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Tero Ahlgren (*University of Turku*)

“First Tractor Division” Fighting in a Hybrid Battlefield: Memes as Wartime Vernacular

Social media contents such as videos and images circulate the web and give a vernacular view to the ongoing conflict. TikTok videos of Russian army units moving into position on the Ukrainian border right before the invasion were one of the key materials for OSINT, or “open-source intelligence” enthusiasts, and several YouTube -streams have followed the events unfold since the start of the war. Events are also tracked on open-source map sites such as liveuamap.com. Usefulness of social has also been noted by the authorities informing citizen about the course of the war, as with the Ukrainian minister of defense Reznikov tweeting about the recently sunk Russian cruiser Moskva as a “perfect scuba-diving site”. Ukrainian president Zelenskyy has even been dubbed the “Churchill of the Meme Age” by different news media.

One set of memes is about Ukrainian farmers towing away abandoned Russian armored vehicles. The tractor has become a sort of a symbol of the Ukrainian resistance, at least in the memes. One other symbol being the Turkish made drone Bayraktar TB2 which has its own song written about it.

The war itself is catastrophic to the people suffering through it, and memes might not help end the conflict or ease the pain. But as Trevor J. Blank has noted, memes can provide a way to handle disaster and show solidarity to those effected by it. In my paper, I aim to look at some of the ways the war in Ukraine is being covered in Internet vernacular.

∞ Bio

MA Tero Ahlgren is a doctoral researcher in folkloristics at the University of Turku, studying the use of social media in societal activism. He is widely interested in “all things internet”, including memes and recently also the act of doomscrolling.

Rawan Alfuraih (*SOAS University of London*)

Ethnography of the Entanglement of Sibaheen Folktales with Ushaiger’s Pre-Modern Mud Spaces

One of the Arabian Peninsula’s oral literatures in the early twentieth century is Sibaheen folktales. Sibaheen, which means praising in Arabic, was named after women’s praises to God that declare the start of the storytelling session. Similar to the Arabian Nights, Sibaheen are realistic fiction stories that has poetry within the narration. There are many fiction characters from the Arabian heritage such as the jinn, the Ghoul and talking animals.

Sibaheen was recited by women in Ushaiger, a village in the central region of the Arabian Peninsula. This is an ethnography of the entanglement of Sibaheen rituals with the pre-modern and pre-urban spaces in the mud village Ushaiger. It will also examine the influence of specific village material public and private spaces- such as wells, rooftops, streets and palms oases - on their oral literature content and practices. I aim to bridge the gap between the folklore studies and analysis of space in geography.

In the 1960s, Sibaheen tales were first collected in writing. However, in the Arabian society, Sibaheen is undervalued by men and it is also neglected by scholars who are mostly men. In addition, scholars leaned towards poetic scenes within Bedouin prestigious classes like tribe leaders and famous poets. They gave less attention to the villages’ illiterate women’s informal Sibaheen rituals and their literary contribution to the Arabian imagination is poorly documented.

Sibaheen and others old forms of poetry and folktales traditions gradually disappeared after waves of urbanization and modernity that occurred at the rise of the Saudi Arabian state in the thirties and the discovery of oil in the forties.

∞ Bio

Rawan Alfuraih is a graduate candidate in Social Anthropology at SOAS University of London. In the last four years, while working as a journalist, Rawan started independent research and an oral history project on the decay of the traditional Arabian oral literature and its entanglement with pre-modern village’s spaces.

Jesse Barber (*University of Helsinki*)

Encircling serpents: Cosmological timelines and the example of the world serpent

In the study of pre-Christian Scandinavian religions, there have been many comparisons between the medieval myths and later folk legends. However, this has usually been on a one-to-one basis, comparing a single motif at a time, without exploring the grander context in which the motif appears and what it communicates about the worldview in which it exists.

In this presentation, I discuss the motif of a small serpent growing to great proportions and encircling an object with its tail in its mouth. I aim to show how this motif relates to other myths and folk legends, as well as the effect it has on the two worldviews conveyed by the medieval sources for Scandinavian mythology and the later sources for Scandinavian folklore respectively. I present a framework for understanding the structure of these differing



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worldviews through what I call cosmological timelines, i.e. the periodization of mythological events that organize the story of the universe from its creation to its destruction.

∞ Bio

Jesse Barber completed his BA, dual majoring in both History and German, at Western Michigan University. He then conducted his MA studies at the University of Iceland in the international program 'Viking and Medieval Norse Studies'. He is currently a PhD researcher at the University of Helsinki within the folklore department.

Lodewyk Barkhuizen (University of Tartu)

The interplay of the material and immaterial in the construction and decay of allegorical cars in the Mindelo Carnaval

This paper considers the interplay of the material and immaterial in the construction and decay of allegorical cars in the Mindelo *Carnaval* in Cape Verde. Allegorical cars function as the thematic centers of *Carnaval* design and performance and express a range of topical socio-political and historical subject matter.

I analyze the 'Baby-eating Witch' and the 'Cacao Farming' allegorical cars to indicate how concepts of space, time, and identity are both 'compressed' (Fauconnier & Turner, 2001) and 'amplified' into larger-than-life three-dimensional forms. The interplay between compression as reduction and scale as amplification creates both the visual and conceptual tension required for the allegorical cars to function as *emitters* (Skibo & Schiffer, 2008) of 'thematic-force'. The allegorical car becomes an *emitter* of 'thematic-force' through a community-driven process of making before this 'force' is once again released into the community through the catharsis of performance.

Based on conversations with *Carnaval* designers, organizers, craftsmen, and community members I begin to identify how thematic ideas, two-dimensional visualization, three-dimensional construction, performance, and the decay of artefacts act as shifting material and immaterial entanglements, and how this can indicate that *Carnaval* is not as a single event but a perpetual discourse based on an ongoing engagement with the deconstruction and reconstruction of the collective Mindelo identity.

∞ Bio

I am a filmmaker and creative arts educator from South Africa. I completed a degree in Visual Communication and an MSc in Educational Technology before joining the MA programme in Folkloristics and Applied Heritage Studies at the University of Tartu.

Malay Bera (Ashoka University)

Emotion and Belief in a Possession Event: The case of Baba Chandrasekhar in Bagnan

Drawing from my fieldwork at a possession event of the vernacular deity Chandrasekhar in Bagnan, a provincial Bengali town in India, I will show the different ways in which emotion influences belief. Scholars have studied the roles of narrative, ritual practice, performance, interpretation and imagination in possession events. But feelings and emotions have remained significantly underexplored for their elusive nature. Being possessed by a god is a cherished as well as physically and emotionally taxing experience for the medium. At the same time, the possession event can be overwhelming for both the medium of possession and the spectators and clients. It is common for people to turn to gods for healing, wealth and success. However, people attend possession events not only for material gain, or physical well-being but for emotional support as well. By analysing my interviews with the people who take part in the possession event of Baba Chandrasekhar, I will show how emotions help the spectators negotiate their beliefs and disbeliefs. Belief is often strengthened with a feeling of proximity with the god, or with the medium. This emotional proximity can be projected onto extended blood relations, kinship and interpersonal connections between the medium's family and the client.

∞ Bio

Malay Bera is a doctoral candidate in English at Ashoka University, Sonapat, India. He studied Folklore at the University of Tartu, Estonia as a Visiting PhD Student, and has an MA in Linguistics from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. His research interests span from children's literature to fairy tales, fables, belief narratives and narratives of protest.

Dr. Kikee Doma Bhutia (Namgyal Institute of Tibetology)

Intermediaries between the Past and Present: Understanding Emotional Archiving of Memories Through Objects and Narratives

This presentation will recount the narrative of a long story interwoven with an object in memory about Hope Cooke and the ultimate merger of Sikkim to India in 1975. Hope Cooke, the former Gyalmo of Denjong (Queen of Sikkim) with whom in the autumn of 2019, I spent two weeks at her apartment in Kendall Center in Wilmington, Delaware, Philadelphia during which time, apart from sharing and remembering her time as a queen in Sikkim and historical events that unfolded, she gave me a video tour and nostalgic memories of the things she has collected during



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her lifetime. At her apartment she archives her things as a repository of memories and her connection to the part of her life lived in Sikkim. Annette Kuhn (1995) and Douwe Draaisma (2001) have insightfully theorized historical and contemporary notions of autobiographical memory where it plays a central role in the continuum of individual identity and the construction of self. By tracing history from an emotional archive perspective, I aim to present an alternate form of historiography where Hope Cooke can be viewed as more than just the Queen who fled Sikkim.

Through these narratives of the personal, autobiographical narratives, and material cultural artifacts, collected during an informal interview, I present significance of memory in forging identities and situating individual as members of families and broader communities. The history of Sikkim and its merger to Indian Union is extended and often mired in controversy and provides multiple perspective as it is an ongoing discussion among academicians and Sikkimese locals. By unveiling the stories of the things that she now owns, I argue memory functions as an emotional archive and benefits articulating narrative with materiality, the power of things in everyday life and some of its celebratory virtues were highlighted.

∞ Bio

Born in Sikkim, a former Buddhist Himalayan Kingdom, now part of Indian Union, Dr. Kikee Doma Bhutia completed her doctoral studies in 2021 from the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore, University of Tartu, Estonia. Dr. Bhutia worked over two years as a Research Assistant in Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok (India). At the Institute, she was involved in various projects which included collection of more than 200 proverbs and later transcription, translation, and interpretation of them. She also assisted in the production of an ethnographic documentaries. After the completion of her studies, she resumes her position as Research Assistant at the Institute and further works on completing the projects.

Her doctoral research focuses on belief narratives regarding *yul lha gzhi bdag* (Local protective deities), in Sikkim (India), and particularly seeks to draw out the relational principles that connect these deities with villagers in their everyday life. It more broadly, concentrates on Folk belief, belief narratives and is an exercise in the vernacular theorizing of Buddhist (folk/vernacular) lifeworld in Sikkim. Her research is an exploration of – the beliefs, values, stories, and rituals she grew up with and so she sees her research as both an academic endeavor and a quest for discovering and understanding ‘the self’.

Jason S. Cordova (*Society for Cultural Astronomy in the American Southwest*)

Journey to the Sixth Sun: Living Representations of Mesoamerica through Computer Modeling of the Mayan Calendar

A fieldwork study of a Mechica (Aztec) solstice ceremony conducted on December 21, 2012, demonstrated that traditional star knowledge is rooted in the foundation of vibrant living cultures and woven into the daily lives of a thriving community. An earlier study conducted in 2011 using physics modelling software to evaluate the astronomical alignments of the archaeological site of Chichen Itza in Mexico confirmed celestial alignments of key buildings. The computer models highlighted the precision architecture of the sites, demonstrated their observational utility for celestial objects, and reaffirmed the culturally symbolic role of the pyramid as a physical representation of the Mayan calendar. Taking the Earth's 26,000-year precession cycle into account, it became evident that the Chichen Itza site was built in accordance with an ancient lineage of traditional knowledge. That knowledge is reflected in the living practices of contemporary Indigenous communities of the American Southwest and Mesoamerica from which I am a descendant. My research integrates state of the art technology with an autoethnographic approach to the analysis of contemporary Mesoamerican calendric practices. Through collaboration with contemporary Mayan and Aztec elders, studies like this can provide a deeper cultural understanding of Indigenous sites and practices.

∞ Bio

Jason S. Cordova is an Indigenous Chicano from Colorado in the United States. He is a board member of the Society for Cultural Astronomy in the American Southwest and a website translation editor with the Museum of Precolumbian Astronomy in Guanajuato Mexico.

Anastasiya Fiadotava (*Estonian Literary Museum, Tartu*)

The mediatization of materiality: a case study of Estonian humorous memes

On May 1, 2021 the former Estonian Prime Jüri Ratas posted several photos of himself in the woods captioned with the words: “In the forest, a windbreak is cleared, sauna logs are cut for the winter, potato furrows are prepared and now the doors of the barn ... nice!”. One of the photos, picturing Ratas with a log on his shoulder and a saw in his hand immediately went viral on Estonian internet. Numerous humorous image macros were created, most of which displaced Ratas with his saw and log from the forest and put him in other incongruous environments.



International Conference of Young Folklorists

26–28 October 2022

THE STUFF OF TRADITION: MATERIALITY AND MEDIA IN FOLKLORE STUDIES

Helsinki, Finland

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Posing as a “normal person” and conforming to some of the gender and ethnic stereotypes, the ex-Prime minister elicited sympathy but also inspired humour. One of the reasons why this photo triggered a lot of humorous reactions is the obvious contrast between the usually neat and official visual depictions of politicians and the showcasing of the backstage of Ratas’s life.

However, the photos and the humorous reactions to them also indicate the versatile relations between materiality and new media. The forestry tools become an object of digital manipulation, and their tangibility is dissolved into the online folklore. The presentation uses this case study to explore how materiality is manifested in contemporary digital folklore, and what role humour plays in the appropriation of material objects within the online discourse.

∞ Bio

Anastasiya Fiadotava, PhD, is a research fellow at the Department of Folkloristics of the Estonian Literary Museum and the Center for Excellence in Estonian Studies, Tartu. Her fields of interest include folkloristics, humour studies, family lore and digital culture. She has conducted several comparative research studies on jokes, memes and other forms of contemporary humour.

Roberta Fiorina (University of Torino)

Heritage, social networks and ethnogenesis: the case of the Northwest Coast Indigenous youth

The First Nations of Canada lived through a very disruptive colonial experience and were forced to endure the assimilation policies promoted by the government with the aim of absorbing their cultures in the western-centric, mainstream one. Because of the forced separation from their cultures, within a couple of decades indigenous people were almost completely disconnected from their past and many grew up without knowing anything of the cultures of their ancestors.

Beginning in the 1950’s though, indigenous people, gave rise to a process of cultural revival in which their heritage played a central role and that still continues to these days. Today, many people, especially the youth, are reconnecting to their traditions and are sharing their experience on the web. Through social networks like TikTok and Instragram, they are able to fully express themselves and send the message that their cultures are not dead, on the contrary, they are lively and continuously evolving. They draw both on their material and immaterial heritage: from traditional dancing and singing to prayers, from art to craftsmanship, from history to teachings, native people post all sort of content through which they spread education on indigenous matters (much needed in

contexts where the information is lacking on a systemic level). They also promote their businesses and interesting projects in support of their communities.

I will discuss this phenomenon focusing on the importance of heritage in the contemporary process of ethnogenesis and reconnection to one’s identity and on the new channels of self-identification and expression.

∞ Bio

I graduated in 2020 in Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology from the University of Torino, Italy. I attended the Specialization Course in Museum and Art Anthropology at the University of Milano Bicocca. My main field of research is the Indigenous Art of the Northwest Coast, Canada.

Silja Heikkilä (Independent)

Dreams and Living Heritage

Living tradition through the ages is a testament to the power of the living heritage and the man-made cultural and experiential heritage. My presentation discusses the social and cultural elements of dreaming and focuses on Finnish dream telling and interpretation tradition. The perspective on dreams is socio-cultural, which is the third tradition of dream research alongside the study of the content and form of dreams. The previous Finnish research by folklorist Leea Virtanen (1935–2002) and folklorist Annikki Kaivola-Bregenhøj has contributed a solid ground for further dream-related socio-cultural studies. Folkloristic research has long been interested in the ways an individual produces and interprets cultural meanings in his community and in social interaction. Thus, the processes related to this tradition have received slightly less attention. I seek to reach these processes through the concept of living heritage.

Living heritage refers to the intangible heritage present in many ways in people’s daily lives. It is passed down from generation to generation through everyday social life and conscious heritage work. My dissertation *Dreams and living heritage. An ethnological study of dream conceptions and dream telling situations* (2021) sheds light on the motives, practices and meanings given to dream sharing as well as constructing and transmitting different conceptions on dreams. At the same time, I try to understand more about the concept of living heritage. I look at different dream conceptions - that is, what dreams are thought to be, - their construction as well as dream conception as a phenomenon. In addition, my research focuses on dream telling situations and related expectations, assessments, and goals. Research data was collected from 62 individuals by interviewing and through questionnaire material.



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Polina Holitsyna (*University of Tartu*)

Pagan metal scene in Estonia: “reproducing authenticity” in the identity construction processes

For many subculturists metal music is a lifestyle that pushes them toward the active negotiations between the individual standpoint and the collective subcultural standpoint. In terms of identity construction and as a sub-genre generally, Pagan metal remains superficially touched upon by scholars in the field of subcultural studies and this way, it requires further research. In Estonia, this sub-genre and its performers are even more original subjects for investigation as the geographical aspect vividly indicates that there must be specific historical and social circumstances that caused the arising of Pagan metal as a response to them and kept fueling the need for Pagan metal in this region. The subculturists performing in this sub-genre are united by practices and morals around it, which fits into the concept of “reproducing authenticity” coined in 2013 by Susanna Larsson. Using this concept as a theoretical framework, the author of this paper strives to offer her point of view on individual understanding of being a subcultural group member in the collective context of the Pagan metal scene in Estonia. The paper will attempt to answer the question of how “reproducing authenticity” works in constructing the individual and collective identities in the Estonian Pagan metal scene.

∞ Bio

I am a master's degree student from Ukraine. I am striving to conduct high-quality research on the extreme metal subculture in Estonia, namely the Pagan/black/folk metal sub-genres. I am interested specifically in how the topics of nature and history are represented in the mentioned sub-genres and how they are interwoven with the identity construction processes in the subculture.

Kinga Horváth (*Eötvös Loránd University*)

Quarantine through the Hungarian pre-teens' eyes

Recognizing the situation under the coronavirus, the National Archives of Hungary published a call to send reflections memoirs and diaries written during the quarantine to the institution. Few manuscripts were received for the call, but three school diaries written by 10-year-old children stand out as homework and report from between March and June 2020, checked by parents and teachers. The diaries show the imprint of the virus protection regulations, the virus anxiety, the advantages and disadvantages of online education. While children's diaries kept on social media are (usually) less controlled by parents and teachers, these are different from written diaries mainly in their tone and their subject choices.

In my presentation, I would like to talk about the differences between the „handwritten” school reports and the videos from Tik-Tok. Where does privacy start on social media and where does it ends? How could be an online pre-teen's diary private and public at the very same time?

Rebecca Irvin (*University of Manchester*)

Horns

‘Horns’ is a short story which uses experimental language to craft a visceral, material diction.

“Thrashing in the paddocked throng I scattered them to frenzy. The heavy-with-milk lugging from me. Sideways eyes spinning in the bone. They all rearing at the cutting wire. Tore out the red bleat and looped the guts around my muzzle.”

In this way, I construct an animal-human subjectivity as a viewpoint for describing the 2001 foot and mouth disease outbreak, which resulted in the mass-culling of ruminants and the disruption of rural livelihoods. I look, too, at the concurrent epidemic of poor mental health and suicide among individuals working in the farming industry. A 2018 study by the Farm Safety Foundation revealed that 82% of farmers under the age of 40 rank poor mental health as the farm industry's biggest issue. Through the gaze of a semi-human predator, born into the trauma of a suicide, we witness the impact of grief, and of the foot and mouth disease epidemic, on the members of a family running a goat farm. The narrating creature is initially understood as a corporeal extension of the trauma experienced by the family, in particular the daughter. Throughout the narrative, however, it becomes aware of itself as an emotional being – experiencing its own traumas and wishing for acknowledgement as a living presence that shares the space of the family's grief, rather than embodying it.

∞ Bio

I am undertaking a PhD in Creative Writing at the University of Manchester, funded by the AHRC. My interest lies in the gap in which modern life comes into contact with ancient superstitions, human becomes non-human, and the fantastical disquiets the everyday. My practice-based research combines the fields of corporeal feminism and folklore theory to both invoke and deconstruct folkloric convention, and to understand the applications of folkloric narratives today.



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Lida Kalakoski & Riina Sirén (University of Tampere)

Triumphing vernacular: The paradox of unveiled timbers

In historical Finnish log houses, the wooden walls were covered with cardboard sheets and wallpapers (or newspapers) to keep the walls tight. Nevertheless, present-days home repairers tend to reveal the timber walls, at least partly, for a more “authentic” look. We interpret this manner to expose such structural materials as a form of traditionalization that emphasizes the presence of the ancient builders.

The log building methods are very different from contemporary building methods and materials. By means of the different construction methods, the practice to uncover traditional construction materials emphasizes the difference between the past and the present. We argue that people romanticize the vernacular low-tech lifestyles, and by exposing the crude and simple constructions they strengthen the inaccurate interpretation of building traditions. Through these operations, people celebrate the past of the building and the handprint of its’ vernacular builders but, paradoxically, the houses lose their authentic features and materials.

We approach this “*paradox of unveiled timber walls*” through exploring a selection of Finnish home decoration magazines to track the extent and significance of this trend. This contribution examines how unveiled timber walls are exhibited and interpreted in the selected homes and articles. As marginal as it may seem, the trend is significant enough to influence people’s understanding on historical buildings and building types. Besides, structuring the interpretations, the trend also has an impact on how built heritage is transformed and repaired.

∞ Bios

Lida Kalakoski is specialized in heritage processes and interpretations of the built heritage. Her ongoing doctoral research discusses the widening scope of built heritage in terms of cultural and ecological sustainability.

Riina Sirén is specialized in Finnish architectural history and works as a conservation architect on different fields of built heritage, in research, design and teaching.

Tuukka Karlsson (University of Helsinki)

Kalevala-metric communicative and non-communicative incantations: discussing canonical terminology of Finno-Karelian knowledge objects

Kalevala-metre describes an oral poetic system that was shared by multiple linguistically related ethnic groups, such as Finns, Esto-

nians, and Karelians. Potentially established already around 200 CE, the metre was commonly used in some areas all the way until the first decades of the 20th century. In current usage, the metre anachronistically derives its name from Elias Lönnrot’s epic, the Kalevala (1835; 1849). Kalevala-metric poetry was multi-generic: its genres included, among others, epic and lyric poetry. The third prominent genre consisted of magically empowered instruments, or charms, which researchers have named in Finnish folkloristic research as incantations.

The Kalevala-metric incantations have conventionally been divided to those that were used more commonly among the population, and those which were perceived as tools of specialists. The incantations in wider circulation are often perceived to function on their correct mechanical recitation, which was seen as the requirement for the efficacy of the uttered charm. In the use of ritual specialists, however, direct communication with the otherworld and the personal power of the performer have become to be seen as the principal requirements.

The incantations used by Finno-Karelian ritual specialists, called among other names as tietäjät, have been categorized in research as being ‘communicative’. While the name for this category is tautological, it has become established in Finnish folklore studies as a way to describe the knowledge objects, which efficacy relies on large part on the communication with unseen agents.

My focus in the paper is in discussing some of the terminological issues related to Kalevala-metric incantations. I will present more in depth the core features of the genre, and reflect on the usability of concepts of ‘communicative’ and ‘mechanical’ frequently used in research. The paper thus contributes to the international charms scholarship and discussion on established research subject with canonical terminology.

Siria Kohonen (University of Helsinki)

Evaluating ritual performances – Expectancy, performance, and placebo

Within performance studies, evaluations about a performance’s success or failure are often considered from the perspective of expectations: people evaluate the outcomes of a performance based on their previous experiences about similar performances, and they expect the forthcoming performances to be somewhat similar. However, expectancy does not influence only the interpretations about a performance’s success. In case of healing performances – whether in a context of modern biomedicine or in a context of traditional healing – expectations towards healing



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performances are also in an interaction with physical healing rates via the placebo effect. The placebo effect is a medical phenomenon in which mental stimuli lead to improved neural and physical responses in a patient's condition.

This paper presents a case study in which pre-industrial traditional healing practices in Finland and Karelia are considered from the viewpoint of expectancy, performance studies and placebo studies. The research materials comprise archived recollections and narratives about traditional healing, and they are studied from the perspective of the question 'how did people recognize a successful healing ritual?' The paper proposes that combining the perspectives of placebo and performance studies can enrich the broader socio-cognitive understanding on how people generally encounter and interpret healing rituals and performances.

∞ Bio

Siria Kohonen is a doctoral candidate in folklore studies, University of Helsinki, Finland. She is defending her dissertation *Healing, Magic, and Mind – Early Modern Finnish-Karelian Healing Tradition in the Light of Cognitive Science and Ritual Studies* in autumn 2022.

Mikaela Krantz (University of Tartu)

Reconstructing Heathenry in Cyberspace

Heathen Reconstructionists are a contemporary subgroup of Heathen/Neo-Pagan folk religions in which the practitioners construct their religious expressions as closely to original source materials as possible. They may identify as Norse, Hellenist, Celtic, Kemetic, etc. Physical elements of praxis include icons and altars with actions of prayer, offerings, and meditation. However, community and ritual gatherings, or the passing on of knowledge, values, and identity often take place in virtual realms. Some tools used in real-world praxis are also only found in cyberspace.

This paper looks at where the boundaries are between acceptable modernization and maintained traditionalization for this group of heathens. It asks how current technological tools - e.g. social apps and algorithms - are used to disseminate what is 'authentic', and how these decisions shape 1) the structure of the community as a whole and 2) the promoted identities of its members. The importance of praxis is, for many self-identified 'recons', central to their identity as 'heathen'. Thus, this paper focuses on the emic discourse around individual, material world practices and communal, virtual/cyberspace cogitations.

This is a preliminary dive into specific heathen Discord – a social media app – servers supplemented with data collected from You-

Tube video transcriptions, publicly live-streamed conversations, and posts on Twitter and Reddit from English speakers who may be from anywhere in the world but are often from North America. Ultimately it asks how the reconstruction of Pre-Christian folk religions are influenced by one's embodied Self and temporal Self responding within modern, tech-dependent societies?

∞ Bio

Mikaela has worked internationally as a professional actor for a little over a decade, graduating from the University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theatre BFA Actor Training Program; Summa Cum Laude. She is currently working on her Master's in Folkloristics and Applied Heritage Studies at the University of Tartu.

Arta Krūze (University of Latvia)

Singing of mocking songs in Latvian traditional wedding: what the texts of folk songs reveal about guest clothing

In addition to the diverse wedding rituals, music plays an important role in celebrating these honors, which includes singing of mocking songs. Singing of mocking songs in Latvian traditional culture is an ancient and highly cultivated custom. This custom, which permeates the whole wedding ritual, symbolically features a clash between the groom's family and the bride's family, which allows psychological tension to be discharged by reaching the catarse. In particular, singing of mocking songs is an effective way to discharge the accumulated negative feelings in a socially permitted, strongly designed and generation-inherited manner.

When wedding guests meet for the first time and get an impression on each other, appearances play a major role – attention is paid to height, posture, clothing and footwear. The fact that clothing has really played such a major role is also reflected in the remarkable number of songs about clothes, footwear and accessories. Firstly, this article focuses on highlighting the main thematic circles surrounding clothing-related mocking songs. Namely, which garments are sung about most frequently, what qualities of clothing have been highly valued, which are underestimated, what is considered beautiful, what is ugly, etc. It is also studied here what can be deduced from these songs about the singers' perception of beauty, virtue and taste and gives a hint of the fashion trends of that time. Secondly, the article will focus on the most remarkable artistic aspects of these songs – the more commonly used means of expression and vocabulary.

∞ Bio

This study is part of my doctoral dissertation called "Mocking



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Songs at Weddings: the Meaning of the Ritual and the Thematic Artistic Aspects of the Lyrics”. The purpose of the work is to explore the role of mocking song rituals in the context of the ancient wedding honors and analyse the thematic and artistic aspects of mocking songs.

Silvie Lang (University of Kassel)

The Stuff of Fairy Tales: Materiality in Franz Schönwerth’s unpublished works

The unpublished works of Franz Xaver Schönwerth (1810–1886) are the stuff fairy tales are made of: heaps of manuscripts in various handwritings that lie in the archive of the city of Regensburg show a whole new dimension to what we call fairy tale. It is this materiality that gives a new understanding of the processes that underlie the genre fairy tale. In the unpublished works, we find documents that let us relive vernacular practice in the 19th century and the socially tangled tradition of handing down. These manuscripts show how the mediation of storytelling took place – from the narrator to the person handing down, the texts reach a final level of revision by Schönwerth himself as he saw fit for publication. Step by step we can trace back and rethink the oral-literate processes of textualization that shape the fairy tale as we know it since the Brothers Grimm. Vernacular expression as well as limited knowledge of orthography serve as markers for oral tradition. Still, much remains open to speculation.

In my paper I would like to further explore the materiality of Schönwerth’s unpublished works and show how this can improve our understanding of the genre of the European fairy tale.

∞ Bio

I’m a doctoral candidate in German and a recipient of the scholarship of the University of Kassel. My thesis topic revolves around the unpublished fairy tales of Franz Xaver Schönwerth. My fields of research are folk poetry, mythology, and demonology as well as the 19th century.

Hanna-Kaisa Lassila (University of Turku)

Public shaming on social media as vernacular surveillance

Social media has enabled people to monitor and punish each other in ways not possible before. In recent years public shaming on social media has been an often-used tool of punishment. It is a tool readily available for social media users with opportunities ranging from snapping pictures of others with one’s mobile phone

or taking screenshots of other’s social media posts. In the paper I hope to discuss public shaming on social media as vernacular surveillance / surveillance folklore, using examples that have surfaced during the Covid-19 pandemic. Public shaming has been used in myriad of ways during the pandemic, by those following pandemic health rules such as wearing masks and getting vaccinated, and those who have opposed said rules. One site of punishment by public shaming is *Herman Cain Award*, a page on the social media platform Reddit where so-called covid denialists are shamed after they have succumbed to Covid-19 and eventually died from it. It is a site occupied with glee and othering and is for an outsider, terribly baffling. I hope to share this bafflement and discuss it in the context of vernacular surveillance.

∞ Bio

Hanna-Kaisa has a MA in folkloristics and is now a PhD student in folkloristics researching gendered practices of online shaming on social media.

Lotta Leiwo (University of Helsinki)

Vernacular newspaper writers discussing and traditionalizing Finnishness in 1880s North America

Between 1870 and 1920, some 389 000 Finns emigrated to North America, the ‘golden land’, in search of a better life. The vast majority of those who emigrated were less literate peasants and workers who formed small communities across the continent. In these communities Finns self-published both handwritten and printed newspapers in Finnish, but also American Finnish literature and self-taught writers’ texts. Finnish publications in North America were not under state censorship, as they were in Finland, giving immigrants more freedom to express themselves. The publications were a means to maintain Finnish language and discussing Finnishness locally, nationally, and even transnationally.

My paper demonstrates the vernacular writing and traditionalization of Finnishness in American Finnish newspaper *Pohjantähti* published in Ashtabula, Ohio in 1886–1887. Preliminary results suggest that “home country” in this publication is an ambivalent concept and the relationship to Finland and Finnishness is discussed distinctively in varied text genres. Additionally, the migrants’ self-published news media was more a means to mirror their own interests than a way to portray world events neutrally.

The study on the American Finnish newspapers is part of an ongoing research in two of related projects I am part of: Kone Foundation funded project ‘T-Bone Slim and the transnational poetics of the migrant left in North America’ in which I work as a research



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assistant, and my Master's thesis about North American Finnish immigrants' relationships to places, Finnishness and third spaces in vernacular writing.

∞ Bio

Lotta Leiwo is a Master's student at the University of Helsinki majoring in Folkloristics and minoring in Religious and North American Studies. In her studies, Leiwo has focused on handwritten and self-published newspapers, working class leisure time and cultural relationship with nature and places in early 20th century Finland. In addition to currently working on her Master's thesis about Finnish immigrant's vernacular writing in North America, she is the research assistant in Kone Foundation funded research project 'T-Bone Slim and the transnational poetics of the migrant left in North America'.

Rok Mrvič (Institute of Slovenian Ethnology, ZRC SAZU)

"May the black eagles pluck out your eyes": Taboo in metaphors of the Slovenian 19th century swearing

This paper represents the first attempt in dealing with Slovenian swearing texts that were documented by local collectors of folklore material and sent to Karel Štrelkelj, a Slovenian scholar of the late 19th century, following his folklore collecting campaign started in 1887. The collected folklore material is not an integral part of longer folklore texts in Štrelkelj's corpus, but was mostly isolated from its context by the collectors. However, additional information about context and function was obtained by analysing similar material either from this period or from later folkloristic and ethnographic collections that share similar structural features, and by careful comparison with data from other historical sources.

The main goal of this research is to contextualize and partially reconstruct these texts in order to perform a semiotic analysis of metaphorical expressions not known in older or contemporary Slovenian swearing material. These findings will make it possible to expand the current Slovenian "swearing imagination" and consequently improve our understanding of swearing mechanisms and the belief systems behind them. According to initial research, these older swearing texts indicate a connection to a broader Slovenian folklore system through certain folklore motifs that are still known today. Widespread folklore motifs (e.g. personified natural phenomena such as the moon, certain diseases, or creature-like phenomena such as the *môra*) will also be contextualized through folk narratives in order to understand the underlying intertextual connections and help us find answers to the questions: What new insights can we gain from analysing a broader range of previously

unknown metaphorical expressions from the corpus? What roles do certain motifs play in the structure of swearing? And, perhaps most interestingly, how have the various notions of taboo changed in the texts analysed?

∞ Bio

Rok Mrvič is doctoral student in folklore studies at the Postgraduate School ZRC SAZU in Ljubljana, Slovenia. His main research interests are the historical transformations of Slovenian short folklore genres, focusing mainly on swearing in the form of curses and oaths.

Rash-ha Muntaqaa (University of Tartu)

Ghosting men: folklore of resilience against gender-based violence

During my one-year ethnography in Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh, where roughly fifty ethnic minorities live, I have studied indigenous belief systems, spotlighting on women's ghostlore among the Chakma, the Marma, and the Tripura peoples. Trekking miles through the perilous hills I have attempted to collect, document, understand, interpret, and analyse the creation, usage, and impacts of ghosts that relevant to women. There women have always been victims of rape, murder, and culturally sanctioned discrimination in every aspect of life; surviving with strong determination to feed their children, cultivate the almost infertile lands, to conform, and push through the everyday obstacles. Throughout the analytical process I came across a pattern of women's coping mechanisms and resilience fuelled by religious and spiritual beliefs and practices against the gender-based discrimination and structural violence. I decided to work specifically on supernatural folklore related to women, because I could hear women's voices in the ghost narratives which, interestingly enough, roomed in different dimensions than the values and beliefs that accommodate women's oppression. My research focuses on ghosts of women and for women in the Hill Tracts of Chittagong; how they are shaped by the stories and presences of personal and collective trauma, and how they sculpt women's position in public and personal spaces. Drawing on interviews with around sixty women and men, I argue that women's ghostlore creates multiple ambiguous and layered realities as a form of resilience against multilayered gender-based violence.

∞ Bio

I, Rash-ha Muntaqaa, 2nd year Master's student, Folkloristics and Applied Heritage Studies, University of Tartu; take interest in folklore regarding ethnospirituality, vulnerability, and resilience. I have an Anthropology background, and I am all in for the amalgamation of Folklore and Anthropology.



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Alina Oprelianska (University of Tartu & Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv)

Prosperity Is the New Beauty: Some Notes on the Concept of Beauty in Ukrainian Wonder Tales

Beauty or loveliness seems to be heroine's intrinsic feature in wonder tales. Physical attractiveness is emphasized in screen adaptations and defined as an essential reward by folklorists. Despite loveliness serves as a marker of being marriageable, its meaning should be defined in both social and cultural contexts, as well as the sub-context of local versions of the tales should be considered.

The paper aims to reconsider the meaning of beauty in wonder tales in its regular meaning. The research claims that the meaning of beauty refers not that much to physical features but rather to the level of prosperity one gains at the end of the tale, and consequently, defined as beautiful. Ukrainian tales have a deliberate description of a "beautiful" girl who gained neckless, jewelry, good clothing, and other goods and became lovely as a princess in the meaning that prosperity makes her good-looking. The research also considers male features of being handsome or physically attractive to the opposite sex based on the reward he gains - land and prosperity that makes him attractive for marriage.

The research applies ethnographic material and customary law of the 19th-beginning of 20th century in Ukraine.

Bio

Alina Oprelianska is a 3d year PhD student at the University of Tartu under the supervision of Merili Metsvahi, and at the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, specializing in the field of Fairy Tale Studies, with a focus on gender aspects. Her research interests are Ukrainian wonder tales, customary law, and folk beliefs.

Heli Paakkonen (University of Helsinki)

Field working under the bridges: Helsinki writings by J.K. Harju

My presentation focuses on Johan Knut Harju (1910–1976), folklore collector who created a roughly 20 000-page collection to the Finnish Literature Society's (SKS) archives during 1961–1977 by writing his own memoirs and by interviewing others. SKS was founded in 1831 and their folklore archives were built around the collections of kalevalaic folk poetry created in the 19th and early 20th centuries in close connection to the nation-building process in Finland. The material Harju gave to the archives was different than anything else stored there before.

Helsinki born Harju suffered from alcohol addiction which among other problems had left him homeless. He spent his time on the streets, beneath bridges, as well as in prisons and halfway houses and wrote about marginal city life non-normative lifestyle of thieves, alcoholics, drug abusers, prisoners, and prostitutes.

I ask how Harju and his work was perceived by the archives and whose heritage was considered to be gained when his writings about modern city life were stored by the nationally important memory institution.

Bio

Heli Paakkonen is a doctoral student in History and Cultural heritage doctoral programme. She wants to make homeless folklore collector J.K. Harju's exceptional lifework known through research, exhibitions, and guided walking tours.

Vesa Matteo Piludu (University of Helsinki)

Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledges and Biocultural Diversity Conservation: Protecting Immaterial and Material Heritages

With the accelerating losses of biodiversity, language and cultural diversity, multidisciplinary efforts to document indigenous worldviews and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) are time sensitive. The TEK has been defined as a) indigenous taxonomies and myths about local species; b) survival and ritual practices related to the environment; c) religious, animistic, and ontological beliefs on the relations between humans, living beings, more-than-human persons and guardian spirits; and the environment. How have the spiritual and ritual aspects of the TEK guided efforts to protect culturally and religiously important species and Sacred Natural Sites (SNS) and Storied Places? In this paper, I will compare folkloric, anthropological and ethnobiological literature on the topic, covering some specific case studies from Amazonia, Latin and North America. I will focus on the analysis of indigenous activist has been the main actors in project. The analysis reveals that ontological worldviews could deeply influence biodiversity and heritage conservation planning, leading to the foundation of meaningful protected areas co-managed by indigenous communities. In the holistic indigenous worldviews the traditional distinction between material and immaterial, natural, and cultural heritages often fades away: protecting a meaningful woodland also means to revitalize the rituals performed in the place, the material cultural heritages (sacred wooden poles, rest of ancient villages or archaeological findings), the traditional survival activities, artisanal carving activities, the use of endangered languages and, in certain cases, the manage-



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ment of sustainable visits of tourists or hikers through visits leaded by Indigenous knowledge holders (as the Haida Watchmen in Haanas Gwaii, Canada).

∞ Bio

Vesa Matteo Piludu is a Finno-Italian Postdoctoral scholar working in the fields of Studies or Religions, Folklore Studies, Semiotic of Art, and Indigenous Studies. He has done research on Brazilian popular and traditional music, Finno-Karelian Bear Ceremonialism, and the artistic interpretations of the heroes Kullervo and Lemminkäinen. He has studied indigenous TEK and Biocultural Heritage conservation projects working as a Visiting Scientist at the University of Turin. At the moment, he is working as a postdoctoral researcher in the project *Conceptualising Biodiversity in Amazonia*.

Vivek Raj (Banaras Hindu University)

Gaya Śrāddha Ritual And Its Actors: Tradition And Changes

In Hinduism, the śrāddha ritual is performed after the death of a person, for his salvation by his *sapindas*. Hundreds of thousands of Hindu pilgrims from India and abroad, and even foreigners come to Gaya to perform this ritual throughout the year, especially during *pitra paksha*. With the proliferation of digital technologies, the state government and some private agencies have introduced an online mode of the ritual in recent years. However, most of Gayāwāl Pandas, a priest community in Gaya solely entitled to officiate the performance of this ritual, have protested against the online mode and other actors of this ritual like shopkeepers, hotel owners, transport personnel, etc. are in solidarity with them. In the pandemic situation, the undertaking of online mode was expected but due to stern protest of these actors (directly or indirectly associated with the ritual), the state government could not accept any bookings, and some private agencies and religious organisations, who had accepted bookings, had to cancel them. But their protest should not be taken as orthodoxical as they are using new modes of communication and other technologies to reach out to devotees and fulfill other aspects of the rituals. Based on data collected from fieldwork and telephonic conversation, this paper is an endeavour to explore the dynamics of the Gaya śrāddha ritual, the role of technological advancements in it, and the reasons behind the protest of actors.

∞ Bio

Vivek Raj is a senior research fellow in the Department of English, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi (India). His area of interests are cultural studies (folk traditions) and ritual studies. He has been awarded DAAD fellowship as a short-term visiting fellow in 2020.

Anna Reepschlager (Memorial University)

The Sweater Curse: Exploring Knitting Superstition on Reddit

The sweater curse — also known as ‘the curse of the boyfriend sweater’ or ‘the curse of the love sweater’ — is a popularly-circulated knitting superstition within online knitting spaces. The curse has two common variations: 1) If you knit your boyfriend a sweater, your relationship will end before you finish it; or 2) if you knit your boyfriend a sweater, your relationship will end shortly after you finish it.

In this paper, I conducted a study of the sweater curse using Reddit threads to explore the ways that participants made use of online spaces to discuss and negotiate the sweater curse.

This paper analyzes the sweater curse through two perspectives. First, it looks at it through a functionalist lens drawing from Bascom’s “Four Functions of Folklore,” (1954). This lens allows me to look at how participants used the space to discuss human relationships, value, belief and provide advice. Second, it looks at the sweater curse through the lens of Gerald Pocius’s “Art” in *Eight Words for the Study of Expressive Culture*, (2003). Studying the curse through the lens of art, I also investigate the ways that the sweater curse is reflective of an asymmetrical view of the product — especially in the value ascribed to the creation process — and investigate some of the ways in which this asymmetry in value can be impactful. Ultimately, I find that these frameworks both illuminate an asymmetry in the value ascribed to the knitting process.

∞ Bio

Anna Reepschlager is a graduate student at Memorial University, pursuing her MA in Folklore. She completed her BA in Communications (with a Minor in History) at the University of Ottawa in 2019. Her past research centred on digital political communications, with a focus in social media law and policy.

Danila Rygovskiy (University of Tartu)

A Church of Christ in the North: Manifestations of Sainthood in the Priestless Old Believer Community of Dubches

Since after the schism in the Russian Church (mid-17th century), the movement of Old Believers split into two principal streams: priestless and priestly ones. The former agreed on idea that after the schism it was impossible to find pure Orthodox clergy, therefore, communities should be run by laity. However, lay people could not completely take over. Thus, one of the consequences was that priestless Old Believers stopped canonizing new saints any longer, although some important for the community people could be po-



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tentially recognized as such. Focusing on material aspect of commemoration of such people, it is possible to track how the idea of sainthood is manifested in posthumous operations with belongings, body, and the burial site of the late person. Another important aspect of this kind of sainthood is hagiography, which might be regarded as a traditional Orthodox way of veneration of saints with a sufficient exception that such hagiographies set up ordinary, routine actions as an example of divine providence and righteous life of the deceased. In my presentation, I will observe an example of Dubches monasteries of Chasovennye Old Believers. Founded in 1930-s deep down in Krasnoyarsk taiga, Dubches monasteries became the main spiritual center for this community scattered all over Russia (predominantly in Urals, Siberia, and Far East) and in the world (USA, Canada, Argentina, etc.). My research is based on fieldwork materials and hagiographic writings of the community, including previously unpublished manuscript *Rodoslovnaya Obiteli Novoselie* (Genealogy of the Novoselie Hermitage).

☞ Bio

Danila Rygovskiy is a doctoral student at the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore, Institute of Cultural Research, Tartu University, Estonia. Title of the work: *Women in Russian Old Belief: Religious Practices and Public Imagination* (4th year, expected time of defense: August 2022)

Iida Rätty (University of Turku)

Describing illness in coronary artery disease narratives

Coronary heart disease is a public health issue that caused one in five deaths in men and one in eight deaths in women in 2020 in Finland. Although mortality of the disease has decreased over the last decade, there are still challenges in timing the diagnosis and hearing the symptoms, especially in women. In this paper, I discuss how people with coronary heart disease construct their illness narrative. As a folklorist, I focus on patients' experiences and lived illnesses.

While illness narratives emerge from personal, lived experiences, they are not solely mirroring these experiences. Illness narratives about coronary heart disease are multileveled combinations in which institutional and vernacular interpretations of health alternate. Personal experiences, vernacular knowledge, and shared stories intertwine with institutional, medical hegemonic narratives. These narratives act as a space for the narrator to negotiate between different interpretations and to seek a belonging in them.

In this paper, I focus on illness narratives written by peer support specialists. Their role as a mediator of both personal experiences

and hegemonic medical narratives form illness narratives that linger between opposing views and perceptions of health. I ask, what kind of alternation of vernacular and institutional agency occurs in the illness narrative, and where the narrator is situated.

☞ Bio

Iida Rätty is a doctoral candidate in Folkloristics at the University of Turku, Finland. In her doctoral research, she studies patients' coronary heart disease narratives as construction and negotiation of vernacular and institutional illness narrative discourses. Her research is a part of the multidisciplinary Sydänpuhe – HeartTalk-project.

Toni Saarinen (University of Helsinki)

Institutionalising folklore and epistemic power relationships in the conspiracist milieu

“Conspiracist milieu” (as Jaron Harambam calls it) is not a homogeneous cultural unit: although the overarching worldview of suspicion is shared to a great degree, related beliefs and supporting ontological arguments vary. Subgroups and individuals hold specific knowledge and contest other knowledge claims. This means that there are power relationships within the conspiracy milieu: some views gain more visibility, some voices are louder.

Conspiracist subculture stands in opposition to the dominant “mainstream” society, which is often considered the domain of *institutional* knowledge. Thus, counter-knowledge that is constantly marginalised, or “stigmatised,” is more likely to be transmitted and communicated independently, on grassroots level, which would arguably make it more “folkloric” than its opposition. This dichotomy more or less inadvertently supports the claim that the onset of the Internet as an open media environment has accelerated conspiracist knowledge production and dissemination to new and dangerous levels.

In this paper, I complicate the picture by arguing that while conspiracism indeed forms a counterculture presenting itself as “folk knowledge,” the conspiracy milieu has produced its own marketplace of ideas which is supported by a powerful media infrastructure. While this process has been underway for decades, the age of Putin and Trump has cemented such transmission of counter-knowledge as institutional. Based on this, I furthermore conclude that the Internet is not the great culprit behind these profound changes – and that the conspiracists' strategic claims of their knowledge being suppressed to grassroots level (and thus authorized by their “folk” origin) might be ill-founded, as well.



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∞ Bio

Toni Saarinen is currently working on his dissertation concerning apocalyptic narratives and discourses in modernity. His areas of expertise include mythology, conspiracism, alternative knowledge(s), and storytelling in contemporary digital environments.

Viliina Silvonen (University of Eastern Finland) & Emmi Kuittinen

At the interface of impressions, body, and tradition. A case study of emotions in a contemporary lament performance.

Laments are a genre of oral poetry that express personal and communal grief and sorrow especially in ritual contexts. The tradition is global, but the specific practices vary culturally. The lament tradition known in Finland has its roots in Finnic oral tradition, in particular the Karelia and Ingria region. In contemporary Finnish society, lamenting has sprouted in various directions from arts into therapeutic uses. One of the most salient features of laments is the affective power that takes over the performer and the audience.

In this presentation we examine the lament tradition and its affective power in contemporary Finland from a point of a lamenter. We treat questions such as: What are the emotions of contemporary laments? How the lamenter understands and comprehends the emotions? How the emotions develop and emerge in the performance of a lament? And what kinds of relations the emotions build between the past and the present and how the connections are interpreted?

The contemporary lamenter's conception of the lament tradition and its emotions bases on earlier research and scholar's written descriptions of past lament performances, the archival text and audio material, and the lamenter's own experiences in everyday life and as a lamenter. The emotions form and emerge at the interface of the topic of a lament, impressions, interactive performance and the bodily experiences. From the point of tradition, emotions are seen as a link between past and present and the varying sociocultural contexts.

Irena Snukiškienė (Vilnius University)

Linguo-Cultural Shifts in English Conceptualisation of LIE

The study aims to reconstruct the linguistic worldview of LIE in archaic and contemporary English linguistic data and to compare the ethno-conceptualization of LIE with its contemporary conceptualization. The research is a part of the S-Q-T methodology proposed by the Ethnolinguistic School of Lublin. It includes the

analysis of proverbs and etymological data, revealing the diachronic picture of the concept analysed, and the analysis of contemporary linguistic data (mainly fiction and mass media language), revealing the synchronic picture. The analysis was carried out by distinguishing the semantic aspects, viewed from certain interpretational perspectives, and grouping them into semantic profiles. The archaic data was selected from the main English lexicographic and paremiological sources, contemporary data was selected from English corpora and retrieved from the press and the Internet. The research shows that LIE's evaluation in the historical dynamics of language has been ambivalent: it has been viewed as both an anti-value and an important social courtesy. Modern texts reveal that LIE in contemporary English has acquired completely new semantic shades. It is often seen as an element of politics and propaganda, conceptualised in the framework of the post-truth phenomenon. It can be observed that the evaluation of LIE has not become more positive, but more pragmatic: it is perceived not only as an element of social courtesy, but as a powerful and necessary tool for reaching personal (often political) goals.

∞ Bio

Irena Snukiškienė is a junior assistant at Vilnius University, a translator, and a licensed tour guide in Lithuania. She is a Ph.D. student at the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore, writing a thesis *THE ESSENCE AND TRANSFORMATIONS OF MORAL VALUES. TRUTH AND LIE FROM A COGNITIVE RESEARCH PERSPECTIVE*. Besides ethnolinguistics and cognitive linguistics, her academic interests include translation theory and practice and foreign language didactics.

Ilya Sulzhytski (University of Greifswald)

“Holocaust Vocabulaires”: Semantic Similarity Methods in Analyzing Holocaust Tourists' Experience

The debates that take place in the public sphere can be different from how “ordinary” people perceive some complex historical topics. Despite differences in feelings and interpretations of complex themes from the shared past, tourists remain sensitive to themes of violence against civilians, repression, and genocide. Memorials dedicated to the shared experience of pain, not just to issues of nation, heroes, or identity, are a possible area of mutual understanding for Eastern Europeans, regardless of national, linguistic, or political differences.

I would like to present the results of a study of tourists' experiences at the Nazi death camps memorials in Poland. In my project, I wanted to understand whether there are differences between tour-



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ists' interpretations of the experience of visiting such sites differ from the debates taking place at the level of memory politics. To do so, I will illustrate ways tourists understand this topic based on an analysis of comments on the Tripadvisor platform.

Natural language processing methods allowed me to identify and visualise the major themes and categories around these sites. First, I used the Word2Vec Model for Semantic Similarities to identify words semantically similar to Holocaust themes in user comments. Then I used Topic Modeling and Sentiment Analysis methods to determine the structure of Holocaust Memory discourse "from below." I believe that big data and natural language processing methods can significantly contribute to studying heritage and qualitative and hermeneutic research methods.

∞ Bio

I am a Sociologist (Ph.D. in Sociology) with a research focus in computational social science and digital sociology, interested in memory studies and cultural sociology. I am now a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Greifswald, studying the possibilities of computational social science in understanding cultural heritage and Holocaust memory.

Laura Suszta (Eötvös Loránd University)

Conceptions of Afterlife among the Denesuline Nation as described by Samuel Hearne (1745—1792)

On reading Samuel Hearne's *Journeys from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean in the years 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772* (1795), it is perhaps not the Native conception of afterlife that captures the reader's attention. Yet this renowned trailblazer of the 18th century, one of the most significant figures in north Canada's "history of exploration," bases his judgment of indigenous religion on that conception as well. "Religion has not yet begun to spread among the northern Indians," writes Hearne, in explanation of his conviction that this First Nation has no idea of an afterlife. All that, however, does not prevent him from recording his observations on the Denesuliné's daily life, customs, and even mythology, so from these premises we can, in actual fact, form a comprehensive picture of their culture.

Because of the practices of the Nation, Hearne declared that the Denesuliné Nation had no concern for the afterlife, but at the same time he acknowledged the presence of mourning, which, according to his description, affected only a limited group of the bereaved in the nation.

In my presentation, I would like to highlight the "funeral" customs of this people (that – according to Hearne – they did not bury their dead although took care of them in specific ways), their rites of the mourning period, and their taboo system, spotlighting the eating habits associated with that period.

Through all this, my aim is not only to put Hearne's above-cited claim into context but also to suggest that the complex relationship the Aboriginals perceive between body and soul can actually be inferred from our author's own words; and to prove that the Denesuliné nation did have a rich and complex religious belief system as well that fitted into their world view perfectly.

Asta Sutinen (University of Helsinki)

Romantic hopes and revealed grudges – amusement mail as an intimate letter and social act in the early 20th century Finland

In the early years of the 20th century, thousands of soirees were organized by political and ideological associations in Finland. These events, with the goals of promoting ideology and fundraising, gained a huge popularity across the country and political party lines. The soiree programmes, advertised in the local newspapers, invited the audiences to enjoy performative numbers such as plays, speeches, comic songs – and – the delivery of "huviposti", amusement mail.

In the discourse of the late 19th and early 20th century self-educated writers, the amusement mail can be set in the context of romantic love. Amusement mail, as a part of fundraising, was a note or a letter redeemed by a particular recipient, whereas the writer often remained anonymous. Amusement mail was also, despite being a private note and thus a material object, a performative act with social purposes and causes. The anonymity of the letters often led to misconducts, threats and even violence among event participants. These problems were widely talked about in the newspapers.

In my presentation I will focus on the discussions and arguments concerning amusement mail in the first decade of the 20th century. By examining the digitized printed material in the National Library (1900–1909), I will ask how did people negotiate with appropriate ways of expressing themselves and their feelings in the amusement mail.

I approach my subject from the point of view of both cultural history and folklore studies, strongly linked to the interdisciplinary study of reading and writing from below.

∞ Bio

I am a second year PhD student in Folklore Studies and Area and Cultural Studies, University of Helsinki. My research interests are



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the history of emotions, vernacular people, history of literacy and humour studies.

Tenno Teidearu (*University of Tartu & Estonian National Museum*)

Materials and Decay: Esoteric Meaning of Material Properties and Processes in the Case of Crystals in New Spirituality

Crystals are natural minerals that are part of material religion of New Spirituality. They are spread and commercialised globally and are currently popular in Estonia. In my anthropological research in Estonia, I concentrate on the practice of wearing crystals and the commerce of crystals, by focusing specially on the significance of materiality. In this presentation, I focus on the significance of the material properties and material decay, which acquire cultural meanings in human interaction with crystals.

My interlocutors, who wear crystals daily and buy them from esoteric shops, stress the significance of the material form, chemical composition and appearance of crystals over the textual representations of their supportive effects. It is ethnographically evident that people who wear stones, and practitioners of crystal therapy, as well as shopkeepers, take the material and its properties very seriously. Crystals are perceived powerful and having energetic qualities because of their unique material. Often, in the context of linguistic turn, the meaning and agency of things are conceptualised as an attributed qualities because objects in their static form afford and shape human practices. However, materials are not permanent, they decay, decompose and fall apart, as do the objects made up of those materials. Also, crystals erode, fade, fissure and break, which my informants interpret in esoteric terms as caused by energetic qualities, because it interrupts their intimate relationship with their stones. Decay and material properties, as I aim to demonstrate, can acquire spiritual meaning, in which material nature and cultural interpretations entangle.

∞ Bio

Tenno Teidearu is a PhD student of Ethnology at the University of Tartu, he also works as a researcher at the Estonian National Museum. His PhD project concentrates on the use of crystals in New Spirituality, and their commerce through esoteric shops in Estonia. His main research interests are material religion, vernacular religion, and material culture and consumption.

Michele Tita (*University of Tartu*)

Imagining Wilderness: Engagement with a Non-Perceivable Environment

In his 2000 book *The Perception of the Environment*, the anthropologist Tim Ingold describes the perception of an organism – both human and nonhuman – as directly tied to the presence of an environment of other living and non-living beings that surrounds and interacts with them. In this regard, he mentions repeatedly the concept of perceptual engagement with the environment, mostly referring to humans who need to deal with their environment and its sensorial perception for their living processes.

Despite the undeniable anthropic influence on the world that we inhabit, not all the surface of our planet is easily accessible to our species and accordingly remains in a state of absolute wilderness. Wilderness, in this sense, can be defined as a domain that is untouched, unseen, and unheard to humans, who cannot engage with it perceptually. Accordingly, if humans need or want to engage with wilderness, they must imagine it, and they can do it through folklore.

In this paper, two case studies – from the Italian Alps and from the Karbi community of Northeast India – will illustrate how wilderness has been imagined and re-constructed in folk narratives, as well as embodied in specific figures of the local folk traditions. For example, the figures of wild men such as the Italian *uomo selvatico* or the Karbi *Kenglong-Po* represent wilderness and the idea of wild in those areas, articulating the relationship between humans and the distant environments that they cannot access physically.

∞ Bio

I am currently a PhD student in the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore at the University of Tartu, Estonia. My research revolves around the folkloric figures of wild men and the image of wilderness in different areas of the world. Previously, I obtained a BA in Anthropology in my native country (Italy) and an MA in Folkloristics at the University of Tartu.

Felipe Augusto Tkac (*The Federal University of Paraná*)

A Confederação dos Tamoios: epic form, nation-building and Romantic Nationalism in 19th century Brazil

A Confederação dos Tamoios is an epic first published in 1856 in Brazil, it consists of ten cantos written in decasyllabic meter telling the story of a struggle between indigenous communities, united in a confederation, against Portuguese colonizers in the 15th century. The poem was written by Domingos José Gonçalves de Magalhães (1811-1882), a physician, writer and diplomat between the years 1837 and 1854. Magalhães built the narrative based on works by chroniclers and historians of Brazil's colonial period, and he shifted the common view of the indigenous by representing the confedera-



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tion of Tamoios as brave honorable people that fought a noble battle to defend the land and the people against the brutal colonizers from Portugal. His intentions by writing such an extemporaneous genre for the period was to, in one hand, produce a “national epic” for the recent independent state, in order to provide legitimation for an intended high culture of Brazilian art comparable to those of Europe. And on the other hand, to be part of an ideological project by Emperor D. Pedro II to build a united state and a distinctive sense of nationality. Magalhães is well known for being the introducer of Romanticism in Brazil, and *A Confederação dos Tamoios* is in a large way his artistic work that mimics his own ideological agenda and philosophical understanding of the world.

∞ Bio

Bachelor's degree in History from the Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná (PUCPR), Master's degree in Cultural History from the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR) and I am currently a Doctoral Student in the Department of History at the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR), working as a visiting PhD student in the Department of Cultures, Folklore Studies at the University of Helsinki. Registered Historian in Brazil under the number 00081/PR.

Digne Üdre (University of Tartu, University of Latvia)

Folk Narratives and Vernacular Artefacts: Eight-pointed Star as the Symbol of the Singing Revolution in Latvia

In this presentation, the relationship between folklore studies and materiality is explored through the visual symbolic forms and tangible artefacts used during the restoration of independence of the Baltic states. Events of those days (1987–1991), both in popular discourse and scholarly literature, are referred to as the Singing Revolution, thereby indicating its non-violent nature. Symbols have a long-standing relationship with revolutions and social movements, having a relevant role in summoning and energizing societies for action.

The focus of the presentation is on the main visual symbol of the Singing Revolution in Latvia – the regular eight-pointed star [*auseklītis*, *auseklis*, in Latvian]. *Auseklītis* in Latvian folklore and mythology is a male celestial deity interpreted as the Morning Star. In Latvian culture, this symbol is both a part of the folk ornament and mythology, thus revealing the relationship between visual symbols, folk narratives and vernacular artefacts.

Intangible meanings found in Latvian folklore and mythology were the ones that gave inspiration to the numerous and creative material forms of the symbol during the Singing Revolution –

from small scale objects like pins to placards, to even monumental ones, like the decors of architecture. All of these were used to materialize the ideas of the independence movement. They were visual symbols of self-recognition that embodied the hope of national awakening and a wish for political independence after the 50-year long Soviet occupation.

The presentation explores this symbol as a part of the cultural opposition and non-violent resistance movement, its ties with eco-nationalism, and also touches upon still remaining materialities in the urban landscape that reminds of the fascination with the symbol during the Singing Revolution.

∞ Bio

I am a PhD candidate at the University of Tartu, Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore. The topic of my dissertation is folk ornament in Latvia in the context of tradition, its mythological interpretation, and layers of historical meanings and contestations connected to it. I am also a researcher at the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art, University of Latvia. I have been involved in various research projects, but the current ones focus on the disciplinary history of folklore studies, the folklore movement and the Singing Revolution in Latvia, and narratives of place and identity.

Gabriella Vámos (Institute of Ethnography and Folklore Department of Material Ethnography, Semmelweis Medical History Museum)

The Cultural Heritage of the Studio of Young Folk Artists in Hungary

The role of folklore in modern culture and the viability of the folk art as contemporary genre were controversial questions among intellectuals at the end of 1960s in Hungary. A group of urban youths discovered the archaic, traditional folk culture and tried to popularize it in the 1970s. One side of this came with the foundation of the *Studio of Young Folk Artists* in 1973 by the member of Nomadic Generation (the name came from the title of a novel by a famous Hungarian writer Sándor Csoóri entitled *Nomad's Diary*).

The members of the movement thought of the folk culture in different ways, and they wanted to learn and use the original folk culture which had not been influenced by socialist ideas, motifs etc. In other words, they wanted to restore the voice of tradition. They collected information about many traditional crafts, organized film clubs and literary lectures, folk art camps and presented their methods in exhibitions, in museums as well. They liked beat music too, so they sought ways to express critical opinions of the political system. This folklorism movement became more and



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more popular and had a special concept of tradition. The members of the Studio and their followers are still present in the field of handicraft education as well as in cultural life.

In my paper, I will first recount the factors surrounding the establishment of the Studio, including how the group related to the current cultural policy, and then focusing on their views expressed in their design work. Finally, I will talk about the forums in which they passed on their skills and knowledge, taking a short detour in the direction of discourses on children's toys reforms, which was in the focus of several scientific disciplines at the time.

∞ Bio

My name is Gabriella Vámos. I am an ethnographer and museologist at the Semmelweis Medical History Museum and a lecturer at Institute of Ethnography and Folklore Department of Material Ethnography in Budapest, Hungary.

Sofia Wanström (Åbo Akademi University)

"Where should you start?" – Tellability of Experiences of Rape within a Finland-Swedish MeToo Campaign

In November of 2017, women of the Swedish-speaking minority in Finland were invited to a secret Facebook group where they could share their experiences of sexual harassment and abuse. This resulted in the local MeToo campaign *Dammen brister*, which published 950 testimonies of sexual violence along with a call for better security for women on November 29, 2017. The purpose of the campaign was to break the silence around sexual violence that is prevalent within the small social unit. When receiving the opportunity to perform experiences that have previously been silenced, what does this performance look like?

In this paper, I discuss the limitations (and possibilities) of tellability within the campaign. Understanding a tellable story as an accepted story, I present how the testifiers have used this space to be creative, thorough, or detailed, but also to defer their act of telling. Indeed, besides being a space for telling, the platform also allowed silence and for leaving things unsaid. For the discussion, I focus on two narrative strategies. The first one I refer to as experience-stringing, where the writer presents many experiences with little or no connection. The second one I refer to as story signifier, which is when an experience is merely mentioned in passing. These two strategies could perhaps be considered opposites; one is taking full advantage of the space while the other refrains from telling altogether. However, I will argue that they are not opposites, but simply different means of performing the complex experience of sexual violence.

∞ Bio

Sofia Wanström is a doctoral student in the subject of Nordic folkloristics at Åbo Akademi university. Her areas of study include narrative, with focus on genre and performance, and gender, particularly sexual violence.

Anna Zalewska (Nicolaus Copernicus University)

Otherworldly guardian and helper. Hypostases of the dead mother in East Slavic magic fairy tale

One of the key figures featured in magical narratives is the donor – a being who provides assistance to the protagonist at various levels of his or her battle with the fairy antagonist and supports the protagonist with advice or magical remedy. Among the donors, the deceased remaining with the protagonist in direct family relations, i.e. father and mother, play a special role.

The main aim of this presentation will be to portray the image of a mother in the role of an underworld guardian and supporter on the basis of East Slavic magic tales. As exemplification material were used implementation threads of the SUS 510A "Zolushka" (ATU 510A "Cinderella"), SUS 510B "Svinoy chekhol" (ATU 510B "Peau d'Asne") and SUS 511 "Chudesnaya korova" (ATU 511 "One-Eye, Two-Eyes, and Three-Eyes"), in which mother gives support to her daughter suffering injustice from her step-mother and stepsisters.

As an interpretative context, the records of beliefs and mythological stories devoted to the posthumous incarnations of the deceased in Slavic folk culture were used. This made it possible to ask what kind of transformations the image of the dead mother undergoes when influenced by the genre rules of the magic narratives. In addition, the paper will talk about her functions, the peculiarities of her behaviour, as well as the forms of interaction with other characters.

Preliminary analysis has shown that the dead mother takes the form of an animal, in particular, a bird (pigeon, sparrow (SUS 510A)) or cattle (cow, bull (SUS 511)), as well as a tree (oak, willow (SUS 510A) or apple tree (SUS 511)), in which a folk need to present any phenomena in the concrete-imaginary form is manifested. What is more, in the magic narratives the dead mother is sometimes replaced by the girl's relative – her godmother or grandmother (SUS 510A), which, as can be assumed, is the result of the genre evolution of the magic fairy tale and its primitive ritual basis. The deceased plays the role of donor and helper: she feeds and clothes her daughter (SUS 510A, SUS 511), gives her valuable advice (SUS 510B), helps her with her household duties (SUS 510A, SUS 511). Moreover, its role lies in upholding the cosmic



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International Conference of Young Folklorists

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26–28 October 2022

Helsinki, Finland

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order, namely justice from the point of view of man's relationship to nature and other people.

Bio

Master of History and Russian Philology, PhD student at the Doctoral School of Humanities, Theology, and Arts “Academia Artium Humaniorum” at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (Poland). Research interests: Polish, Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian folk tales, folk Slavonic demonology, mythologi-

cal tales; her PhD dissertation is focused on demonic characters in Polish and East Slavic folk tales. Member of the presidium of Polish Youth Commission of the International Organization of Folk Art and secretary of the International Seminar on Folklore at NCU.