the example of zoomorphic images of the Balkan countries and peoples, as well as the peoples, of the Baltic region.

TURNING ‘UNKNOWN’ PAINTINGS INTO COVID-19 MEMES AS A MEANS OF HUMOUROUS CRITICISM

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One of the most salient features of internet memes is their intertextuality. Meme creators draw on diverse semiotic resources and expect that their addressees will recognise the intertextual references and reconstruct the intended humorous meanings (at least to a certain extent). The proposed study investigates what happens when the semiotic resources employed in memes are not particularly famous and thus cannot be expected to be shared among social media participants. The semiotic analysis of a large corpus of memes based on less well known/unknown paintings attempts to address questions such as (1) through which recontextualisation techniques unknown paintings become pandemic memes; (2) why meme creators seem to prefer such paintings to well-known ones; and (3) what are the pragmatic effects of humour production in such memes.

The semiotic analysis of the data reveals a variety of recontextualisation techniques enabling meme producers to humourously criticise the measures imposed to prevent the spreading of COVID, as well as the ways people behave within such conditions. The fact that the unknown recontextualised paintings do not carry strong connotations and intertextual meanings allows for more creative potential, as meme creators exploit the visual particularities of the paintings to illustrate their critical comments.

POPULAR 20TH CENTURY BELIEFS AND SORCERY RELATING TO FERTILITY: THE CASE OF LITHUANIA

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Ethnographic sources and research testify to the significance the traditional Lithuanian country community attached to fertility at the beginning of the 20th century. Young community members learnt about preventative sorcery meant to protect them from infertility in their childhood. Tradition like this was passed down from older generations as an extremely important element of wedding customs. Likewise, sorcery was used when a woman was not able to conceive. Quite often this was seen as the only accessible means of having offspring. Most ancient rituals and sorcery have been forgotten in the modern society of the 21st century, or are sometimes remembered during the wedding without any enquiry as to the origin or ancient meaning. However, people not able to have children never cease trying various means of inducing fertility.

The aim of the report is to examine and analyse sorcery related to fertility in Lithuania during the 20th century. The problem of the research is to ascertain the means meant to induce fertility today and in the past, i.e. old and new methods, the latter perhaps borrowed from other cultures or adopted from modern medicine. The work deals with the following tasks: it 1) analyses Lithuanian ethnological sources providing data about sorcery dealing with fertility; 2) examines the ethnological research dealing with the traditional rituals and sorcery inducing fertility; 3) investigates the beliefs and sorcery, not forgetting their origin, diffused in modern Lithuanian society, used by people who seek to have children. To fulfil the tasks the author uses data from ethnographic sources and analysis of investigation; likewise, the field research data of exhaustive interviews with childless people collected between 2020 and 2022. In addition, the author uses the comparative and interpretative methods of context analysis of collected material with the aim of revealing the evolution of sorcery and the popularity and origin of beliefs diffused in modern society. When describing the sorcery that deals with fertility that is popular among members of modern society the author refers to the information presented in the mass media and social media sites.

STRAIGHT EDGE, VEGANISM AND MASCULINITY: EXTREME AMERICAN SUBCULTURE

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Straight edge (SXE) is a subgenre of punk that emerged in the 1980s. The main distinctive feature of SXE is that its members do not consume alcohol, mind-altering drugs or tobacco products. The movement emerged as a reaction to the alcoholism and aggression that prevailed in US punk subculture at the time. The two basic postulates of SXE are self-discipline and anti-capitalism (particularly anti-consumerism). Since the beginning, SXE members have also been vegans, although SXE is not a vegan movement in the classic sense, that is, the emphasis is not on animal rights. Veganism for SXE is a protest against consumer society, although animal rights groups have always existed within the movement.

SXE ideology is also related to masculinity. In the 1980s, the main proponents of SXE were nerds, in modern terms, who could not find a place for themselves in either mainstream or underground culture. SXE provided them with a like-minded community of people resisting social pressure to consume (particularly alcohol and mind-altering drugs) and to be aggressive. As so common in rock culture, most of the members of SXE were male. In the 1990s, SXE turned into a hyper-masculine aggressive subculture, the radical part of which – the hardliners – instigated their own attacks on “enemies”, primarily neo-Nazis and drug dealers. It ended with the SXE subculture being declared a terrorist organisation in the United States.

Veganism has historically played the role of an identity symbol in SXE, with which, combined with abstaining from alcohol and other substances, subcultural affiliation is also noted. Veganism, combined with this abstention, enabled a deepening of the cult of self-discipline within this subculture so that no animal products in any form are consumed. In SXE, nature and animals are seen through the prism of anti-capitalism, i.e. they are seen as victims of corporate exploitation.

The cult of self-discipline and healthy lifestyles led to the movement in more and more aggressive directions. Body building and extreme sports became more and more important as activities that relieve frustration. Through training, the cult of hypermasculinity also developed

and the movement increasingly began to cultivate brotherhood and solidarity against the 'outside world'. As of today, the peak of SXE as an aggressive subculture is in the past, and the subculture is returning to raising social awareness, including in the field of animal rights. The objective of the presentation is to place SXE in the framework of US suburban and college culture and to show how this subculture reacts to and opposes both alternative and mainstream youth culture (jocks, preps, etc.) through its lifestyle.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION AND SCIENCE IN THE WORKS OF MYKHAILO MAKSYMOVYCH

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The aim of the paper is to characterise the images of religion and science in the works of Mykhailo Maksymovych, a famous botanist, folklorist and historian of the 19th century and first rector of the University of St Volodimir, in Kyiv. The way of solving the problem of correlation between faith and knowledge adopted Mykhailo Maksymovych is analysed in the general context of the intellectual processes of the 19th century.

This research is based on published books, memoirs, articles and letters written by Mykhailo Maksymovych, as well as his unpublished letters and materials for lectures, saved in the Institute of Manuscripts at the Vernadsky National Library in Kyiv. These materials are analysed in terms of the methodological approaches of the Cambridge school of intellectual history.

Maksymovych's attitude towards the demarcation problem of knowledge and faith was the result of his attempts to harmonise the philosophy of Friedrich Shelling with the traditional Orthodox worldview. In this context the image of 'heart' was especially important for Mykhailo Maximovich. His opinion is compared with the ideas of other representatives of the philosophy of the heart (such as Hryhorii Skovroda, Pamfil Yurkevich and others).

The influence of Mykhailo Maksymovych's personal religiosity on his attitude to religion and science is underlined. Expressing the ideas of Mykhailo Maksymovych about the correlation between faith and knowledge in his research of history is analysed. It should be noted that Maximovich's attitude to the role of the faith in the process of understanding history was extremely important for his concept of the 'Russian world', which was combined with the idea of the 'people's spirit'.

Mykhailo Maksymovych's general attitude to the problem of the relationship between religion and science was an example of Romanticism's influence on the intellectual process in Ukraine.

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WORKSHOPS

SACRED SITES AS SITES OF PROBLEMS

Convenors: **Kristel Kivari** (University of Tartu), **Elo-Hanna Seljamaa** (University of Tartu), **Tõnno Jonuks** (Estonian Literary Museum).

Sacred sites outside of defined religious frameworks function as nexuses of vernacular voices. Sacred sites can be places where people can appreciate transcendental nature or where they can walk on the pathways of saints or historical figures; they can be places where people celebrate calendar feasts or commemorating the events in history.

Management of public space and nature often needs to rely on sufficient sources and data to define the place as significant and meaningful. The frameworks of recognition and protection have a socio-political background and require tools for operation.

Considering this, sacred sites function as great arenas for debate over the nature of sacrality and legitimacy and traditions of various practices. Their ability to raise more questions than answers makes this theme good for problem-centred research.

Thus, the roundtable poses a rhetorical question: what are the problems of sacred sites? How do these problems point to the contexts and motivations of various actors? The convenors of the roundtable offer various case studies from Estonia to illustrate the discussion and expect participants to contribute ideas and examples from their own cultures.

ART IN COVID-19 HUMOUR

Moderator – **Władysław Chłopicki** (Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland)

Discussant – **Anna Pięcińska** (Marie Curie-Skłodowska University of Lublin, Poland)

Participants:

Villy Tsakona (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens), **Dorota Brzozowska** (Opole University), **Ralph Müller** (Universität Freiburg, Institut für Allgemeine und vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft), **Agata Hołobut** (Jagiellonian University in Kraków), **Delia Dumitrica** (University of Rotterdam, Netherlands), **Anastasiya Fiadotava** (Estonian Literary Museum), **Saša Babič** (ZRC SAZU (Ljubljana, Slovenia), **Jan Chovanec** (Masaryk University, Brno, Czechia), **Tsafi Sebba-Elran** (University of Haifa), **Rita Repšienė** (Vilnius University, Lithuania)

Using the material from the International Coronavirus Humor Corpus, this workshop aims to analyse COVID-19 humor using references to art (e.g. painting or music) and popular culture (e.g. film, TV series, literature, etc.) as the area where the global and local collide and interweave, including some hybrid forms. In particular, the workshop focuses on the Central and Eastern European and Baltic cultural space, looking into how local and regional traditions are mixed with transnational references in order to produce humorous effects.

NOTES
