



SENSES AND RELIGION

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FOREWORD

The 5th Conference of the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF) - Ethnology of religion group took place in Celje from 9 to 11 September 2006. The main focus of this conference, which rounded off the days dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Niko Kuret was on the relationship between religion and the senses. At the proposal of Leonard Primiano, this topic was addressed and thematized in the introductory paper by Gábor Barna. The papers themselves demonstrate various understandings and perceptions of the senses; certain authors focused primarily on the five senses (i.e., sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell), and others also discussed the sensations connected to these senses. The published articles therefore thematize the use and role of the senses in historical discourse and the personal perception of transcendence that hesitates between the perspective in which the body is not present, and that in which the body is expected to have a sensory experience. Pilgrimages are one of the main events in which the senses and sensory experience are addressed to the greatest extent, through physical strain, group experience (e.g., prayer and song), and experiencing new places. at the ritualized and, at the same time, internalized level, holidays make possible the sensory experience of closeness or family, and provide the individual with a feeling of safe shelter.

With regard to the relationship towards religion, the conference thus opened certain issues on the relationship between the perception of the senses and culture, between theological theory and folk practice, and so on. In addition, it opened certain topics related to an almost religious understanding of certain famous persons, such as Josip Broz Tito and Jim Morrison. At the same time, the conference leaves the door open to the issues of pain, ecstasy, and all areas that transcend the typology of the five senses and also offer individuals the opportunity to experience the transcendental through the senses.

The last paper, Roland Grimes' "Re-Sensualizing Ritual Theory," not only concludes the discussion about specific ritual phenomena, but also opens and broadens up the field of theoretical self-reflection.

Jurij Fikfak

PREDGOVOR

Med 9. in 11. septembrom 2006 je v Celju potekalo srečanje komisije za vprašanja ljudske religije pri mednarodnem združenju za etnologijo in folkloristiko (SIEF). Na tej znanstveni konferenci, s katero smo zaokrožili dneve, posvečene spominu 100- obletnice rojstva akademika dr. Nika Kureta, je bil glavni poudarek na razmerju med religijo in čuti. Temo je predložil Leonardo Primiano, v uvodnem prispevku jo je zasnoval in tematiziral Gábor Barna.

Sami prispevki kažejo na različna pojmovanja in dojemanja čutov: nekateri avtorji so posvetili svojo pozornost predvsem petim čutom – vidu, sluhu, tipu, okusu in vonju, drugi pa so razpravljali tudi o doživljanjih, povezanih s temi čuti. Tako so tu zbrani prispevki, ki tematizirajo rabo in vlogo čutov v zgodovinskem diskurzu in v osebni percepciji transcendence, ki omahuje med pogledom, v katerem je telo odsotno, in tistim, v katerem se od telesa pričakuje čutno doživljanje. Romanja so ena glavnih dogajanj, v katerih so čuti in čutno doživljanje s telesnim naporom, skupnostnim doživljanjem – npr. z molitvijo in pesmijo – in nedomačo lokacijo najbolj nagovorjeni. Prazniki na ritualizirani in hkrati internalizirani ravni omogočajo čutno doživljanje bližine, družine in dajejo posamezniku občutek varnega zavetja.

Znanstveno srečanje je tako v okviru razmerja čutov in religije odprlo nekatera nova vprašanja o razmerju med percepcijo čutov in kulturo, med teološko teorijo in ljudsko prakso... prav tako je bil predstavljen skoraj religiozen odnos do nekaterih znanih osebnosti, npr. do Josipa Broza Tita ali Jima Morrisona. Hkrati pa pušča odprta vrata za vprašanja bolečine, ekstaze in vseh tistih polj, ki presegajo tipologijo petih čutov, in ponujajo posamezniku možnost tudi čutnega doživljanja transcendentnega.

Zadnji prispevek, Rolanda Grimesa, *Za-čutenje teorije ritualov*, ne le zapira diskusijo o ritualni pojavnosti, ampak hkrati odpira in razširja polje novega teoretskega samopremisleka.

Jurij Fikfak

SENSES AND RELIGION. INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

GÁBOR BARNA

The theme of the conference of the SIEF Commission for Folk Religion (9–12 September 2006, Celje, Slovenia) was based on two pillars. One was the sensual perception of reality and within this the place of the five human senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste), and the other was religion as a process of cognition, in which the role of sensual perception may differ from one age and one culture to another.

Keywords: *senses, religion.*

Osnovna tema konference Komisije za ljudsko religijo SIEF (9.–12. september 2006 - Celje, Slovenija) je slonela na dveh temeljih. Prvi pomeni čutno percepcijo resničnosti in znotraj nje mesto petih čutov (vid, sluh, vonj, dotik in okus), drugi pa religijo kot proces spoznavanja, v katerem se vloga čutnega dojemaja lahko razlikuje od ene dobe do druge in ene kulture do druge.

Ključne besede: *čuti, religija.*

The theme¹ of the “Senses and Religion” conference of the SIEF Commission for Folk Religion (9–12 September 2006, Celje, Slovenia) was based on two pillars. One was the sensual perception of reality and within this the place of the five human senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste), and the other was religion as a process of cognition, in which the role of sensual perception may differ from one age and one culture to another.

It is through our senses that we experience the natural and social reality around us. With their help we can know this reality, perceive interconnections, and shape relationships. The senses are gateways to memory, gateways to knowledge. This is a kind of cognition and communication that is culturally determined and creates forms dependent on culture. This means that the cultural use of the senses is not incidental, but can be described as a cultural system. However the rules are not immutable; they can be modified with the passing of time and changing circumstances. Especially strong changes have occurred in the past two centuries with the rapid advance of technical civilization.

This applies not only to the culture of the senses, but also to scientific research on sensual perception. The situation has changed from a superficial knowledge of sensual perception to a state of understanding. This is the consequence of psychological, scientific, and medical studies and research on the senses over the past 200 to 250 years. Their findings have been incorporated into our everyday lives, also becoming part of commercial and advertising activity in the 20th and 21st centuries. In recent decades we have even seen the appearance

¹ This theme was proposed at the 2002 conference of the SIEF Commission for Folk Religion in Edinburg by Prof. Leonard Norman Primiano (Cabrini College, Radnor, Pennsylvania).

of a “virtual reality” of the senses; the digitization of the senses and the creation of a virtual world began not only through computer games, but also with the help of the computer.

A few examples suffice to indicate these processes. Our age is characterized by the dominance and technicalization of sight and visibility (i.e., television, film, magazines). Many changes can also be observed in taste, where strong internationalization is taking place. This can be seen in the rapid spread of international fast food chains: the food available in McDonald’s restaurants, Chinese restaurants, and Italian pizzerias. At the same time, parallel with the internationalization of tastes and perhaps as a counterbalance or supplement, we can also see the use of local flavours and tastes of past ages at various local celebrations and festivals.

Technical civilization has had a great influence on the use and culture of the senses. Mechanization has introduced new sources of noise that were previously unknown: railways, industrial machinery – or, more recently, techno music, dance clubs, and the walkman and discman so popular with young people that have become inseparable parts of our lives. In short, new sources of noise have appeared in our world.

Over the course of time, European thinking feminized and aestheticized the senses and sensual perception. It was thought that women were determined by the senses and emotions, whereas men were characterized by thinking, reason, and recognition of reality.

In the age of technical civilization and through its means, the human body can also be eliminated from the use of the senses. For example, what can be seen is recorded with the help of an instrument: the camera and film. Technical civilization has also changed the culture of smell and hearing, bringing them closer to the dominance of sight. Modern technical means (such as the microscope and the telescope) can improve our senses, but they can also make perception individual and subjective. We also encounter the refined manipulation of the senses, particularly in the world of cosmetics and body care products.

The French thinker Maurice Merleau-Ponty stresses the embodied nature of perception. He writes that people do not have passive bodies that see and understand an objective world ‘out there’. All experience of our world is mediated through our perception of it – via biological, psychological, and spiritual mechanisms, or senses [cf. Bowie 2002: 44]. These conference papers consider the biological and psychological foundations of sensual perception as given and do not address them, but rather turn their attention to the role played by the functioning of the five senses in religious culture. In particular, they look at the roles of the senses in the given religious rite, because religiousness involves a combination of cognition, emotion, and action [Wulff 1995: 269]. The contributors to the conference use the angle of the five human senses to interpret the religious practice of individuals and communities, its elements and means in different historical periods, in the past or the present, in various Christian and non-Christian religions.

Religion claims to provide the meaning of life, to explain the world as a whole. However, it wishes not only to answer the questions of past, present, and future, the macrocosm and the microcosm, being and non-being, this world and the world beyond, body and

soul, good and bad – it also wishes to interpret man and the transcendent in their entirety and in their interconnections. Religions perform this role in a communication process, in which the Sacred declares and communicates itself, and for this they may make use of all the senses. In this way, they evoke and cultivate religious feeling in people. Although faith cannot be taught, religious feelings and experience can be aroused, assisted, and expressed with special means. These means all come together in the liturgy and appear in the range of instruments used: word, spectacle, movement, gestures, and use of space, in direct or indirect contact with the Sacred. In short, all our senses can take part in our encounter with God and the Sacred: *hearing, sight, touch, smell, and taste*. In this way, too, they can provide a feeling of wholeness.

Liturgical means use the symbolic language of rites and ritual elements. The aim of our conference was to examine and interpret these principally from the angle of the *five senses*. In addition to the word, sound, music (*hearing*), and the visual image, statues, buildings, the use of space, or the arts in general (*sight*), we know little or almost nothing about the way religion uses means linked to *taste, smell, and touch*, their effect and purpose. Separately or together, these means can help shape the individual and community religious experience. The rite is the expression of something, and the model-like transmission of something (rite of and for something). It uses a varied range of instruments that are linked to the period concerned and its task is to transmit changing contents of spirituality. In many cases, these rites make up for some kind of lack, compensating for the finite and fragmentary nature of the human being. They make the invisible, the unfathomable, the immortal, the imperceptible visible, tangible, audible, and perceivable. They manifest the unmanifestable.

Various cultures and religions have taken different attitudes to the senses. It is sufficient here to mention the nature philosophy of India, China, the Greeks and Romans, mediaeval Arabs, and Christians. Islam recognizes five pillars of religiosity: faith, five daily prayers, alms, fasting, and the pilgrimage to Mecca. In Judaism, the five books of Moses frequently mention the senses: Genesis = the eye or sight, Exodus = the ear or hearing, Leviticus = smell, Numbers = taste, and Deuteronomy = touch [Jütte 2000: 90]. Not only different cultures but also different religions ranked the senses in a hierarchy: sight was first, hearing second (e.g., Hear, Oh Israel), followed by smell, taste, and touch.

The dominance of individual senses differs in the various rites: differences between Eastern and Western, Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant can be mentioned. The rites use the senses as important vehicles of meaning; they may play an important part in the creation or restoration of harmony. In Christian religion(s), sight and hearing are the most important. There is perhaps no need to emphasize the role of sight. Evidence of this can be found in the altars and images of Catholic churches, or in the iconostases of Eastern rite churches. This expression of the invisible in visible form manifests the “power of images” [Freedberg 1989], and in the wider sense led to the development of religious aesthetics in religious studies [Münster 2001]. However, it is striking that nowadays there are growing numbers of cases of “spiritual sight, visions, and apparitions”. In Protestantism, especially

Calvinism, hearing is the most important source of faith and knowledge of faith (faith comes from hearing). In addition to the spoken word and singing/music, silence also has an important place in the liturgy. Taste plays a part in religions in sacrifices: in sacrifice, communion, and the funeral ceremonies of the Eastern rites. A good taste is the numinous, the taste of the Lord: *Taste and see that the Lord is good!* [Psalm 34: 8] is true even if it is to be understood metaphorically. Touch is the sign of meeting in religion, taking form among gestures of the kiss, stroking, or touching. A good smell is an expression of holiness – as the legends of the saints show.

The individual wishes to participate in the practice of religion with his or her entire personality. The five senses express this fullness. A feast is an occasion for the complex and generally intensive use of the senses. This is why festive occasions of worship make intensive use of the senses. The religious service is a sacral drama that always acts on all our senses, even if in different ways. The use of the senses or, on the contrary, their elimination (I am thinking of fasting or silence) may play an important role as symbols. The use of symbols can mean use of the senses, and this ensures an atmosphere of solemnity. The senses open a gateway to the emotions, but they must not be confused with the emotions.

The number five appears to be important in religions and it is often associated with the five senses. Of course, it has other associations as well, such as the five angelic choirs and the five wounds of Christ. In mediaeval art, the five senses seem to have marginal importance because a kind of hostility to the body appears during the Reformation in both Catholic and Protestant piety, and many people even today still regard this as characteristic of Christianity. Examples of the visual representation of the senses can be found in the time of the Catholic restoration and the Baroque.²

And what have ethnography, folklore studies, and anthropology learned and studied about the problem mentioned above, the connection between the senses and religion? The answer is: almost nothing. In this respect, the literature of ethnography and anthropology has studied almost exclusively non-European peoples.

Making preparations for this conference, I found that many ethnographic and anthropological works deal with the senses in non-European cultures and societies, but only a few present data about our own life.³ This is not only because anthropology has traditionally concentrated on the study of non-Western societies, but also because emphasizing, analysing, and interpreting the roles of the senses – sight, touch, smell, taste, and hearing – in culture and society is a rather new viewpoint in the social sciences. We cannot undertake an overview of the relevant material in European ethnology. Good guides from the viewpoint of cultural history can be found in Robert Jütte [2000], Geurts [2002], and David La Breton

² To cite only one example from Jütte's book: a painting by Juan Antonio Escalante titled *The Victory of Faith over the Senses* illustrates the official attitude of the Catholic Church at the time. Faith is personified as a female figure with a cross on her left and a chalice on her right. The five senses are personified by five female figures that use gestures to indicate the sense each one represents [Jütte 2000: 93].

³ For further extensive bibliographies, see Howes [2003], Bendix [2005], and Stoller [1989].

[2006] in the thematic issue of *Etnofoor*, including the introductory study by Regina Bendix [2005]. The extensive literature contains data mainly on sight [cf. Jenks 1995] and hearing [Erlmann 2004; Bull-Back 2004], with much less mention of taste [Stoller 1992], touch, and smell [Rey-Hulman & Boccara 1998; Vajstein 2003].

This short introduction can perhaps show the breadth and depth of the anthropology of the senses and draw scholars' attention to studying the connection between the sensual and the religious. I would also like to refer to the conference held in Szeged at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the beginning of October 2006, also dealing with the roles of the senses in religious life. I was very surprised at the great response to the invitation and call for papers: more than 50 papers were submitted and there were at least 40 speakers at this three-day interdisciplinary conference. This was the first survey in Hungary of the complex connections between religion and the senses.

One of the lessons of ethnographic research, conferences, and literature is that the role and significance of the individual senses in the cognition process is not the same. Although Western societies themselves have complex sensory orders, a great deal has been written on the role of sight in Western culture. The other sensory domains remain scarcely investigated. This is why Western culture, especially now, is interpreted and characterized by the hegemony of vision [Howes 2006: VII].

One of the lessons of the anthropological study of the senses among non-European people and cultures is that the senses operate in relation to each other in a continuous interplay of impressions and values. They are ordered in hierarchies of social importance and reordered according to changing circumstances. As we know, sight was generally deemed to be the highest and most important of the senses in pre-modern Europe; within a religious context, hearing – attending to the word of God – was often given primacy. Smell and touch were rather neglected. In Christianity the five senses are represented allegorically [Jütte 2000: 284–299].

It has also been customary in Western society to associate the senses and sensuality with only certain social domains, most notably aesthetics and sexuality.

If we wish to understand the cultural formation of the senses in religions, we have to turn to the given (European or non-European) cultures. There are divergences from the dominant sensory model by individuals or groups in the society. This is true when we focus on Western Christianity: senses have a different meaning in various Christian denominations. In Protestant denominations, there is emphasis on hearing, “faith is through hearing”, while in the Roman Catholic and especially the Eastern rite all five senses participate in deepening the religious experience.

Some of these differences may be institutionalized in European cultures. For example, women may be understood to have different ways of sensing than men. Women have been traditionally associated with the more “corporeal”, “proximal” senses of taste, touch, and smell, and men with the more “rational”, “distal” senses of sight and hearing. In terms of everyday practices, women were expected to concern themselves with sewing, cooking,

cleaning, and childcare at home, while men went out to hear and discourse, to see and “oversee” the world.⁴

Differences often arise from the different situations and experiences of members and groups within society. Alternative models may be elaborated that correspond to the particular experiences of the persons in question and challenge the dominant order [Howes 2003: 29–58].

The connections between the senses and religion have not been elaborated in anthropology or the ethnology of religion. The papers published in this volume will help fill this gap; they analyse the role of the senses or a particular sense, and interpret this in a religious context.

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⁴ This observation by Constance Classen is cited by Howes [2003: 55].

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ČUTI IN RELIGIJA. NEKAJ UVODNIH MISLI

Zdi se, da religija trdi, da zagotavlja pomen življenja in da razlaga svet kot celoto. V tem okviru išče več kakor le odgovore na vprašanja o preteklosti, sedanjosti in prihodnosti, o mikrokozmosu in makrokozmosu, biti in ne-biti, o tem svetu in onstranstvu, telesu in duši, dobrem in slabem; želi tudi interpretirati človeka in transcendenčno v celoti in njuni povezanosti-

Religije uresničujejo to vlogo v procesu komunikacije, v katerem se sveto samorazkriva in sporoča in pri tem uporablja vse čute. Ti zbujejo in negujejo v ljudeh versko občutje. Čeprav se vera v religijski praksi kaže kot "milost" in je zato ni mogoče učiti, se vendarle verska občutja spodbujajo, krepijo in izražajo s posebnimi sredstvi. Ta sredstva se združujejo v 1) liturgiji, kjer se kažejo v nizu uporabljenih pripomočkov: besedi, uprizoritvi, gibanju, gestah, rabi prostora, neposrednem in posrednem stiku s svetim, kakor tudi v 2) dogodkih, ki spremljajo liturgijo ali verske dogodke (npr. romanja itn.). Skratka, ko se človek srečuje z Bogom in svetim, so udeleženi vsi čuti: sluh, vid, tip, vonj in okus. Na ta način omogočajo občutje celostnosti. Zagotovo je posebej zanimivo dejstvo, da čuti prestopajo meje med svetom svetega prostora in zemeljskega sveta profanega in postanejo ambivalentni. To je posebna tema za terenske raziskave.

Liturgična praksa uporablja simbolni jezik in elemente obredov. Cilj naše konference je to preiskati in interpretirati prvenstveno z zornega kota petih čutov. Razen o besedi, zvoku in glasbi (sluh), vidnih podobah, kipih, zgradbah, rabi prostora ali umetnosti nasploh (vid), malo ali skoraj ničesar ne vemo o tem, kako religija uporablja sredstva, povezana z okusom, vonjem in tipom, o njihovih učinkih in namenih. Ta sredstva ločeno ali skupaj prispevajo k oblikovanju individualnih in skupnostnih verskih izkušenj. Obred je izraz nečesa in je model za posredovanje nečesa. Uporablja niz pripomočkov, ki so povezani s konkretnim obdobjem, njegov namen je posredovati spremenljive vsebine duhovnosti. V mnogih primerih so obredi nadomestek za nekakšen primanjkljaj in kompenzirajo končno in razdrobljeno naravo človeškega bitja. Nevidno,

neizmerljivo, nesmrtno in nedojemljivo postane vidno, oprijemljivo, slišano in zaznano. Izražajo torej neizrazljivo.

Želimo, da bi sodelujoči uporabili perspektivo petih čutov za interpretacijo religijske prakse posameznikov in skupnosti, njene sestavine in sredstva v različnih zgodovinskih obdobjih, v preteklosti in danes, in v različnih krščanskih in nekrščanskih verah, kakor tudi poti teh praks med svetim in zemeljskim, ki izražajo človekovo stalno prizadevanje, da bi dosegel transcendenco.

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ISSUE OF SENSES IN RELIGION /
VPRAŠANJE ČUTOV V RELIGIJI

SENSES OR NON-SENSES. DEBATES ON RITUALS IN PRE-REFORMATION DENMARK

ARNE BUGGE AMUNDSEN

In the 1520s the Danish (and Norwegian) politics of religion was a complex matter and under severe pressure both from the Roman Catholic nobility and from radical Lutheran cities. This situation also triggered debates on the meaning and rationality of religion and rituals. The author concentrates on one of these debates: that between the Carmelite Paulus Helie and the Lutheran apostate Petrus Laurentii. Helie focused his arguments around concepts such as tradition, experience, and history. Laurentii argued that historical changes never would occur if tradition and human authority were given priority in the Christian church. Both participants in this debate also referred to the human senses. To Helie, the smells, tastes, and movements of the Christian rituals were instruments of transcendental experience. To Laurentii, the human senses were non-sense: not ritual, but rather true belief and sincere feelings were the only solution.

Keywords: senses, Denmark, reformation, rituals.

V 20. letih 16. stoletja je bila danska (in norveška) politika religije kompleksno vprašanje pod močnim pritiskom tako rimskokatoliškega plemstva kakor radikalnih luteranskih mest. Položaj je spodbudil tudi razpravljanja o pomenu in racionalnosti vere in obredja. Avtor se osredinja na eno teh razprav – med karmeličanom Paulusom Heliejem in luteranskim odpadnikom Petrusom Laurentijem. Helie je strnil svoje argumente ob konceptih tradicija, izkušnja in zgodovina. Laurentii je trdil, da ne bi bilo historičnih sprememb, če bi imeli tradicija in človeška avtoriteta prvenstvo v katoliški cerkvi. Oba razpravljalca sta se sklicevala tudi na človeške čute. Za Helieja so bili vonji, okusi in gibi v krščanskem obredju instrumenti transcendenčne izkušnje. Za Laurentiija so bili človeški čuti ne-čuti: edina rešitev je v pravi veri in iskrenih občutjih, ne pa v ritualu.

Ključne besede: čuti, Danska, reformacija, rituali.

The great changes in religion, political power, and cultural processes that took place in parts of Europe in the first half of the 16th century, and which were already called “the reformation” in the languages of that time – these changes have always interested and even intrigued cultural historians.¹ It is impossible to single out *one* central element of these changes. Politics, economics, religion, and mentalities seem to have been combined and related in ways that modern scholars can hardly grasp with their secularized conceptual framework. This is the broader background for this article, in which I analyze only one small chapter of these changes, a chapter that took place in a rather marginal part of Europe at the time: the Kingdom of Denmark.²

¹ A recent example is Edward Muir [1997].

² Further aspects are discussed in detail in Amundsen [2006].

THE LUTHERAN REFORMATION IN DENMARK

In the 1520s the Danish politics of religion was a rather complex matter. The kings of the Oldenburg dynasty, Christian II and his uncle Fredrick I, were under severe pressure both from the Roman Catholic nobility and from leading groups in radical Lutheran cities. The ideological debates intensified, and no one knew what the solution would be: Would Denmark become a revolutionary, Lutheran monarchy, or would this part of Europe remain within the unifying, Roman Catholic Church?³

In fact, this uncertainty about political and religious development in Denmark did not end until the 1530s. King Fredrick I died in 1533 and his death was the direct cause of a bloody and brutal civil war. This war (the *Grevens Fejde*, or Count's War) ended in 1536 with the final victory of the Lutheran crown pretender, who was proclaimed the new Danish king with the name Christian III. He immediately decided that his monarchy would be a Lutheran monarchy with no tolerance for the old church and its structures or supporters. The bishops fled or were imprisoned, and within few years a new Lutheran church structure was established.

This is, of course, dramatic enough – seen as a cultural revolution and a breakdown of historical traditions. However, what I find interesting is the situation *before* this Lutheran victory, in the period when no one was able to know exactly what was going to happen. Such situations have a tendency to put values and arguments under pressure, thus making them more clearly explicated than what is normal or even necessary in “normal” situations. I take this as my theoretical and methodological starting point.

RELIGIOUS COMPLEXITY IN PRE-REFORMATION DENMARK

If we turn to the Denmark of the 1520s, it is not hard to find considerable religious and cultural complexity. During this decade the Lutheran reformation was partially implemented in some important Danish towns, such as Viborg and Malmø (present-day Malmö). The monasteries were occupied and used for new purposes, monks were dismissed, and the Catholic clergy were expelled from their own churches. The city councils proclaimed the new, true religion to be *their* only choice, and King Frederick I partly accepted this choice and partly lacked sufficient power to prevent it.

To the defenders of the old belief and the old church, this situation was regarded as a catastrophe. A Christian monarch should not tolerate the cult of apostates. On the other hand, to the Danish Lutherans the city reformations were signs of a new era, and they expected the king to support them [Koch and Kornerup 1987].

Both the old and the new beliefs had to be defended, not only by political means but

³ Matthias Asche and Anton Schindling [2003] have thoroughly described the reformation processes in Scandinavia.

also by use of the printed and the spoken word. Of course, a situation like this also called for debates on the meaning and rationality of religion and rituals. If the Roman Catholic Church should be kept unaltered in Denmark, what grounds should this be based on and what were the positive elements of this church? The question could also be posed the other way around: What were the critical arguments of those that wanted radical change? Why was a radical change the only solution? Both factions agreed that this was a question of church rituals and of what, from a modern perspective, one might call the cultural and social functions of the Christian religion. But it was also a question of how Christian believers could communicate with their god.

TWO MONKS IN DEBATE

Below I concentrate on one of these debates in pre-Reformation Denmark – the debate between the Carmelite Poul Heljesen (*Paulus Helie*) [Heise 1893; Andersen 1936] and the Lutheran apostate Peder Laurenzen (*Petrus Laurentii*) [Rørdam 1896]. My interest in them is due to the fact that they represent two clear-cut alternatives in this time of change.

They both had the same background because they had been members of the Carmelite Collegium in Copenhagen established by King Christian II in 1517 [cf. Valkner 1963]. However, whereas Poul Heljesen kept his loyalty to the old church unchanged until his death, Peder Laurenzen left the Collegium in the mid-1520s. First he went to Germany to meet Martin Luther, and then he settled in Malmø to participate in the city reformation that took place there in the late 1520s.

THE LUTHERAN APOSTATE PEDER LAURENSEN

In his book titled *Malmøbogen* (The Malmø Book), which was printed in 1530, Peder Laurenzen presented a very fervent and rather aggressive post-factum defence of the city reformation in his new hometown.⁴ He described what had taken place in his opinion: The abuse of the sacraments, the mass, and the churches had been stopped, while the citizens kept their loyalty to the king and did not dispute his civil power. The most extreme signs of the old abuse – the ornaments of the churches – had been removed and sold, and the money had been used for the benefit of the poor. Now – Peder Laurenzen concluded – the pure word of God could be heard both in the churches and in the streets of the city of Malmø without being distorted by dead things like processions, altarpieces, incense, or golden robes.

To Peder Laurenzen, what was regarded as “old” was almost automatically suspicious

⁴ The book was re-edited in the 19th century by Holger F. Rørdam [1868].

– that is: old with regard to the history of the Roman Catholic Church. In his opinion, the only authority was the Bible, the teachings of Jesus, and the Apostles. On the other hand, most periods of church history had represented a moral and ritual decline with the result that the church had developed in directions that were far from the authentic ideals. Sacraments and rituals not explicitly mentioned in the New Testament were simply fantasies constructed by the pope and the clergy in order to keep common men and women in poverty and ignorance. In fact, according to Peder Laursen this development was even worse because it had closed the door to God's grace to most people. And now, during the last years, Peder Laursen argued, God's wrath had turned on Denmark. In a situation like this, the reformers in Malmø had done the only right thing. They had restored the original, simple, and authentic rituals and pious ideals, and had liberated the people of God from their historical prison. Moreover, a very important part of this prison was the rituals of the old church.

THE REFORMER'S VIEW ON CHURCH DEFICIENCIES

Peder Laursen's most important strategy was to *reveal* the deficiencies of the old church and its traditions. The clergy were mostly occupied with collecting money and valuables for themselves, thus selling the mercy of God for money or gifts. His advice to the people of God was that they should not put confidence in any priest, monk, bishop, ritual, or ecclesiastical law. The old clergy could be expelled from the reformed city, but the rituals also had to be radically changed.

To be able to detect the meaning of the true word of God, Peder Laursen recommended a return to a *historical starting point*, thus disregarding the centuries of church history between apostolic times and the present. In his argument, true Christian worship was not a question of liturgical traditions, colours and candles, beautiful and shining liturgical vessels, or church decorations. Quite the contrary: such things would confuse the soul, distracting the pious mind that wanted to *understand* the divine word.

In God's eyes – and definitely also in the eyes of Peder Laursen – it was endlessly more valuable if a simple peasant sang a popular hymn on a street corner than if he took part in a church festival or complex ritual led by a priest. In short: the true religious ritual had its origin and legitimacy in the hearts and minds of the participants, not in history, tradition, or external forms. The rituals of the old church were the rituals of monkeys: the laity had been taught to copy what the clergy did without really understanding the meaning of it. The senses would lead the soul astray, according to the Lutheran city reformer Peder Laursen and his Malmø book of 1530.

THE DEFENDER OF THE OLD CHURCH

What did the situation look like from the other side of the conflict, from a defender of the Catholic faith? In several pamphlets and widely distributed manuscripts, Poul Helgesen responded to Peder Laurensen, his old friend and colleague in the Copenhagen Carmelite Collegium.⁵ However, Poul Helgesen had quite another strategy. If we analyze his writings, it is possible to see that he followed three lines of argumentation connected to these *topoi*: the power of the Holy Spirit, the power of the formal structures of worship, and the power of tradition.

Seen from the perspective of Poul Helgesen, the most terrible abuse in contemporary Denmark was not the rituals or the politics of the Catholic Church, but the worldly hubris of the Lutheran reformers. If one believed that the Christian church was ruled by the Holy Spirit, it would be an attack on the Spirit to try to dissolve the existing institutions of this church or to dismiss its legitimate servants [*Skriifter af Paulus Helie*, III: 60f]. Where – Poul Helgesen asked – had the Holy Spirit actually been in the centuries that had followed the first Pentecost if not in and within the Christian church as an institution with its rituals, sacraments, and traditions? In fact, Poul Helgesen argued, the history of the Christian church is also the history of the Holy Spirit. To even think otherwise would result in absurdities and lack of consequence. If the Christian God is one, it also follows that the Church is one [*Skriifter af Paulus Helie*, II: 17]. This is the power of the Holy Spirit.

Poul Helgesen also pointed to the fact that all humans were sinful, not fully capable of true worship. God's own instruments to fill the gap between the ideals and the sinful realities were the rituals, or the "church ceremonies", as he called them. Where the individual human mind and body were restricted and ambivalent, the forms of the rituals could act and speak for them. The rituals gave the human senses a structure. False devotion was the most likely outcome of the individual, de-ritualized activities in the Lutheran churches, while the Catholic churches and their rituals contained the potential for both individual and collective worship [*Skriifter af Paulus Helie*, II: 142]. In Poul Helgesen's argument, this was the power of the formal structures of worship.

TRADITION AND HISTORY

The most interesting point in Poul Helgesen's discussion, however, is the third line of argument: the power of tradition. In fact, this point is closely linked to the two other points, but it takes them further into questions of history and epistemology.

To start with epistemology, Poul Helgesen argued that man has no individual religious knowledge in the meaning that the human senses are to be trusted alone. In contrast to the

⁵ Several editors edited his collected works in the mid-20th century [*Skriifter af Paulus Helie*, I–VII].

arguments of the Lutheran reformers, Poul Helgesen was of the opinion that it was impossible for individuals living 1,500 years after Jesus and the Apostles to have any knowledge of what *they* said, did, and intended. If the fathers of the Church and the church institution had not carried this knowledge from one generation to another, it would have been lost and lacked any reference to any legitimate reality. The meaning of the Holy Scriptures was a shared knowledge, following the Christian church through history. If the fathers of the Church or the church institution had misinterpreted Jesus and the Apostles, there would be no Christian belief or knowledge left – only an empty, terrifying past [*Skriifter af Paulus Helie*, III: 148f]. In other words: To propagate the dissolution of the old church, of the Roman church institution, would be equivalent to religious suicide, according to Poul Helgesen.

Poul Helgesen also commented on history. To say that the old church as an institution was the only possible guarantee for substantial Christian knowledge and experience was not only a question of formal reasoning, according to him. On the contrary, Poul Helgesen argued that the most important container of the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, the most central element in the power of tradition, was the Christian rituals.

He argued that using these rituals enabled the individual believer to neutralize the limitation of place and time, which is the limitation of the individual mind and body. Kneeling in front of a sacred painting, taking part in a collective church ritual, you are bound to the limits of your body, to the limits of present experiences. However, at the same time, and as a consequence of the formal structures of the ritual, you will be able to experience and make real both past and future realities: The believer might be both on earth and in heaven, and in the past, the present, and the future – simultaneously! Through the rituals of the church, the individual took part in the wisdom and experience of past generations. In the ultimate end, this was actually a taking part in the wisdom and experience of the Apostles. *This* was the inner meaning of the rituals: they were open secrets, God's own channels between Him and his creation, keeping the human senses away from non-sense.

THE END OF THE DEBATE

It is no wonder that Poul Helgesen was horrified when he was informed about what had happened in Malmø and in Viborg. He learned about empty churches, laymen preaching in the streets, and liturgical vessels and manuals destroyed or sold. To him, the ritual revolution of the Protestants was the first step to cultural, social, and religious chaos. This was a breakdown of history and meaning.

However, in 1530, neither Peder Laurensen nor Poul Helgesen knew what would come of the conflicts and debates. This forced them to be explicit regarding the arguments for what they did – or what they did not want to happen. However, we know what happened! After 1536, Peder Laurensen made a career in the new Lutheran church in Denmark until

his death in 1555. Poul Helgesen, on the other hand, did not give up his Catholic faith. His fate after 1536 is unknown.

The two men never reconciled but, from one perspective, both of them turned out to be wrong. The Lutheran reformation in Denmark and Norway became much more moderate than the radical experiments in Malmø and other Danish cities might have indicated in the 1520s. King Christian III was a clever politician who knew that radical changes would threaten the political stability of his kingdom. The ritual politics of the new church, then, ended in a position between that of Poul Helgesen and Peder Laurensen. It was conservative, and it altered ritual traditions only slowly and with caution.

RITUALS AND CULTURAL VALUES. THE POSITION OF THE SENSES

To conclude this analysis, I would like to go a step further in this study of the ritual debate in pre-Reformation Denmark, and ask the following question: Which cultural values were actually attributed to rituals by the two adversaries? Poul Helgesen concentrated his arguments around phenomena such as tradition, experience, and history. What would the results be if a contemporary ritual revolution actually dissolved the wisdom of the forefathers? According to Poul Helgesen, the paths to the past then would be closed and forgotten. The Lutheran Peder Laurensen, however, argued that historical changes never would occur if tradition and human authority were given priority in the Christian church. In his view, any ritual was the possible object of change.

The interesting point here is that both participants in this debate referred to the human senses. To Poul Helgesen, the smells, tastes, and physical movements of the Christian rituals were instruments of transcendental experience. They kept the senses from being non-sense. To Peder Laurensen, the appeals to the human senses were non-sense. To God, any ritual would be sufficient, but Christian believers should not confine themselves to them. Not ritual, but instead true belief and sincere feelings were the only solution.

I regard this discussion of the 1520s as astonishingly modern. Under the pressure of a possible religious revolution, the two adversaries were forced to argue deeply and explicitly. The question of ritual, senses, and history was turned into a question of how individuals should communicate with the divine, of how human language and human acts might neutralize the distance between the experienced world and the transcendental world. The Lutherans pointed to one solution to this problem, and the Roman Catholics chose another. The debates in the early 16th century even in a remote place like Denmark shed light on important and long-lasting differences in European religious cultures.

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ČUTI ALI NE-ČUTI. RAZPRAVE O RITUALIH
V PREDREFORMACIJSKI DANSKI

V 20. letih 16. stoletja je bila danska (in norveška) politika religije kompleksno vprašanje. Kralja oldenburgske dinastije, Kristijan II. in njegov stric, Fredrik I., sta bila pod močnim pristiskom tako rimskokatoliškega plemstva kakor radikalnih luteranskih mest. Nazorske razprave so se ostrile,

vendar nihče ni imel rešitve. Bi morala Danska-Norveška postati revolucionarna luteranska monarhija ali naj bi ta del Evrope ostal v enotni rimskokatoliški cerkvi?

Položaj je spodbudil razprave o pomenu in racionalnosti religije in obredja. V prispevku se osredinjam na eno od razprav, namreč tisto med karmeličanom Poulom Heljesnom (Paulus Helie) in luteranskim odpadnikom Pederom Laurensenom (Petrus Laurentii). V analizi je v središču naslednje vprašanje: Kakšno vrednost sta nasprotnika pripisovala obredju? Paulus Helie je strnil svoje argumente ob konceptih tradicija, izkušnja in zgodovina: kakšni bi bili nasledki, če bi sodobna revolucija razkrojila modrost prednikov? Po Heliejevem mnenju bi bile poti k preteklosti zaprte in pozabljene. Luteranec Petrus Laurentii pa je trdil, da do zgodovinskih sprememb ne bi prišlo, če bi imeli tradicija in človeška avtoriteta prvenstvo v katoliški cerkvi. Skladno s tem je vsak ritual podvržen spremembam.

Zanimivo je, da se pri tem oba razpravljalka sklicujeta na človeške čute. Za Paulusa Helieja so bili vonji, okusi in gibi v krščanskih obredih instrumenti transcendenčne izkušnje. Za Petrusa Laurentiija so bili človeški čuti ne-čuti: za Boga zadošča vsak ritual, vendar rituali za krščanske vernike ne morejo biti edina stvar. Edina rešitev je v pravi veri in iskrenih čustvih/občutjih, ne pa v ritualih.

Razprava v 20. letih 16. stoletja je presenetljivo sodobna. Pod pritiskom mogoče verske revolucije sta bila nasprotnika prisiljena argumentirati poglobljeno in eksplicitno. Vprašanje rituala, čutov in zgodovine se je spremenilo v vprašanje, kako naj bi posamezniki komunicirali z božanskim in kako lahko človeški jezik in dejanja neutralizirajo razdaljo med svetom doživetega in transcendence.

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Otočec. September 2006 [Photo by J. Fikfak].

CANDLES IN SWEDISH CHURCHES

NILS-ARVID BRINGÉUS

The author describes how Swedish churches and society have had different relationships to the use of candles: affirmative up to the Reformation, and negative or ambivalent up to the twentieth century, when candles started once again becoming an important element not only of religious life, but public life as well.

Keywords: candles, Sweden, reformation.

Avtor opisuje, kako so v švedskih cerkvah in družbi v različnih obdobjih imeli različen odnos do rabe sveč: afirmativnega do same reformacije, odklonilnega ali ambivalentnega ves čas do 20. stoletja, ko so postale sveče znova pomemben element verskega doživljanja in tudi drugače v javnem življenju.

Ključne besede: sveče, Švedska, reformacija.

Light is a word that only takes on meaning in relation to its opposite: *darkness*. Creation began with God saying “Fiat lux”. Before that, darkness had prevailed, but now darkness was transformed into its opposite, light.

In the far north, for geographical reasons, there is still a struggle between darkness and light. For a great part of the year, people live in total darkness, until the light – as on the morning of creation – breaks through. For a short time I myself lived out in the countryside, far from any built-up area and without any neighbours. In moonlight or when the stars were out, the darkness of night could have its charm, but when it was cloudy I was completely enveloped in darkness. The night felt dangerous, and I longed for daybreak.

In our thoroughly electrified world it is useful to bear in mind that our ancestors lived in a constant alternation between light and darkness, and they spent a great deal of their time and energy searching for sources of light. This can increase our understanding of what light meant to them. They longed for the light, and they marked the days during the year when the light had its greatest power and when its power was smallest.

Once upon a time people made fire by striking steel or flint and catching the spark in tinder. They also needed a medium for keeping the flame alive. The cressets of the medieval church, small stones with hollows for oil, remind us of the significance of oil. Later on there came other sources of light: tallow and wax. In the allegorical world of the medieval church, the bee was praised as a producer of wax. According to a notion that was widespread in the early church, the bee symbolized the virgin birth. Apiculture and the utilization of wild bees became important. At the same time, a distinction was made between tallow candles and wax candles. In God’s house, only the latter were good enough.

Through cressets and candles of tallow and wax, it became possible for the priest to read the sacred texts and conduct the liturgy in the dark Romanesque churches. The sources of light thus acquired a crucial significance in the cult. The parishioners were obliged to pay their tithes in wax or oil so that lights could burn in the churches. Wax candles were also common offertory gifts. The candles were significant both for the collective – the parish – and for the individual. Olaus Magnus writes in his history of the Nordic peoples from 1555 that *if the skin of a wolf, lynx, or fox, or an animal of another species has been caught in their nets, the price of it is dutifully used for church candles*. He adds that *wolf-skins are also donated so that with the proceeds candles may be bought and burned in veneration of the saints*.

Candles were required on certain set occasions: at Sunday mass, when the status or degree of holiness was marked with a specific number of candles on the altar: two, four, or six. At the high festivals of the year, especially Christmas, the need for candles was particularly great, but also at Candlemas, when the candles were blessed. At festivals of the life cycle, candles were of crucial significance: at christening, churching, matrimony, and in connection with death and burial. In the laws of the medieval Swedish provinces there are detailed regulations concerning candles on these occasions. There is a rich iconography reflecting the use of candles in these contexts. There are also objects, in the form of candlesticks, testifying to the importance of light sources. Olaus Magnus's history gives examples of the medieval use of candles. He writes, for example, how women who underwent "churching", a purification rite after they had given birth, go *with burning candles to give thanks to God*. In the Catholic church the custom is observed by *all women who have borne a child when, after a space of forty days, carrying lights, they must go to be purified before a priest at the church doorway*. The medieval laws simultaneously remind us that candles had to be kept under close watch and that they could be dangerous.

"Fiat lux" is a kind of fire-making formula, and it was repeated at the annual blessing of the candles, which was originally done by rubbing two sticks together. The candles thereby acquired a sacred dimension: they were charged with sanctity. People took their candles to church, where they left some of them, and took the rest home to use there.

As soon as material things enter the picture, prestige comes too. Two wax candles were more than one, four were more than two. At ceremonies for distinguished people, more candles burned than on other occasions. For royal ceremonies a tax could even be levied to ensure that there were enough candles. A wealth of candles became a measure of the status of the living and the dead.

In the late Middle Ages the use of candles increased. In cathedrals, candles burned day and night on the graves of saints, and eternal lamps illuminated the altar as a symbol of God's presence.

The place for candles was on the altar and by the baptismal font, but they also had a mobile function. Olaus Magnus depicts the bride riding on a side-saddle with a torch in her hand. The bridegroom riding with his escort also carries a torch. Olaus Magnus tells us that

When they are about to go to church for the priestly blessing, every groom and bride, according to the excellence of their rank and birth, order to be borne before them tall candles of various hues, made with wonderful skill out of soft wax, with similarly coloured silken drapes hanging from them.

At christenings a burning candle was placed in the child's right hand, and when life ended a candle was put in the hands of the deceased. Light thus followed a person all through life.

The Reformation, of course, required taking a stance on the use of candles in church. The Church Ordinance of 1571 allowed candles to remain in use. For images of saints, however, it was not permitted to light candles, but *otherwise one may use candles at the altar when the canonical hours are held*. As for the practice of placing a candle in the hand of a



Fig. 1: A man presents a candle as an offering. Painting by Albertus Pictor in Härkeberga church.



Fig. 2: On the baptismal font in Gumlösa church in Skåne there is an image of the Virgin Mary carrying the baby Jesus in the temple. Behind her is Joseph, holding a candle in his hand.



Fig. 3: Five candle bearers at the funeral of a nobleman. Title vignette in Olaus Magnus, 16:37.



Fig. 4: Mounted bride and bridegroom with torches in their hands. Title vignette in Olaus Magnus, 14:9.

dying person, this could be continued as desired. However, the priest was to inform the people that it did not matter for the salvation of the souls whether one had a candle in one's hand or not. The custom survived well into the eighteenth century.

During the struggle with Calvinism in Sweden in the 1560s, Archbishop Laurentius Pauli prepared a tract on church ceremonies. Here he distinguished between necessary, voluntary, and reprehensible use of candles in church. At the same time, he wrote an entire exposé of the medieval use of church candles. Among those that could well be used but also done without, there were

Candlemas candles, Hallelujah candles, christening candles, bridal candles, churching candles, all kinds of offertory candles, large and small, which are dedicated to God and the saints, candlesticks, torch holders, and chandeliers.

The reprehensible ceremonies comprised all kinds of blessing of candles. The Uppsala Meeting in 1593, however, did not have as generous an attitude. Among the ceremonies that had to be abandoned were *the long torch holders used during high mass and at weddings*. At a synod in the archdiocese of Uppsala on 6 February 1595 it was decided to cease the use of salt and candles at christening and the use of candles at communion.

In Denmark the opposition to candles was not as strong. The Church Ordinance of 1539 and the Church Ritual of 1685 prescribed that the altar should be furnished *with two candles, lit as long as the communion lasts*. When Skåne and the neighbouring southern provinces were transferred to Sweden from Denmark through the Peace of Roskilde in 1658, the heads of the Swedish church strove for uniformity in ecclesiastical practice. A meeting in Malmö in 1681 prohibited the lighting of wax candles on the altar and beside the coffin at funerals. The significant sums used to buy wax candles would instead be delivered to Lund University to be used to support a number of students and scholarships. But the decision was not popular, and the deans remained strikingly passive. There are examples of dummy candles being placed in the candlesticks so that the altar would not be completely bare. Two of these have recently been found in Fleninge church in north-west Skåne. In Denmark the early service on Christmas night had been abolished at the Reformation, mainly because people were far too intoxicated when they came to church. In Sweden, on the other hand, it may be said that all that remained of the medieval splendour were the Christmas candles and torches that people brought with them on the early journey to church on Christmas morning. The significance of light in this context was particularly clear.

Through the central leadership of the church, then, candles had been gradually extinguished in Swedish churches from the end of the sixteenth century to the end of the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries too, divine service was dominated by the word. The liturgy was plain and the candles remained unlit.

But the situation would change, indeed, to such an extent that the Swedish church today is enjoying a boom in candles, almost rivalling what we had in the late Middle Ages. How did this happen?

Some time into the twentieth century there was a gradual revival of interest in church

textiles and also in the decoration of churches. Albert Lysander, rector of Sankt Petri in Malmö, who was a pioneer in this respect, published an article in *Svensk Kyrkotidning* in 1917 entitled “Living flames on God’s altar”. He wrote:

The lighted candles welcome people, they speak of preparation for the Lord’s service, they give those who enter a powerful, immediate sense of being awaited. Therefore, procure candles for the altar of your church, to which you yourself go and want others to come.

Lysander underlines that what he wants is *living flames, lit at every church ceremony which includes altar service*. ... *If electric light is installed in your church, do not let it be conducted to the altar candlesticks.*

A new situation had thus arisen. The churches had been increasingly fitted with electric lighting. Some churches even excelled in banks of lights and incandescent bulbs. But it was an artificial light, a cold light, not a living light, not a liturgical light, not a light that enriched divine service. What makes wax or stearin candles sacred or popular, or in some cases controversial? The burning candles convey not just a visual experience but also an olfactory one. A visitor to a small Greek orthodox monastery church reports how only two wax candles were burning in it, but they filled the entire church with an aroma of honey. The candle flame is alive, somewhat unpredictable. It interacts with the surrounding atmosphere and can at certain moments be strengthened, only to be weakened the next moment or even turn to mere smoke. Like human life, the light is finite. Sooner or later a candle burns down. Light gives people pause for thought.

The liturgical renaissance that gradually arose, chiefly among high-church clergy, also led to a renaissance for candles and thus for the atmospheric value of the services and ceremonies. In a book about customs and ceremonies used in divine service, Harald Andersson writes that *there has been a return all through our church to letting the altar candles burn at divine service – above all at communion service*. In places, however, it was not until the 1940s that altar candles were lit in the churches. In a handbook for sextons, the rector Gunnar Rosendal dwells on the significance of the candles being lit in a beautiful way.

Whether high or low church, lighted candles are now found at any Swedish service. To guide those who prepare the altar, the diary accompanying the church almanac now gives instructions about the number of candles: two, four or six depending on the character of the day. Recommendations like this are also stated on the radio broadcast of the ringing of the bells at six o’clock on the evening before Sundays and holy days. Traditionally, altar candles are tall and spire-like. Yet this tradition is evidently being broken, as is the principle of symmetrical candlesticks and candles of equal height.

The significance of the gospel as marking the presence of Christ is seen evidenced in the procession with cross and candles. Luther, in his *Formula Missae* of 1523, likewise has the gospel procession with candles and cross. At the end of the twentieth century, especially in large churches, it became common that the reader of the gospel, accompanied by a couple of assistants carrying staffs with burning candles, proceeds down the church to

read the day's gospel. The reading of the gospel can be framed by hallelujah singing in the medieval manner.

Medieval church customs also included a ceremony of dousing the candles in Holy Week. The service on the evening of Maundy Thursday is now once again closed with a ceremony in which the cloth is removed from the altar and the candles are extinguished. On Good Friday the altar candles in 38 per cent of the country's churches are now left unlit. The dousing of the candles can thus be filled with meaning. Yet even the ancient church custom of lighting a big paschal candle on Easter Night has been resumed in the Church of Sweden. On the Sundays after Easter this paschal candle is lit in over 60 per cent of the churches.

At the announcement of the names of those who have died during the week, it has long been common to ring the bells briefly. In several places this is supplemented with a candle being lit for the deceased by the sexton.

Living flames are playing an increasing part in other ceremonies. Handing over a lighted candle to one of the sponsors at a christening was so rare in 1962 that there was no question about it in the survey of church customs that year. Since then it has become so common that almost 100 per cent of churches have it, as a result of which it was included in the service book for 1986, in the ritual for the baptism of both infants and adults. It is now the rule that the altar candles are lit at church weddings. This is also the case at funeral services, when the large candlesticks are placed on the floor on either side of the coffin.

Memorial services for those who have died during the year are now widespread at All Saints. It is then common that the names of the deceased are read out while a candle is lit for each one at the altar rails. This occurs in roughly half the parishes in Sweden. All Saints is now the major holiday on which graves are ornamented in Sweden. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of candles burn in the cemeteries. The grave candles show that the custom of candles nowadays is not a product of central direction by the church; it is a result of individual initiative.

Yet perhaps the most striking expression of the renaissance of candles in Swedish churches in our time is the introduction of candle stands, with room for a large number of candles at chest height. The candles can be bought by churchgoers and lit at services or ceremonies and on other occasions. Usually a "mother candle" is burning as long as the church is open. This can be used to light the individual candles, which means that matches are not necessary.

This custom was unknown when Mats Rehnberg published his dissertation in 1956 about the renaissance of candles in the twentieth century. The first candle stand was lit for the fourth general assembly of the World Council of Churches in Uppsala in 1968. The symbolism was expressed both in the name, "The Tree of Reconciliation", and in the stylized globe. Although the object was designed for a special occasion, it had a wider meaning. The globe could be associated with missionary work, and the payment for the candles could be a small gift to the missions. The 101 candle holders were quickly filled with lighted candles



Fig. 5: A candle has been placed in the hand of the deceased on his deathbed. Painting in Litslena church, Uppland.



Fig. 6: This painting of the Gregorian mass from around 1510, which belonged to the convent of Saint Klara in Stockholm, depicts two candles on the altar and two candles on processional staves.



Fig. 7: Dummy candle from Fleninge church, Skåne, now in the local heritage museum.



Fig. 8: Easter candles in St Mary's Church, Ystad.

by visitors to the cathedral. Candles can be lit for living friends or dead relatives. The idea of candle stands soon spread throughout Sweden, and in 1995 they could be found in 63 per cent of the country's churches. That they really are used is obvious from the consumption of candles. In a multicultural society, the candle stands are accessible to people of different confessions, evidently not just inside but also outside Christianity. Lighting an offertory candle is simultaneously a form of active and outreaching action with a symbolic meaning.

While candles in churches at the start of the twentieth century could still be regarded as *adiaphora*, that is, actions tolerated because they are dogmatically indifferent, this is no longer true. Both the number of occasions when candles are lit and the geographical spread have increased vigorously. There are evidently several contributory factors in this. The aesthetic decoration of the church increased steadily during the twentieth century. The candles emphasize the changing church year and changes in people's lives. They give a sense of solemnity and calm, which is necessary in our stressful times. The rich use of candles was initially encouraged by representatives of high-church currents and has at times been perceived as an approach to Roman Catholic and Orthodox piety. The different uses of candles in our churches, however, have become so common that they can no longer be associated with any particular type of piety.

At the same time, it is important to point out that the living flames are not just connected to churches, but also to everyday life outside them. There is an old tradition of carrying torches at political and similar evening events. The candlelit processions in churches on Lucia Day have in fact been transferred from the private setting of the home to the public space of the church. The custom of lighting candles at death scenes has accompanied the custom of laying flowers at such places. In Sweden the tragic deaths of both prime minister Olof Palme and foreign minister Anna Lindh gave rise to tributes in the form of flowers and candles, thus setting a pattern. Major international disasters such as the South-East Asian tsunami in 2004 have also been followed by manifestations in which candles have played a significant part. Media coverage makes us aware of this use of candles, which is then copied.

Candles have long been an important part of Christian symbolism. In the Bible it is easy to find texts that associate light with Christ. But no confession can make the flames into its own property. The symbolism of light is thus well suited to our multicultural age. It is particularly effective in a shared social manifestation, for example, in cemeteries at All Saints. But behind every lighted candle is an individual who is able to project thoughts and feelings to someone close. The use of candles therefore has both a collective and an individual function. It is geared to action, which is important, not least for those who find it difficult to express feelings in words. Candles are part of our culture of experience, which in many cases has taken the place of the culture of the spoken word. At the same time, the use of candles is tied to a time and a society, as I have tried to exemplify through the historical development in Sweden. I have confined myself to the Swedish custom, but it needs to be placed in a comparative context, as can happen at conferences of this kind.



Fig. 9: A baptismal candle is handed to the godparents by the churchwarden at a christening in Uppsala Cathedral.



Fig. 10: Candles being lit for those who have died during the past year in Lomma church, Skåne.



Fig. 11: Candle bearers with lighted candles in St Mary's Church, Ystad.



Fig. 12: Girls from Borgarskolan in the Lucia procession in St Peter's Church in Malmö, 1982.

SVEČE NA ŠVEDSKEM

Življenje med svetlobo in temo je zaznamovalo človeka na Švedskem. Do pojava reformacije so bile sveče zelo pomemben sestavni del cerkvenega obredja, njihova raba je naraščala. Uporabljali so jih tako pri branju, na oltarju in pri krstu. Poleg funkcije osvetljevanja so imele tudi simbolno vlogo, na eni strani so s številom kazale na obstoječe hierarhije, na drugi je krščenca njegova sveča povezovala s skupnostjo vernih. Svetloba je človeka spremljala vse življenje. Prižgane sveče so spodbujale ne le vidni čut, temveč tudi čut vonja.

Reformacija je rabo sveč problematizirala in skušala določiti na eni strani vloge, ki so jih imele sveče v srednjem veku, in je s predpisi omejila njihovo rabo v reformirani cerkvi. Ponovno so vlogo svetlobe odkrili v 20. stoletju, najprej z elektrifikacijo in s tem povezano možnostjo osvetliti cerkev, nato z renesanso liturgije, ki je prinesla tudi renesanso sveč in poudarila pomen okolja pri doživljanju obredja. Prav tako so sveče postale sestavni del individualnega obredja na dan vseh svetih ali pa ob počastitvi spomina, tako npr. na kraju smrti Olofa Palmeja ali zunanje ministrice Anne Lindh, in spremljajočih manifestacijah s svečami. Sveče so del naše kulturne izkušnje, njihova raba je pomembna tako za kolektiv kakor za posameznike.

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SENSES / ČUTI

THE USE OF THE SENSES IN RELIGIOUS REVIVAL MOVEMENTS

ANDERS GUSTAVSSON

This paper demonstrates that sight and hearing have played the most important roles in the Protestant regions of Scandinavia. In many instances, the phenomena linked to sight and hearing have been maintained for long periods of time, and new phenomena have come into existence in other respects. Revivalist movements have wavered between maintenance of traditions and a regeneration that would enable them to awaken interest among new generations. Senses other than sight and hearing have not had the same importance in the post-Reformation period. However, touch has played a more important role than previously realized by scholars of cultural history. Taste and smell, on the other hand, have not yet acquired the same importance as touch, even if taste has acquired a new social function in a religious context.

Keywords: *sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell.*

Razprava pokaže, da sta bila v skandinavskih protestantskih deželah med čuti najpomembnejša vid in sluh. V številnih primerih so se pojavi, povezani z vidom in sluhom, zelo dolgo ohranili, novi pojavi pa so nastali v drugačnih povezavah. Prenoviteljska gibanja so omahovala med vzdrževanjem tradicije in regeneracijo, kar jim je omogočalo zbuditi interes pri mlajših generacijah. V postreformacijskem obdobju drugi čuti niso bili tako pomembni. Vsekakor je imel dotik pomembnejšo vlogo, kakor mu jo pripisujejo kulturni zgodovinarji. Pomen okusa in vonja ni bil tako pomemben, čeprav je okus v religioznem kontekstu dobil novo socialno funkcijo.

Ključne besede: *vid, sluh, dotik, okus, vonj.*

INTRODUCTION

This paper reviews the use of the five human senses – sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell – in religious revival movements from the late 19th century to the present. The study is based mainly on my own fieldwork in the coastal regions of western Sweden, but also includes surveys of similar movements in the nearby countries of Norway and Estonia, and in the history of the Protestant church.

SIGHT

Sight can refer partly to what humans actually see with their eyes, and partly to supernatural experiences during which the seers believe that they are observing supernatural objects and beings.

Actual sight once had a fostering and confessional function. Obvious examples are the mass-produced religious pictures that began to be found in many homes in the late 19th century and to be customary in revivalist homes from the same period. An intentional in-

structive purpose must be presumed when such pictures were hung in children's bedrooms. One woman from the province of Jämtland told of a picture of Christ in her childhood home: *Mother meant for this picture to show us where we ought to turn in all the ups and downs of life. The picture had great meaning for us in this way, and gave us the confident faith to cope with whatever we would meet.* Pictorially based concepts of this kind have made lifelong impressions on the minds of many of my informants.

If these pictures were intended as a profession of faith directed towards strangers, they were hung in the room where visitors were welcomed into the home. The pictures were often accompanied by Biblical passages, such as *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord* (Fig. 1) from Joshua 24:15. A woman from the province of Värmland stated that *the most important thing is to have the pictures in the sitting-room and the children's rooms. We assert our faith when we dare to display what we believe in and stand for. After all, we do meet many nonbelievers.*



Fig. 1: A mass-produced picture with the text: *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.* A picture of an angel is visible in the middle of the house.

This devotional aspect was obvious when pictures were hung in bedrooms. Pictures of the Madonna have also begun to be found in the bedrooms of free-church homes in recent years, something that can be attributed to foreign travel in Catholic countries. Religious pictures have also recently been found in the sleeping quarters of fishing boats belonging to revivalist owners, along with prayer-like texts, such as *Jesus, Savior, pilot me / Over life's tempestuous sea . . . / Chart and compass come from Thee; / Jesus, Savior, pilot me.* This text,

which expresses a stalwart faith in the face of the uncertainty that prevails out at sea, is one I found on a boat owned by Pentecostals from the island of Åstol (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2: The text *Jesus, Savior, pilot me . . .* hangs above the bunk in the fishing boat *Brattvåg* from Åstol [Photo by Jan-Erik Weinitz, 1980].

In recent years, even in greatly secularized Sweden, it has become increasingly common to wear a cross hanging visibly on a chain around the neck. One continuation of my fieldwork, in addition to the observations already attained, could be to interview people wearing crosses. What meaning do these crosses have for them, and what do they intend to indicate by wearing them? The most specifically Christian variant of these crosses is the “Cross of the Resurrection.” This cross, which has appeared in recent years, has a bright figure of Christ visible in its centre. It is most often worn by young people that belong to Christian youth groups (Fig. 3).

Even when death has struck, revivalist families consider it important that expressions of their Christian faith be expressed on gravestones as professions of belief aimed at visitors to the cemetery. This applies both to texts and pictorial symbols, and among these is the Cross of the Resurrection encircled by rays of light. The texts on such gravestones often have a Biblical origin and emphasize the resurrection of the dead. Among the most used is a passage taken from John 11:25 – *Jesus said: I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.* Clearly expressed Christian symbols and texts on gravestones have become much more common, generally speaking, in Norway than in



Fig. 3: Young girls wearing a “Cross of Resurrection” on a chain around the neck [Photo by the author, 2006].

Sweden in recent years. This may be because a larger number of individualistic and worldly pictorial motifs are used on Swedish than on Norwegian gravestones, but may also be the result of more tangible secularization in Sweden, in the sense that spiritual dimensions are no longer expressed in ways that are visible to others.

The perception of divine beings by the people in my compiled material relates especially to angels and, in some cases, to Jesus. The Swedish ethnologist Katarina Lewis conducted an extensive study of the home-mission revivalist movement known as Schartauanism in the 20th century. She noted several examples of women that state that they have experienced visitations by angels, especially during difficult periods of their lives [Lewis 1997]. Visions by Jesus have been reported to have occurred during intense revivalist meetings, among them in the Pentecostal congregation on the island of Åstol in the late 1940s. Reports of these happenings, such as when local fishermen saw Jesus approach them on the seas, have been passed on over the years. This has provided a feeling of security and assistance in difficult situations. One of Katarina Lewis’ informants spoke of something similar during a crisis she experienced:

I felt so weak after my last child was born. I just couldn't go on. It was just no use. What would happen to the children? Then I saw someone standing at the foot of the bed. It was Jesus. Then I was able to sleep. Then I could rest.

God is considered to make Himself known in a different way than Jesus, and to impart messages. One informant that belongs to the Swedish Mission Society told of how he suddenly saw a golden message one night above his bed:

There was a picture on the wall with letters of gold, for when Our Lord writes, He writes in gold. It was shining gold, but I couldn't understand what it said. Then an old voice interpreted it in Swedish: 'They will care for you when you are old.' There was light all around the picture so that I could see the letters.

This informant was unmarried and, as he reached middle age, he had begun to worry about what sort of care he might receive as he became very old. He had prayed to God for help and advice. It was in this exact connection that he experienced this tangible contact with the divine world.

Ghosts are among those beings from the evil and sorrowful part of existence that make themselves known, in keeping with the dualistic understanding of the world then prevalent. Along the coast they are referred to as “specters,” the unhappy corpses of those that have not been buried in sanctified ground and therefore can be heard screaming in the night. This folk belief, which was very common among the older generation of members of revivalist groups, was not seen as being in conflict with a living and active Christian faith. Such experiences were openly spoken of with fellow believers. The folk-life artist Carl Gustaf Bernhardson (1915–1998) painted several pictures of ghosts and “specters” searching for their clothing after it had disappeared when wreckage was gathered up (Fig. 4).

The artist believed that he had visions of a different world than that which can be observed with ordinary eyes. In comparison, an informant that was an active member of the free-church movement, the Swedish Mission Society, stated that he could see people

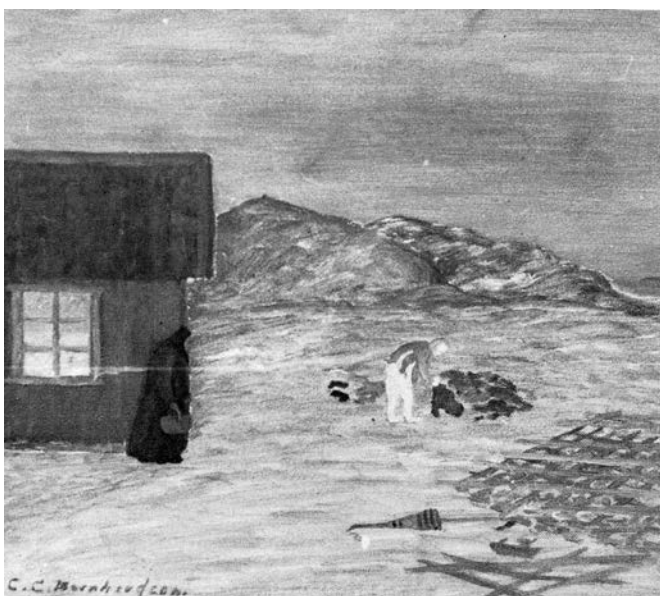


Fig. 4: A barely clothed seaman/specter searches in the light of dusk for his clothes in a heap of wreckage, to the dismay of a watching woman [Painted by Carl Gustaf Bernhardson].

that had died many years ago, but that they had never been among the actively faithful. He sometimes experienced these visions while he walked to or from the mission meeting house. He never kept these visions secret, but often spoke about them to other members of the mission society. With regard to such supernatural visions, one might quote something that the Norwegian folklorist Bente Gullveig Alver said concerning a study about a clairvoyant Norwegian woman entitled “The Third Eye”: *It would be more unscientific to deny clairvoyance than to be receptive to its existence* [Alver 1982: 35]. The cultural scholar should always listen when informants speak about their experiences, rather than discuss whether these are real or fictitious. The study of the aspect of faith involved is far more important than any attempt to analyze the possible reality on which these experiences might be based.

HEARING

Hearing refers partly to that which people hear with their ears and partly to that which they believe they hear from a supernatural world.

Hearing with one’s ears can refer to the religious upbringing that one has been exposed to in the home by the parental generation. The folk-life artist Carl Gustaf Bernhardson painted a picture showing his grandmother reading the morning prayer for her grandchildren (Fig. 5). Daily instruction of this kind in the home of times past can often be found in the records of folk-life archives. Revivalist movements often unite a spiritual dimension and material objects in a very factual manner. Women that gathered to sew and knit for charitable purposes and for the missions, for example, usually had one or more of their company read aloud from a devotional book (Fig. 6).

Songs and music are also included in the aspect of hearing. These have always played a prominent part in the free churches of both the western Swedish and southern Norwegian



Fig. 5: Carl Gustaf Bernhardson’s grandmother reads the morning prayers from her prayer book to her grandchildren seated on the sofa.



Fig. 6: The women of the Swedish Mission Society sewing group on the island of Smögen sewing items for mission work while one of the older women reads from the prayer book [Private photo, 1894].

coastal regions. Groups of vocalists and musicians were formed and traveled about to different districts in order to spread the Christian message. Young men living in coastal districts often started such groups. Among these were, for example, the Åstol Brothers (Fig. 7), the Dyrön Brothers, and the Skärhamn Brothers. The songs and music presented by these groups have alternated with personal testimonies witnessing the importance of the Christian faith for each and every one of the members.



Fig. 7: The singing Åstol Brothers have released CDs of religious songs, including *Revival Songs from Åstol* [Photo by Björn Edlund, 1980].

The fact that listening to songs and music has adopted new expressions in our own time can be exemplified by the Christian motor clubs that have grown up in recent years. The Street Gospel motor club, which is active on the western Swedish islands of Orust and Tjörn, was started in the summer of 2005. This motorcycle club is not a church group, but a society open to all true believers. It has 34 members, both women and men. Most of the leaders have a background in the Pentecostal movement. The motor club's aim is to have its members travel around on their motorcycles and spread the Christian message to the general public through their music and vocal presentations. Their music is modern and very loud, as I observed during my field studies (Fig. 8).

In this paper I also wish to discuss my informants' reports of hearing voices from an invisible world. This has often occurred during times of crisis and danger; for example, when fishermen and sailors have been warned about approaching storms. These have usually been experienced as well-meaning and divine voices, but there have been instances of



Fig. 8: The Street Gospel motor club performing songs and music during their appearance on the island of Orust in the summer of 2006 [Photo by Agneta Nienhardt].

evil voices originating in the world of the devil. One elder (born in 1922) in the Pentecostal congregation at Åstol in the province of Bohuslän [cf. Gustavsson 1982] recalled hearing his father (1893–1960), also a congregation elder, speak of a warning that he had been given while at sea. This warning had saved the crew of the fishing boat and was perceived as having been sent by God:

Once when Papa was homeward bound from the North Sea, he heard a voice that said, 'Ludvig, go up on deck.' The voice said this once and then twice. Papa went up and looked about, but couldn't see anything. But the third time he looked out, he saw breakers close by them. He shouted to the man at the helm, 'Quick, change course!' So this was a warning. If he hadn't heeded the warning, they wouldn't have come home.

One can easily understand that the dangers of the open sea have formed a basis for such warnings, and these are also found in the folk beliefs of former times. Carl Gustaf Bernhardson painted pictures showing “warners,” who appear as bright figures to someone walking on the ice just as it is about to break under his feet, or when storms are approaching out at sea.

The informant from Åstol also spoke about how he had experienced *a voice from the Almighty* around 1970. His two sons, about 20 years old, were traveling by motorcycle, but did not arrive home when expected. The father became uneasy and began to pray. He then heard a voice that said *Vänernsberg*. The next morning one of his sons phoned and said that they had had trouble with their motorcycle and had stayed overnight in the town of *Vänernsberg*. *I already knew that*, the informant said. He experienced this as having had auditory contact with the divine world. In some cases, such voices are considered to have come from angels. One informant, who was born in 1904 and who belonged to the Swedish Mission Society, told how he had had several experiences of waking at night and hearing voices that passed on comforting messages to him when he lay ill. *It was an angel. The voice came from*

about a half meter above the floor by my bed. It was shrill and light like that of a child of ten or twelve. 'You will get better.' This informant had been ill and received this message while in a very trying condition.

TOUCH

The touching of objects or people has come to play a peripheral role within the Protestant church when compared to the former Catholic period. One can simply consider, for example, the formal disappearance of holy water. Among ordinary people, however, popular customs of touch continued without the official sanction of the church. The Swedish ethnologist Nils-Arvid Bringéus gave an excellent example of such traditional usage in his study of the false churching of women that had miscarried. These women attempted as unobtrusively as possible to catch hold of the back of the vicar's robe as he was carrying out some official action, such as a burial. According to popular belief, the women would then be healed. This custom is based on a medieval ritual that has its origin in the New Testament narrative in Matthew 9:20-22. According to this account, a woman that suffered from continual bleeding unobtrusively caught hold of the back of Jesus' robe and was then cured [Bringéus 1964].

There have even been cases in recent times of active members of the free-church movement having suddenly been cured when they have come into contact with a supernatural divine force that has surged through their bodies. This point of view is entirely in keeping with the official doctrine of the free-church that emphasizes the importance of seeking and receiving divine faith-healing. The laying-on of hands with accompanying prayers on the part of the congregation can take place in such situations. An active member of the Swedish Mission Society told of his personal experiences in the following way:

I had a cough that just wouldn't get better. One day I was up in the attic and feeling very depressed because I couldn't say a single word to anyone without coughing, altho-



Fig. 9: An informant that was an active member of the Swedish Mission Society shown walking with a divining rod in an attempt to find water [Private collection].

ugh I'd gone to the doctor many times. Then I prayed and, after the third prayer, I was answered. It was just like a flash of lightning went through my body. It burned a lot. My cough disappeared and never came back.

This man has performed dowsing, or seeking water with a divining rod, and interprets such activity as getting into contact with *something that is everlasting*. When the divining rod twists downwards towards the ground with such force that it cannot be prevented, the narrator believes that this is because he has come into contact with forces in the earth that have existed *ever since God created man* (Fig. 9).

When Pentecostals with whom I am acquainted have acquired the gift of speaking in tongues (or glossolalia), they have also spoken of experiencing a supernatural and divine force flowing through them. It has been beyond their control, and their voices became a tool for it. They began speaking a language that they themselves could not understand. This has occurred both in religious meetings and in solitude. One man, who became a member of the Pentecostal congregation in 1939, told of experiencing

a force that's really immense, something you can't understand. It's something divine. It comes over a person like a delicious balm. You become fearless, so you no longer feel at all shy or withdrawn when witnessing about Jesus. It comes suddenly. No one knows about it beforehand. You can lie there like an empty sack and then, one, two, three. That's when the force is needed.

Touching with a religious implication has also had a protective function against accidents. This has occurred in the coastal districts of western Sweden, which are characterized by both home-mission and free-church revivalist movements. The folk-life artist Carl Gustaf Bernhardson depicted this in some of his paintings relating to fishing. The fishermen would make the sign of the cross with their hands in the water as they let their lines or nets drop



Fig. 10: A fisherman grasping the anchor chain as it is let down into the sea while saying *God give you strength tonight, dear friend* [Painted by Carl Gustaf Bernhardson].

down into the sea. They believed that this prevented any mishaps that might happen to the equipment. This was also thought to promote successful fishing. Another subject is the fisherman that grasps his anchor chain before sinking it down into the sea in bad weather and says, according to the picture caption, *God give you strength tonight, dear friend* (Fig. 10). This material object is personified here and, because of this, is something that can receive help from God. These folk-life paintings are based on the artist's own experiences as a fisherman during the 1930s.

Another explicit way in which people could make contact with the spiritual world was when the vicar or the free-church preacher came down to the harbor just before fishermen from these revivalist coastal districts departed for deep-sea fishing. He was not to go on board because this could bring bad luck, according to traditional folk beliefs, but was to stand on the wharf, say a prayer, and, like the women that remained at home, take the fishermen's hands both as a sign of farewell and as a blessing. Carl Gustaf Bernhardson depicted an incident of this kind in 1939 when he himself was on board a boat about to depart (Fig. 11).



Fig. 11: The vicar of the island of Gullholmen saying farewell to the fishermen about to depart for deep-sea fishing grounds in 1939 [Painted by Carl Gustaf Bernhardson].

One occasion when taking hands occurred in a ceremony in the post-Reformation Protestant church was during the churching of women that had recently given birth. This took place in the church six weeks after the child was born. This custom continued as long as the ritual of churching itself continued; namely, until the late 19th century as a general rule, and in revivalist families until the early 20th century [Gustavsson 1972]. At the end of the ceremony, the vicar took the woman that had just become a mother by the hand and uttered the words: *May the Lord be with you in His truth and fear, from now and throughout eternity! Amen* (Fig. 12). The common folk considered this to be a blessing, and it was precisely this blessing for the future that women that had miscarried hoped to receive by grasping the vicar's robe (see above).

In our own times, the grasping of hands has returned to the church, or rather to high-church and ritualistically oriented groups, in a new way through the revival of the ancient rite of peace. When the vicar utters the words, *May the peace of the Lord be with you*, the



Fig. 12: The vicar of the church in Varberg in the province of Halland taking a new mother by the hand after having read the prayer “A Mother’s Thanksgiving” for her in 1971 [Photo: Hallandsbild, Tony Malmqvist].

members of the congregation take each other by the hand and repeat, *The peace of the Lord*. The former ritual of making the sign of the cross during christening ceremonies has reappeared in recent years. The vicar touches the child’s body and says, *I make the sign of the cross on your forehead, your mouth, and your heart* [cf. Bringéus 2005]. During confirmation ceremonies, there have been several instances in recent years of the vicar, the assistants, and the closest relatives forming a circle around each young person being confirmed and placing their hands on his or her head and offering prayers. This is understood by many people as a rite of blessing for the young person’s future (Fig. 13).

At sports events, I have observed soccer players making the sign of the cross on their chests before the start of a match. This is seldom done by Swedish- or Norwegian-born players, but very often by foreign professional players that have come to Scandinavia from predominantly Catholic countries, such as Brazil. It will be interesting to see if this new custom also begins to inspire Norwegian- and Swedish-born players in the future. This can then be considered either a religious act or a rite of superstition before the start of the match. One should remember that many of these foreign players are models or idols for young soccer fans today, and that they can thus become sources of inspiration.

TASTE

The consumption of food and drink with a pronounced religious aim has never played a prominent role in the popular religion of the Lutheranism-dominated areas of Sweden and Norway. The aspect of consumption is primarily linked to the rite of Communion, which takes place within the context of the mass in church. In recent years, serving coffee and cakes immediately after the church service has become more frequent in many places in Sweden. Such events do not, however, have any religious function, but are purely social in character and offer the worshippers a chance to meet on a personal basis. Their conversation does not usually have a religious content.

In past times, all meals were preceded and followed by prayers [Gustavsson 1994; Bringéus 1997], a subject that has been thoroughly discussed by Nils-Arvid Bringéus. This custom has, however, lessened or completely vanished in connection with the increasing rise in the individualization of religion. Another ancient custom that has vanished consisted of the mourners at a funeral drinking a glass of wine just before the coffin was taken to the church and the cemetery. This lived on into the 20th century, primarily in those districts of western Sweden characterized by the home-mission revivalist movement known as Schartauanism. After the Reformation, this was practiced in memory of the deceased. The custom had no

Fig. 13: Recital of prayers with the laying of hands on the head of a newly confirmed youth. The ceremony was performed by the vicar, the assistants, and the young person's closest relatives at the parish building in Åh in western Sweden in the summer of 2006 [Photo by the author].



religious content; in other words, in contrast to medieval times, when toasts were drunk in honor of God and the saints. The modern memorial toasts are of interest in this connection solely because they took place in the context of a religious church funeral during which the vicar or a highly placed layman proposed a toast with the words *We drink this wine to honor the memory* or *We raise our glasses in memory of the deceased*. This took place after the vicar led prayers and before the mourners left the deceased's home [Gustavsson 1980] (Fig. 14).



Fig. 14: A glass of wine drunk in memory of the deceased in her home at a funeral in western Sweden in 1973 [Photo by the author].

During my investigation of symbols on gravestones in Norway and Sweden, I found indications of food only on a few immigrants' graves. This was, for example, the case in 2001 when plates of fresh apples and oranges were placed in front of the gravestone of a Chinese woman that was born in 1947 and died in Sweden in 1992 [Gustavsson 2003]. Outside the Protestant regions of Scandinavia, however, similar phenomena can be found, especially in Orthodox regions. The Finnish ethnologist Nils Storå studied memorial meals arranged on relatives' graves by the Orthodox Skolt Sami of Finland. He wrote *The main element in these commemorative feasts is the meal in memory of the dead man, in which he also takes part. On the occasion of collective feasts of remembrance, all the family's dead take part* [Storå 1971: 270].

In my own case, and in connection with a world congress of folklorists in 2005 in Tartu, Estonia, I had the opportunity to conduct fieldwork among the Orthodox Setu people in southeast Estonia. Many religious ceremonies were reestablished and revitalized in this region after Estonia's independence from the USSR in 1991. I participated in an important religious holiday in the town of Saatse near the Russian border during the summer of 2005. Here I experienced the deceased's next of kin, both younger and older persons, placing meals on graves (Fig. 15).

Such meals were arranged on a large number of graves. Tables were often laid on the graves, on which both food and drink, especially vodka, were placed. It was not difficult to understand that this was a festive occasion. Although the participating clergymen conversed with me in German, I could not speak directly to the laymen among the Setu people, but had to rely on an Estonian interpreter. The hospitality of the participants was very evident and also involved the unknown fieldworker, who visited several graves. My interpreter and I were offered food, desserts, and drink, both vodka and soft drinks. I was, however, more interested in documenting, conversing with, and taking photographs than in eating and drinking, ignorant as I was about the cultural codes present at the scene. Both the clergy-

men and my interpreter pointed out that I had to accept whatever was offered to eat and drink because refusing the people's hospitality would be considered an insult [cf. *ISFNR Newsletter* 2006, no. 1: 22]. Accepting this hospitality was considered to honor both those that offered and the deceased by whose grave one stood. On such occasions, festivity and joy characterize the living at the same time as they experience solidarity through time in relationship to their deceased relatives.

SMELL

Incense is the only subject that can be substantiated in my collected material that has any religious meaning associated with the sense of smell. Incense disappeared after the Reformation, but has begun to emerge once again in ritually oriented religious groups, such as the Ansgar student church in Uppsala, Sweden.



Fig. 15: A family of Setu people gathered, together with two black-clad Orthodox priests, for a commemorative meal at their relatives' graves during the holiday of *Päätnitsapäev* (Elijah's Friday) in the summer of 2005 in the town of Saatse in southeast Estonia [Photo by the author].

SUMMARY

This paper has demonstrated that sight and hearing have played the most important roles in the Protestant regions of Scandinavia that I have studied. In many instances, the phenomena linked to sight and hearing have been maintained for long periods of time, and

new phenomena have come into existence in other respects. This has taken place within the religious revivalist movements that have sprung up outside the official state church since the late 19th century. The revivalist movements have wavered between maintenance of traditions and a regeneration that would enable them to awaken interest among new generations.

Senses other than sight and hearing have not had the same importance in the post-Reformation period. This paper has, however, indicated that touch has played a more important role than previously realized by scholars of cultural history. A regeneration in these respects has also taken place within the Swedish church, which was separated from the state in 2000. Through increased ritualization and growing activation of the members of the congregation, the sense of touch has acquired greater importance, something that has had special appeal for young people. Taste and smell, on the other hand, have not yet acquired the same importance as touch, even if taste has acquired a new social function in a religious context. The sense of smell, in the form of incense, can acquire increased importance in correlation with a growing ritualization of religious activities.

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RABA ČUTOV V VERSKIH PRENOVITVENIH GIBANJIH

Razprava pokaže, da sta bila v skandinavskih protestantskih deželah med čuti najpomembnejša vid in sluh. V številnih primerih so se pojavi, povezani z vidom in sluhom, zelo dolgo ohranili, novi pojavi pa so nastali v drugačnih ozirih. To se je zgodilo v prenovitvenih verskih gibanjih, ki so vzniknila zunaj uradne državne cerkve od poznega 19. stoletja. Prenovitvena gibanja so omahovala med vzdrževanjem tradicije in regeneracijo, kar jim je omogočalo, da so prebudila interes pri mlajših generacijah.

V postreformacijskem obdobju drugi čuti (razen vida in sluha) niso bili tako pomembni. Vsekakor se po moji raziskavi kaže, da je imel dotik pomembnejšo vlogo, kakor mu jo pripisujejo kulturni zgodovinarji. Obnovitev v teh ozirih se je zgodila tudi v švedski cerkvi, ki se je ločila od države leta 2000. S povečano ritualizacijo in naraščajočo dejavnostjo članov kongregacije je dobil čut dotik večjo vlogo, nekaj, kar je postalo za mlajše generacije tudi privlačnejše. Okus in vonj pa nista nikoli imela tako pomembne vloge kakor dotik, čeprav je okus dobil v religioznem kontekstu novo socialno funkcijo. Čut vonja, posebej pri kadilu, lahko postane pomembnejši, sorazmerno z naraščajočo ritualizacijo religioznih praks.

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SAINT LUCY, THE QUEEN OF LIGHT. THE LEGEND AND FOLKLORE OF SAINT LUCY

ULRIKA WOLF-KNUTS

The Feast of Saint Lucy is celebrated on December 13 by a girl wearing a white gown and candles that visits a crowded church. This article investigates the senses mentioned in newspaper reports describing this ceremony. I explain why some senses are not mentioned at all, and I relate my findings to thoughts about the senses as elements of a cultural system guided by power, experiences, and expectations that make up the sense of tradition.

Keywords: *Saint Lucy, senses, newspapers, experience, sense of tradition.*

Praznik sv. Lucije se praznuje 13. decembra. Pri tem je glavna figura dekle, ki v belem ogrinjalu in s svečami obiše polno cerkev. Članek obravnava omembe čutov v časniških poročilih, ki opisujejo ceremonijo. Avtorica pojasnjuje, zakaj nekateri čuti sploh niso omenjeni, in povezuje spoznanja z mislimi o čutih kot elementih kulturnega sistema pod nadzorom moči, izkušenj in pričakovanj, ki osmišljajo tradicijo.

Ključne besede: *sv. Lucija, čuti, časniki, izkušnja, zavest o tradiciji.*

In the Protestant country of Finland, only one saint is celebrated regularly and with great enthusiasm. This is Saint Lucy, who is believed to have been a girl from Syracuse, Sicily, born around AD 285. She was martyred in AD 304. By the 5th century she was already a popular saint, and she remains so in both the Catholic and Orthodox churches. She is the patron saint of throat problems, eye ailments and blindness, blood flow, and dysentery. She is venerated on December 13 and was first mentioned in Finland in 1330.¹

According to legend, Lucy was a beautiful girl that had vowed herself to chastity. However, unknown to Lucy, her mother permitted a young heathen man to marry her daughter and thereby announced a great dowry. Lucy was determined never to marry, and so the boy lost the dowry – and instead, Lucy used it for the poor. The young man informed the authorities of Lucy's belief in Christ and consequently they strove to kill her, but no means were sufficient to take her life. She finally died by the sword, but reached out to receive Holy Communion. Another legend refers to her beautiful eyes, which were such a temptation to the young heathen man that she tore them out and sent them to him. Consequently, he converted to her Christian faith.

Alongside the Syracuse legend in its different versions, the facts about Saint Lucy that folklorists tend to tell interested listeners and inquisitive journalists concern motifs other

¹ An overview of Saint Lucy (in Swedish – Sankta Lucia) and her history can be found in Swahn [1993: 68–91; cf. also Bringéus 1999: 110–119; Lönnqvist 1972; Vilkuuna 1988: 323–324].

than medical needs or fidelity to a beloved or to God. We prefer to talk about food – and lots of it. The explanation for this is that December 13 was the last day before the Christmas fast. Therefore people tended to eat many foods forbidden during the period of abstinence. There are reports of seven meals before breakfast, or one meal in every corner of the house. Meat, sausages, and fatty food made up the meals, consumed with schnapps. December 13 was also celebrated as the last day before the Christmas holidays in schools and universities. There were several more-or-less serious customs connected with this day. In many places, for instance, the schoolboys collected supplies, especially candles, for the coming semester. At the university in Lund, the students put on burlesque plays in which they might make their professors jump over a fire to test their abilities. Saint Lucy's Day thus had traits reminiscent of customs connected with the *mundus inversus*. Although not every step is transparent in the historical accounts, Saint Lucy is said to be connected with the *Christkindl*, one of the Protestant versions of Saint Nicholas. The explanation here is that the Protestants would not approve of a Catholic saint in their celebration of Christmas. Instead, they thought of the child Jesus as the donor of all good gifts. A little girl was regarded as the best person for this. Folklorists also believe that the celebration of Saint Lucy is associated with the winter solstice, and all the malevolent supernatural creatures moving around in the darkness. They explain the changes that took place in the Nordic calendar system and they associate these with the demonic *Lussi* in the folklore of western Sweden and Norway, who was really a rather malicious character. Certainly the folklorists add some words about Lucifer and *die Lutzelfrau*, and they do not forget to point out that her name may derive from the Latin word *lux* 'light'.

The custom of Saint Lucy was brought to western Sweden from Germany in the 18th century. Later on, after 1910, it was introduced to Finland through educational institutions.

PRIVATE AND PUBLIC

Modern Finland celebrates Saint Lucy in two ways – one private, the other public. In private a girl, a daughter of the family, dresses in white, puts a lingonberry or plastic wreath with candles or electric lights on her head, and brings her parents breakfast in bed while singing a special Lucy song. The first Swedish text was written in 1924 by Sigrid Elmblad, "Sankta Lucia, ljusklara hägring" (Saint Lucy, Bright Illusion). Today there are two other serious versions as well as many parodies. The original Italian text describes Naples and has nothing to do with Lucy or even with a saint. The melody was borrowed from Italy and introduced by Gunnar Wennergren. Certainly, there is a lot of personal and family variation in the performance of this custom, depending on the age of the girl, the risks of carrying lit candles, her ability to sing, and whether she is strong enough to carry a tray. A little son may even be deemed fit to pose as Saint Lucy – presuming he can be persuaded to do so. If there are several children in the family, one is Saint Lucy while the others dress

up as maidens, star-boys (*stjärngossar*), or goblins (*tomtar*). The maidens look like Saint Lucy but do not carry a wreath.

A public Saint Lucy is elected from among several candidates with the help of the local newspapers and their readers. The candidates are young girls, generally in their late teens, mostly tall, slim, and fair-haired, with a good singing voice. The candidate that receives the most votes becomes Saint Lucy. She and her maidens are instructed by “Lucy mothers”, who tell them what to do and what not to do as Saint Lucy. Among other things, there has been debate over whether it is appropriate for a Saint Lucy to wave as her cortege moves through town [*Hufvudstadsbladet* 14 Dec. 1993]. When 13 December comes, the girls are taken to a church in Helsingfors (Helsinki) and to the cathedral in Åbo (Turku). The church is packed, mostly with families and elderly people. Saint Lucy wears a white gown, she carries a wreath of lingonberry with candles not yet lit on her head, she may have a candle in her hand, and around her waist she has a red belt. Her maidens also wear white gowns; they have tinsel in their hair and around their waists, and a candle in their hands. Together they sing, perhaps “Nu tändas tusen juleljus” (Now Thousands of Christmas Candles Are Lit). Toward the front of the church they meet the vicar, who preaches on a suitable theme. Then he lights the candles, blesses the girls, and dismisses them. On their way back they sing the Lucy song. The main impression is one of serenity and holiness.



Fig. 1: The crowd outside the Cathedral in Åbo (Turku), December 2006 [Photo by Carl-Gustav Berg].

Outside a crowd of people awaits, sometimes just watching, and sometimes even following them to a venue where Saint Lucy is “crowned”, when a prominent person gives her a specially designed necklace.² Afterwards there is a feast, mainly for the youngest members of the community. After this evening, Saint Lucy visits hospitals, old people’s homes and

² The concept of crowning Saint Lucy with a necklace after she has received the badge of office, the lit wreath, is a relic of the time when the church was not yet involved in the ceremony. Then the crowning took place in a theatre or in some other large hall, and it was there that the candles were lit.



Fig. 2: Saint Lucy and her maidens [Photo by Lena Marander-Eklund, December 2006].



Fig. 3: Saint Lucy and her maidens in the cathedral in Åbo (Turku) with their candles not yet lit, December 2006 [Photo by Lena Marander-Eklund].

garrisons, associations, workplaces, and offices, singing the Lucy song and reciting a poem. Coffee and cakes are usually served during her visit. Saint Lucy's main job is to raise money for special projects decided on each year. There is a Saint Lucy administered by the Swedish-speaking social welfare NGO *Folkhälsan* in Finland as well as local Saint Lucys. During December and January, all of them collect money for special needs.

NEWSPAPER REPORTS

The Saint Lucy ceremony is regarded as a symbol of Finland's Swedish identity. Consequently, reports on the Saint Lucy celebration are published every year as standard winter items in Finland's Swedish-language newspapers from December 14 onwards. Often they consist

of a full-page text plus shorter reports on subsequent days. Saint Lucy thus appears to be important. I have analysed a number of these reports and an interview with a Saint Lucy and one of her maidens. In this paper I will mainly concentrate on the part of the custom that takes place in the church. Generally, it was not until the 1980s that the church was introduced into this custom. What senses are mentioned in this part of the custom of Saint Lucy? My personal sensual experience and my own memories of the Saint Lucy celebration influence my reading, listening, and understanding. Also, my perception of many corresponding situations makes me aware of which senses are *not* mentioned in the texts, be they seen as self-evident or unseemly. In my interpretation of the newspaper reports, I am highly influenced by David Howes's thoughts on the senses.

SENSES AS CULTURAL SYSTEMS

The primary senses are hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch. Our ears, eyes, nose, mouth, and skin are the sense organs that help us register our experiences. From a physiological point of view, this process is extremely complicated and, furthermore, extremely rapid, from the stimulus that a reaction is needed to the reaction itself. From a cultural point of view, the process of experiencing is even longer and more complicated because it is not until after the reaction of a sensation that we start to question our experience; only then do we start to evaluate and explain it to ourselves and to verbalize or otherwise communicate it to other people. In doing so, we integrate all our former experiences. Each and every step is conducted in a culturally bound, or at least a culturally accepted, way. However, the sensations are only the starting point because they rapidly lead to emotions that are culturally rooted and upheld. Sensations are the gateways to entire worlds of experience containing other experiences and memories, but also longing, fear, and hope. Dealing with the senses from a cultural perspective means dealing with a cultural system of accepted or unaccepted norms, experiences, negotiations, and patterns that make up a consistent whole with sets of rules to be followed or broken depending on the situation. How we do this is guided by our sense of tradition. There is an important interface between sensations and emotions, and this should be given close attention.

According to David Howes, the senses must be regarded, understood, and shared as cultural systems. He maintains that man's perception is culturally shaped and bound. Although man's perceptions are strictly individual, he leans towards culturally bound concepts when he tries to understand, interpret, and explain his experience of the perceived phenomena. He interprets and explains his perceptions against a given background common to those people in a society that try to understand one another. However, folklorists such as Albert Eskeröd and Lauri Honko have demonstrated that a perceiver's expectations are also important for understanding an experience. Eskeröd showed how perceptions were interpreted in terms of emotions depending on dominant interests with the person [Eskeröd 1947: 71]. Honko

stated that folk belief figures were products of culturally and traditionally anchored expectancies and knowledge about heeded and violated norms when people thought that the figures allowed themselves to be seen, felt, or heard in a community [Honko 1962: 86–152].

Howes also states that perception is guided by politics, by power, and can be used in order to exercise power. According to Howes, the senses are filled with meaning; they have a hierarchical and regulating relationship by which social and cosmic order are expressed and maintained. As he puts it: *Biology provides the clay, but culture is the potter* [Howes 2005: 5].

We can maintain that there is no experience that is not introduced sensually, and conclude that the understanding of sensual experiences is culturally bound. Moreover, all our memories were once introduced by our senses [Stewart 2005: 59]. Accordingly, the senses are the gateway to memories, to the imagination of the future; they are the gateway to knowledge [Roberts 2005: 109].

THE SELF EVIDENT SENSES

As a rule, the newspaper articles make no explicit mention of the senses. The reporters concentrate on the effects and consequences of their ability to perceive something – that is, Saint Lucy and her procession – and they do not mention which senses they have activated in the process, or at least they are quite discriminating when they write about their experiences. Certainly, the senses play a great role in the reports, but only in an indirect way. Either they are not considered at all, or they seem to be self-evident and therefore not worth mentioning. Perhaps the explanation for this lies in the close connection between the senses and the body. Every sense is produced with the help of bodily activity. However, this fact is not necessarily a good thing if the situation to which the description refers is expected to be filled with serenity and holiness. The locality to which I have limited my investigation of the ceremony of Saint Lucy is the church. Generally, bodily activity is tempered in church, and especially a Protestant one.

SMELL

In the material analysed here, smell is not mentioned at all. In a Protestant church there is no incense, but there are flowers, dust, smoke from extinguished matches, wet woollen winter coats, perfume, and washed or unwashed bodies. The failure to mention smell can be explained in different ways. Either the smell in the church is not spectacular and therefore merits no description, or it is regarded as impolite to mention smell if it is not enjoyable. Smell alludes to hygiene, and a bad smell implies poor hygiene. One report on a Saint Lucy festival after the church ceremony said there was *an aroma of damp woollen socks and spruce*

needles [*Hufvudstadsbladet* 18 Dec. 1997]. Not even in this case is the smell called a smell, being characterized as an “aroma”. Howes introduced the concept of emplacement when body, mind, and environment fit together. Displacement is the opposite. The mention of the sense of smell seems out of place in the reports about Saint Lucy in the church [Howes 2005: 7]. There seems to be a culturally bound obstacle to the sense of smell as described by reporters.

TASTE

Nor is the sense of taste mentioned in the reports of the church ceremony. However, early on the morning of December 13 several reporters say that a cup of coffee is offered in connection with the visit by Saint Lucy or after the ceremony in the church. No details are given, and perhaps they are not even necessary. All the newspaper readers would know from personal experience what coffee tastes and smells like. Anybody that has been out of doors on a pitch black December morning in mud, snow, frost, or rain would understand what a hot cup of coffee is like without a detailed description. Moreover, it is clear that “coffee” does not mean only coffee but also includes other drinks and cakes. “Coffee” is a symbol for all these different tastes. However, it is also a symbol for much more. Although neither taste nor smell is included in the reports, the mention of “coffee” activates an entire cultural system of light, warmth, and togetherness as well as their opposites.

Yet another association with taste is given by the reporter describing the soldier that dreams of treating the girls to a cup of coffee and a doughnut in the café without competition from the other boys [*Hufvudstadsbladet* 24 Dec. 1987]. Here the sense of taste is not mentioned but, if we share similar experiences, we are able to understand that the meaning of the message is not only the taste of the coffee and doughnut, but the lonely young man’s hope for female company and togetherness. Although the sense is not even mentioned, it opens up memories of tastes and recollections of corresponding situations, and it also allows a dream, which may be extremely detailed. The senses include parts of history and bricks for the future.

HEARING

The sense of hearing comes to the fore through the reporters’ mention of Saint Lucy’s song and some Christmas hymns. The texts refer to the physical ability to hear wonderful singing by Lucy and her maidens, or a special choir impressively echoing in the silent church. One reporter refers to the vicar’s address [*Åbo Underrättelser* 14 Dec. 2006], but most attention is paid to the girls’ singing, and to some extent to the accompanying goblins playing the guitar. This moderate attention to the sense of hearing is surprising because the Protestant

church is generally one of listening rather than feeling. However, what is seldom mentioned is the atmosphere of expectant murmuring as the congregation wait for Saint Lucy to appear. Nor do the reporters say anything about the noise created in a church packed with children of all ages. Such a congregation is not quiet. If the reporters do mention the noise, they write positively: *In honour of the day it seemed that the children had brought along their very best behaviour and acted like little angels* [Åbo Underrättelser 14 Dec. 2006]. In other contexts, there have been arguments about parents' right to bring their infants to solemn gatherings where silence is expected. Perhaps the reporters' professional etiquette (i.e., the reporters' tradition) does not permit observations on unseemly behaviour.

However, the failure to mention the sense of hearing is not parallel to the lack of descriptions of smell. Smell indicates something disgusting, repulsive, and should therefore not be mentioned. Unseemly sound in connection with Saint Lucy is, on the other hand, a matter of age, or lack of education, and such noise will cease in due course. We can see that noise is permissible even in church, provided that the person making it can be excused. There seems to be a hierarchical relationship between noise and smell.

TOUCH

The sense of touch is not concealed in the texts. The reports mention how crowded the church is, and that it is warm and narrow. Outside it is cold, and people are shivering. The church ceremony is described as quiet, in contrast to the noisy feast that follows [Åbo Underrättelser 14 Dec. 2000; Åbo Underrättelser 14 Dec. 1990; Hufvudstadsbladet 14 Dec. 1993; Åbo Underrättelser 16 Dec. 1986]. The reporters mention the physical feeling as a background, a parallel, or even a contrast to the mental state they want their readers to feel. Therefore, they describe the event as old-fashioned, warm, and intimate [Åbo Underrättelser 17 Dec. 1991; Åbo Underrättelser 21 Dec. 2002; Hufvudstadsbladet 17 Dec. 1987]. The Lucy girls, however, felt sweaty and nervous [Hufvudstadsbladet 23 Dec. 1995; Åbo Underrättelser 14 Dec. 2000]. The sense of touch also opens up philosophical and theological associations. The cold weather is a parallel to the cold world, or to the cold relations between individuals in the cold world. In the interview, the Lucy maiden recalls how disappointed and resentful she felt when she tried in vain to make an old woman smile. She thought that such a person, a killjoy, should not attend the event at all [IF mgt 1994/002]. The Lucy girl describes how she cried at the cancer hospital, but how the visit became a light, warm experience thanks to the song [IF mgt 1994/001]. The warmth in the church makes it easy for the readers to think of the individual warmth that should be transferred from person to person not only at this special moment but always, in open-handedness and voluntary efforts [Åbo Underrättelser 16 Dec. 1986; Åbo Underrättelser 14 Dec. 2005]. The sense of touch allows the reporters to associate moral, ethical, and theologically anchored images. In the reports, smell and taste do not clearly function in this sublime way.

SIGHT

Central to all the reporters' texts is the sense of sight. The reporters emphasize the physical ability to see the event by mentioning persons that cannot see properly. In the texts, light is almost the only "object" referred to, even though there is much more to see. In the dark church, the girls dressed in white with candles are quite an impressive sight. If, for some reason, there are electric bulbs in Saint Lucy's wreath, then this is emphasized. Sometimes the reporters refer to electric light as a contrast to the candlelight.

The mention of light also refers to the weather. Almost all the texts tell about the winter darkness, the snow-free darkness, or the dark autumn. Sight also seems to be the dominant sense for associations at a non-physical level. Saint Lucy can spread light in society even when there is economic or social darkness. The mental darkness due to lack of peace of mind,



Fig. 4: The vicar lights the candles in Saint Lucy's crown in the cathedral in Åbo, (Turku), December 2006 [Photo by Lena Marander-Eklund].



Fig. 5: The Lucy girls leaving the dark cathedral in Åbo (Turku), December 2006 [Photo by Lena Marander-Eklund].

warmth in the heart, and love are associated with Saint Lucy. Last but not least, some texts refer to Saint Lucy as a bearer of the light of Christ. This is emphasized by the fact that a flame from the candles on the altar lights the candles on Lucy's wreath, and this same flame is passed on to the maidens' candles, and in some cases even to candles all over the church. The sense of sight inspires the reporters to make observations from several perspectives. Saint Lucy's coming is a contrast to darkness for physical, physiological, meteorological, ethical, moral, or theological reasons. Light symbolizes the most sublime values in modern Western society.



Fig. 6: Two tired Lucy girls, December 2006 [Photo by Lena Marander-Eklund].

CONCLUSION

The press narratives about Saint Lucy are numerous. One could focus on the old and investigate those described as happy and moved when listening to Lucy singing and watching the candlelight. One could discuss the money raised for special purposes, including the storm that arose some years ago when the Folkhälsan association tried to patent Lucy as a brand; this was regarded as an attempt to gain power and did not pass without protest. One could concentrate on the beauty contest aspect. Recently, feminists have commented on the exploitation of girls for a purpose reminiscent of a beauty contest. One might also discuss the scandal when somebody called Saint Lucy a pin-up (1997), an act regarded as politically incorrect. We could study the children having a great time. We could concentrate on the parodies of the Saint Lucy festival. We could study the way fun is poked at the entire ceremony when described by one of the Lucy girls six months later. Or we could concentrate on the different experiences of the girls watching the Lucy procession and dreaming of princesses, or the little boys that are more fascinated by the flashing blue light on the fire engine following the procession than by the Lucy girls' candles [*Åbo Underrättelser* 15 Dec.

2006]. In nearly all these cases, senses play a predominant role. However, I have chosen to determine which senses are more-or-less clearly mentioned in the texts, and how it is possible to understand the mention of the senses in a culturally bound way. The reporters write about Saint Lucy within a cultural system of senses, the meaning of which is to regard the custom as a ceremony of light in contrast to any kind of darkness. Some senses are not allowed to surface in any way. They have a low status in the hierarchy of senses or are not politically correct. The physical environment of the church locality probably limits the options of which senses can be mentioned, but there does also seem to be a professional tradition or an agreement on what to write about the ceremony. The alternative reports of smelly socks, Lucy as a pin-up girl, blue lights, or other non-mainstream, norm-offending issues do not find a place in the reports from the church. The reporters are bound by a cultural system or tradition that makes them write about Saint Lucy in a given, conventional way. In this system, which is built on the experiences of senses, the norm and power of the church as a place for quiet and peace are central, reminding society before Christmas, the feast of cosiness and generosity, of all sorts of physical and mental darkness and of cosmic order. Through their reports, the journalists function as instruments to preserve the cultural system that corresponds with readers' expectations and, above all, with their memories of the Saint Lucy tradition founded on their own sensual experiences. When choosing which issues they want to stress in the articles on the church ceremony, the reporters demonstrate their sense of tradition, which is inspired by other conventional descriptions of the ideal Protestant Christmas from bourgeois Romanticism.

However, I do have one more remark. It was most difficult to distinguish between the senses and the emotions they create. It seems to be impossible to delimit a study of the senses and religion to the senses only because they tend to open up not merely for perceptions and experiences, but also for memories, for analyses of the present and for hopes for the future. These topics touch on deeply philosophical issues.

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SVETA LUCIJA, KRALJICA LUČI. LEGENDA IN FOLKLORA O SVETI LUCIJI

Praznovanje sv. Lucije 13. decembra je v protestanski Finski družinsko, a tudi javno, s procesijo po mestu, ko vikar pošlje dekleta iz lokalne cerkve. Naslednji dan je dogodek opisan v lokalnih časnikih. O sv. Luciji krožijo številne pripovedi. Med njimi je pripoved o starih in bolnih ljudeh, ki so opisani kot srečni in ganjeni, ko poslušajo Lucijino pesem in opazujejo svetlobo sveč. Druga je o denarju za posebne namene. O teh namenih se razpravlja ob razburjenju, ki je nastalo, ko je želelo združenje Folkhälsan patentirati Lucijo kot zaščitno znamko, kar je bilo sprejeto kot poskus uveljavljanja moči. V deklici Luciji so videli tudi lepotno kraljico: njen izbor je bil včasih sprejet in kritiziran kot lepotno tekmovanje. Tako so tudi nedavno feministke komentirale izkoriščanje deklet za ta namen. Omenjen je tudi škandal, ki je nastal, ko je nekdo sv. Lucijo imenoval "dekle z naslovnice", kar je bilo označeno kot politično nekorektno. Lucija je lik v pripovedi o otrocih, ki se zabavajo. O prazniku sv. Lucije pa krožijo tudi parodije. Zgodba je nastala tudi o tem, kako se je pol leta pozneje dekle – Lucija ponorčevala iz ceremonije. Lahko

bi se osredinili na različne izkušnje deklet, ki opazujejo Lucijino procesijo ali majhne dečke, ki so bolj navdušeni nad modrim gasilskim avtomobilom kakor nad dekleti s svečami. Skoraj v vseh omenjenih primerih imajo prevladujočo vlogo čuti. Vendar sem se odločila, da ugotovim, kateri čuti so v besedilih bolj ali manj jasno omenjeni in kako je mogoče te omembe razumeti kot kulturno označene.

Poročevalci pišejo o sv. Luciji v okviru kulturnega sistema čutov, katerega pomen meri na šego kot obred luči v nasprotju s temo. Pri tem nekateri čuti sploh niso omenjeni, imajo v hierarhiji čutov nizek status ali pa so politično nekorektni. Fizično okolje cerkve verjetno omejuje možnosti, katere čute omeniti, poleg tega pa gre najbrž tudi za tradicijo ali soglasje o tem, kako pisati o ceremoniji. Alternativne zgodbe o smrdljivih nogavicah, Luciji kot dekletu z naslovnice, modrih lučeh ali drugih nesprejemljivih, za norme žaljivih zadevah, ne najdejo mesta v poročilih iz cerkve. Poročevalci so privrženi kulturnemu sistemu ali tradiciji, ki jim narekuje konvencionalno pisanje o sv. Luciji. V sistemu, ki temelji na izkušnjah čutov, sta v središču norma in moč cerkve kot prostora za spokojnost in mir, ki opozarjata družbo na vso mogočo fizično in duhovno temo in na kozmični red. Časnikarji s svojimi poročili delujejo kot instrumenti, ki ohranjajo kulturni sistem, da ustreza pričakovanjem bralcev in predvsem njihovim spominom na izročilo sv. Lucije, kakor so osnovani na njihovih čutnih izkušnjah. V besedilih izražajo svoje občutenje tradicije, ki je povezano s splošno meščansko romantiško podobo božiča.

Vendar je treba opozoriti še ne nekaj. Izjemno težavno je razločiti čute in in čustva, ki jih ustvarjajo. Raziskovanje čutov in religije se zdi nemogoče omejiti izključno na čute, ker se ti ne razpirajo le zaznavanju in doživljanju, temveč tudi spominom, analizam sodobnosti in upanjem za prihodnost. Te teme se dotikajo globokih filozofskih vprašanj.

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Svete Gore. September 2006. [Photo by J. Fikfak]

BECOMING SACRED.

THE USE OF THE BODY IN IDENTITY TRANSFORMATION

GORAN PAVEL ŠANTEK

This paper analyzes various ways of using of the human body and senses in the religious practice of the Catholic movement the Neocatechumenal Way. This religious movement, established in Spain in 1960s, especially emphasizes ritual practice, which is considered the main instrument of communication with the sacred Other. Innovations in ritual practice and their symbolic interpretations are followed by careful planning of how to achieve full engagement, contemplative as well as bodily and sensory, of the members in ritual acts. The aim of this paper is to make a contribution, based on new fieldwork data, to research on bodily and sensory dimensions of ritual practice.

Keywords: *Neocatechumenal Way, anthropology of religion, senses, body.*

Avtor v razpravi analizira različne načine rabe človeškega telesa in čutov v religioznih ritualnih praksah katoliškega gibanja Neokatehumenska pot. Religiozno gibanje, ustanovljeno v Španiji v 60. letih, posebej poudarja ritualne prakse, ki jih imajo za glavno sredstvo komunikacije s svetim Drogim. Inovacije v ritualnih praksah in njihovo simbolično interpretacijo spremlja skrbno načrtovanje, kako doseči polni angažma udeležencev ritualnega dejanja, tako na kontemplativni kakor telesni in čutni ravni. Namen razprave je na osnovi novih terenskih podatkov prispevati raziskavo o telesnih in čutnih dimenzijah ritualnih praks.

Ključne besede: *neokatehumenska pot, antropologija religije, čuti, telo.*

INTRODUCTION

At one moment of the ritual called the *lucernarium*, all the members of the Neocatechumenal Way hear an announcement similar to this:

Soon, the lights will be turned off in this room, and there will be complete darkness. Use this time to concentrate on yourselves and to observe the egocentricity you live in, as well as the darkness that surrounds you. At first you will not feel anything, but after several seconds you will hear the person at your side breathing, you will feel his breath or maybe his presence. This darkness is to bring to consciousness the selfish darkneses you live in, and to show you the need to direct yourselves to other people.

After the announcement, the lights slowly begin to fade in the closed room and in a few moments it becomes impossible to see anything. The people are left to themselves and the darkness. At first they can only hear their own breathing, and then the breathing of the persons around them. The deprivation of sight sharpens other senses: they can sense smells and touches more intensely, be it the accidental touches of their neighbors or the circulation of the air. A few minutes later, rays of light slowly begin to appear, becoming brighter and brighter, to the point that they can recognize the Easter candle carried by the priest, who

stops several times and chants: *Jesus Christ is our light and our salvation*. When the priest reaches the altar, all the lights in the room are lit, and one of the Neocatechumenal leaders reminds the people that the darkness symbolizes human selfishness, the light that breaks it represents Jesus Christ, and everyone present is invited to be that same light to the world and to others.

Two things about the Neocatechumenal Way can already be noticed here: 1) it aims to change its members and make them sacred (Christ-like), and 2) it uses rituals that carefully employ human senses as a means of transformation.

This is my point of departure. This paper considers the use of the senses in rituals of the Neocatechumenal Way, and is structured in three sections. The first section reviews the origin and development of this new religious movement, the second presents its ritual life and some of the ways the senses are used in it, and the third provides an interpretation of how and why the senses, ritual, and identity transformation are so intimately connected.

WHAT IS THE NEOCATECHUMENAL WAY?

Be humble and faithful to the Church, and the Church shall be faithful to you [Arguello 1996: 16], said Pope Paul VI in 1977 to Kiko Arguello, the founder of the Neocatechumenal Way. He thus expressed the ambivalent, permissive, but also restrictive attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards innovations under its umbrella, a stance that has also been evident throughout the history of the Neocatechumenal Way, a Catholic movement that began in Spain in 1964.

The Neocatechumenal Way was founded when Francisco Arguello, a 26-year-old artist, underwent a deep existential crisis and experienced a mystic vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Together with the organizer of the mission, Carmen Hernandez, he created the first Neocatechumenal community in the most poverty-stricken suburb of Madrid. This community had no structure whatsoever at first, and its gatherings and entire ritual life were improvised and took place at random. Things changed after a visit by the local Catholic bishop; he not only supported the activities of the community, but also made possible its expansion to the other parishes in his diocese. In order to respond to this recognition on the part of the Church and to increase the scope of their activities, the founders created a hierarchy with themselves at its head and formalized the work of the movement, establishing the patterns by which future communities would be created and structured, and how their ritual life would unfold.

At this stage of its development, the idea of the name of the movement emerged. As stated by the cofounder of the movement, Hernandez:

[At the beginning] we knew nothing of the catechumenate. We proclaimed Jesus Christ and this created a climate of unity and community. To our great surprise, we realized that baptism was the way. Through the failures in the small town of Arguelles, we

discovered the need for a catechumenal way to the discovery of baptism. Everything grew out of experience: nothing was conceived in advance. [Hernandez 2000: 4]

As can be seen, the founders spontaneously thought of the catechumenate because, as the path of preparation for baptism, it had been the fundamental means of initiation from the very beginning of Christianity. A new initiation – or the new (*neo*) catechumenate – had become necessary because a loss of the meaning of the sacred Other and of the sacred self had been noticed among many Catholics, both among those in Spain in the 1960s, as well as in today's Croatia and throughout the world.

One case in point: Sunday is a day of obligation when all Catholics are required to attend mass that can be taken as a good example of the loss of meaning of sacred symbols. Sociological research in Spain shows that only about 20% attend Sunday mass in Spain, and the situation is similar in Croatia [Marinović-Jerolimov 2001]. Taking this into account, Arguello says: *We all know that this traditional belief by which all are Christians no longer corresponds with the truth* [Arguello 2000: 18] because, he continues, modern Catholics are: 1) desacralized – *there is a loss of feeling for the sacred; that is, people no longer see God anywhere: they have lost the feeling for God in their own work, the closeness of God in the family, and so on* [2000: 25]; 2) de-Christianized – *that is, with the evident rupture between religion and life that we notice among people. There are people that go to mass on Sunday, and even take Communion, but for whom this has no influence whatsoever on their lives* [2000: 30], and 3) experiencing a crisis in their own faith that has come about *because no signs of faith are given anywhere* [2000: 38].

All of this causes personal dilemmas among Catholics and, in some cases, fragmentation of identity, which has major consequences in everyday life. Therefore, it is no wonder that Arguello has stated that all [neocatechumenal] catechesis [and communities] are full of *ripples* [Arguello 2000: 74], meaning people undergoing life crises, people that are lost, disappointed, lonely, and so on. Arguello offers a sound example of disintegrated formal Catholic identity from his own experience:

For me, the encounter with Jesus was a liberation, something wonderful in comparison with what I had suffered previously because of my complexes, because of my hatred of my father and my mother, because of my brothers, because of my difficulties in communication with others, because of my conflicts with girls, because of a series of events that forced me into slavery; but, above all, because of my inability to love, because of my immoderate desire to find myself, to triumph, and to win. [Arguello 2000: 99]

The proponents of the Neocatechumenal Way are aware that many Catholics are in such relatively deprived situations, and therefore they see their task as restoring coherence to the Catholic symbolic self; that is, emphasizing this to anyone interested and offering from the very beginning the creation of Neocatechumenal communities. As an example, their invitations to catechesis, by which the Way commences, state that all those that are lonely, unsure, weary, ill, and so on are welcome to join.

This very fact that sacred symbols no longer have any meaning for many Catholics shows

that contemporary Catholic structures have become inadequate, and that the traditional religious structure has become weak and lost authority. As is known from the anthropology of religion, such situations open up symbolic areas and are a common place for the emergence of new religious movements. Although in some cases these newly created movements seek to provide completely new “sacred” symbolic systems, the Neocatechumenal Way limits its objective only to the reintegration of disintegrated Catholic symbols of the sacred. As the cofounder Hernandez says: *What must be done first is to evangelize those within the Church, to re-evangelize the Church itself, which is what the pope and all the bishops are saying: evangelization within the Church, in order for it to be able to carry out its vocation* [Hernandez 2000: 21]. In this, the new evangelization is nothing other than a new initiation into the Catholic symbolic system.

Limited space prevents a deeper discussion here of all the sociological, cultural, and specifically internal Roman Catholic reasons for the emergence of the Neocatechumenal Way. It is clear that the Catholic symbolic self is seen as disintegrated and the Neocatechumenal Way seeks to reintegrate it. As the major tool in this “sacred” transformation of identity, it offers years, or even decades, of ritual life comprised of numerous phases – rites of passage of a sort – developed in keeping with the initiation models of the original Christian communities, but also in line with the official Vatican document on the manner of introducing adults to Christianity. In short, the ritual life of a Neocatechumenal community consists of at least two liturgical events per week. Every few years the community is submitted to scrutinies – rite-of-passage-type rituals – in which its readiness to progress to the next, always more demanding, ritual stage is examined. This continues in the same way for some twenty years, after which the life of the neo-catechumen becomes deeply radicalized and everyday practice is ritualized. After passing through all the stages, the community of what Arguello now calls *mature Christians* [cf. Blasques 1994: 74–76] renews baptismal promises at the Easter celebration and completes the Neocatechumenal Way, ready to be the *light, salt, and yeast* [Statut 2002: 33] of the world, and, if the need arises, *as a servant of Jehovah, [prepared] to lay down his or her life for Him* [Arguello 2000: 253–256].

Although the movement is now represented globally – on all continents, in 103 countries, 800 dioceses, and 5,000 parishes with 17,000 communities [*Alfa y Omega*¹ 211/2000] – it has become so uniform that there are no differences whatsoever in its practice, other than those of language.

DEVELOPING “THE SENSE OF OCCASION”

As can be seen, the Neocatechumenal Way dedicates remarkable attention to its ritual activities and its leaders believe that only through full, active, and lengthy (over 20 years) participation in the movement’s ritual life can a person achieve the goal: securing a new and

¹ *Alfa y Omega* is the weekly newspaper of the Archdiocese of Madrid.

sacred identity. Ritual is seen as the main vehicle for communication with the sacred Other and therefore the leaders of the Way strive to be innovative in ritual practices and their symbolic interpretation. The idea is to make the members engage entirely in the ritual.

Consequently, participation in the ritual must be complete, involving the whole person, which means that the human body also assumes a very important dimension. One way of using the human body and its senses in Neocatechumenal ritual acts has already been seen at the beginning of this article. Some other means are illustrated by the examples below.

HEARING

The sense of hearing deserves to be mentioned first because it is especially stressed in Neocatechumenal rituals. The catechists believe (and it is said at the very beginning of the introductory catechesis via the commencement of the Way) that belief comes through listening to preaching. The phrase *belief comes through listening to preaching* is one of the catechists' favorites, and in accordance with it preaching is used as the main medium of catechization. During some rites of passage (stages of the Way), catechists preach for hours and the Neocatechumens receive all important information about the movement and their personal spiritual growth through listening. They listen to various types of verbal expression: preaching, Bible readings, members' personal experiences, liturgical songs, and so on.

For example, at the beginning of every ritual the gathered Neocatechumens listen to an introduction to the Biblical passages that will be heard during that particular ceremony. After having heard the scheduled texts, they listen to the believers present, who testify their personal experience based on what was read – that is, what precisely those words say about their lives. After the testimonies, those gathered listen to the sermon delivered by the priest leading the ritual. The ritual always includes singing, and hence listening, to liturgical songs based on the Biblical passages selected for the occasion.

Singing is a very important ritual activity and everyone is expected to know all the words of all the songs they have been taught (as members progress from phase to phase, they learn new songs). From this it is obvious that songs – both listening to them and singing them – are an integral part of Neocatechumenal enculturation. Listening to members speak about their personal experiences is especially moving. Members sometimes testify about the most stressful and difficult situations in their lives, and listening to them can create stress for everyone, as the listeners' tears often testify.

SIGHT

Sight is used in numerous and original ways – which is not surprising because the founder, Kiko Arguello, is a recognized painter. There are always some paintings by Arguello in the

ritual space, all with very strong symbolic meaning, known to the members. One example is the following:



Fig. 1: The Return of the Sacred Family to Nazareth by Kiko Arguello [Photo by G. P. Šantek].

The Neocatechumenal interpretation of this painting goes something like this:

The icon shows the return of the Sacred Family from Jerusalem to Nazareth, after the boy was found in the Temple. Saint Joseph carries Jesus over his shoulders, who turns toward his mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary. She hands to him the papyrus with the word of the mission [Isaiah 61, 1–2]: “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me” Saint Joseph’s face has the characteristics of the Servant of Yahweh, because his son must be prepared to be the Servant of God, who bears the sin of the world [Isaiah 53]. The fact that an adolescent Jesus is carried over the shoulders indicates the importance of the father in the Sacred Family and thus in all families. The importance of this is underlined in the life of the Neocatechumenal communities, which must be a sign to the entire world. These communities are established in parishes and are similar to the Sacred Family of Nazareth. The Neocatechumens try to live in them according to Saint Paul’s instructions [Ephesians 4]. The gesture of the Blessed Virgin Mary handing the word to Jesus can be found in



Fig. 2: A Neocatechumenal community celebrating Communion.

many icons of the Orthodox Church (the Eleusa Kykkotissa). [<http://www.geocities.com/elneocatecumenado/sgdafamilia.htm>]

Accordingly, the organization of ritual space is also very important and filled with symbolic meaning.

The scene in Figure 2 organizes space in such a way that it symbolizes the human body; in the words of a Neocatechumen in his late twenties: *The priest is up there on the throne because he represents the head, the rostrum represents the mouth, the altar the stomach, and all present the limbs of Christ's mystical body.* The organization of space thus follows the “body analogy.” One possible explanation for using it here can be found in Bowie’s ideas that, by using analogies with the body, which is the cue to elaborate social constructions, cultural concepts make an attempt to appear natural [Bowie 2000: 43].

Figure 3 shows how the altar is arranged with flowers to please the sense of sight. A painting by Arguello is also seen on the rostrum and there are flowers beneath it.



Fig. 3: The altar [Photo by G. P. Šantek].

TASTE

Catholics eat bread and drink wine ritually transformed into Jesus' body and blood during Communion. This is also done by the Neocatechumens, but one element connected to the sense of taste was previously unknown for me. In a ritual connected to the stage "The Invitation to Prayer," Neocatechumens must put a small lump of salt into their mouths and wait until it is dissolved. It is not pleasant to have a lump of salt dissolve in your mouth, but this is done because it is symbolically important. The catechists consider it necessary to understand the mission of Christians in the world: as we need salt to live, other people need us to live. We need to be salt for them and for the world, and consuming a real lump of salt helps us remember this forever.

SMELL

The least involved sense is smell, and this is involved in the usual Catholic way, through incense during some celebrations of mass.

TOUCH

The only different thing that the Neocatechumens normally do and other Catholics almost never do, as far as I know, is kissing one another during the rite of peace.

All these examples, however limited, show that the Neocatechumenal Way is a very structured and formalized movement. It is thus expected that some ideas of controlling the body must be developed. Accordingly, at some moments in various rituals everyone is expected to perform certain bodily movements – for example, to bow, stand up, sit, kneel, and (although very seldom) lie down or dance. All these movements are also filled with meaning understandable to every member. It must be stressed that some of these movements (e.g., praying the "Our Father" with open hands) can be (and are) used as identification markers in some liturgical events that involve all Catholics.

During the ritual "The Invitation to Prayer" Neocatechumens receive the "Liturgy of Hours". Kneeling symbolizes their respect for the word and for the priest, who is always a symbol of Christ.

FROM EXPERIENCE TO BELIEVING

Why is the body and analogy with it used so much in the Neocatechumenal Way? The fact that *everybody* has personal experience with it, knows it well, and easily understands all

comparisons with it makes the human body very convenient for symbolic usage. Merleau-Ponty demonstrated that the body is not passive:

as the world acts on our bodies, so our experience of being in the world affects and shapes the phenomena we perceive. There is continual interaction between the embodied individual and the social and natural world of which the individual is a part. [Cit. in Bowie 2000: 44]

Continuing with Bowie's insights, because the human body is simultaneously experienced subjectively and objectively, it belongs both to the individual and to the wider social body [cf. Bowie 2000: 41]. This makes the body especially suitable for social exercising, formation, and control, or as a place of verification of the acceptance of social rules – defined, naturally, by the holder of power. This is why the lack of freedom of movement corresponds to the amount of totalitarian tendencies in a society or social group.

In addition, what is experienced stimulates more intense emotions than what is not. Or, as Douglas said: *The more personal and intimate the source of the ritual symbolism, the more telling its message* [Douglas 1976: 114]. Consequently, when the sensory stimuli during the ritual are stronger the feelings are more intense,² and when the feelings are more intense the “message” of the ritual has better chances of being adopted. This leads to the more successful realization of the ritual purpose.

We as human beings continually create patterns of meaning out of our individual and collective experience [Bowie 2000: 48].

The leaders of the Neocatechumenal Way surely know this and seek to achieve such forms of ritual engagement so that, by participating in them and acquiring new networks of meaning through them, each member can attain a new, sacred identity. Ritual, therefore, is very structured and the use of the body is carefully taught, following the well-known model that the modification of behavior and modification of beliefs go hand in hand [cf. Bowie 2000: 55]. Truly, anthropology has known for a long time that the body, mind, and emotions are



Fig. 4: “The Invitation to Prayer” [Photo by G. P. Šantek].

² This is because the senses are located between the physical and the cognitive [cf. Bendix 2005: 3].

intimately connected. The first part of this trio has long been rather neglected in anthropology but, as we can see today, things are changing. We anthropologists have, obviously, finally decided to *live in the flesh*, and not only in the symbolic kingdom of the mind.

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POSTAJATI SVET.
KORIŠĆENJE TIJELA KOD TRANSFORMACIJE IDENTITETA

Neokatekumenski put je katolički pokret utemeljen u Španjolskoj 1964. godine od Francisca Arguella, dvadesetšestogodišnjeg slikara kojemu se nakon duboke egzistencijalne krize objavila Blažena Djevica Marija i dala u zadatak osnivanje malih kršćanskih zajednica, i Carmen Hernandez, organizatorice misija. Poslanje je Neokatekumenskoga puta osnivanje malih zaje-

dnica u kojima će pojedinci postupno, putem višegodišnjega sudjelovanja u ritualnom životu, strukturiranom na način sličan obredima prijelaza, steći novu osobnost, novo „ja“, koje će biti suobličeno svetome drugom i tako i njegov uprisutnitelj u ovom svijetu.

U radu je predstavljen dio načina na koje se u ritualnim praksama ovoga pokreta, glavnom sredstvu transformacije osobnosti i susreta sa svetim, koriste ljudsko tijelo i osjeti. Inovacije u obredima i njihove simboličke interpretacije pomno su promišljene kako bi se postiglo potpuno i cjelovito sudjelovanje pripadnika, što se smatra nužnim preduvjetom uspješnosti svete transformacije identiteta.

Neki primjeri potpunoga i aktivnoga uključenja pripadnika u ritualni susret sa svetim na Neokatekumenske putu, povezani s angažmanom tijela i osjeta, navedeni u članku su:

1. Angažiranje sluha. Na prvome je mjestu jer je na Putu osobito naglašeno. Ritualno stariji, katehisti, vjeruju da vjera dolazi preko propovijedanja i zato je propovijedanje glavni medij katehizacije, neokatekumenske enkulturacije, a slušanje glavni način dobivanja svih važnih informacija o pokretu i vlastitom duhovnom rastu u njemu. Slušaju se različiti tipovi verbalnih ekspresija: propovijedanje, biblijska čitanja, osobna iskustva pripadnika, obredu prikladne pjesme, spontane molitve, itd.

2. Angažiranje vida. Vid je provociran na brojne i originalne načine, što ne bi trebalo biti čudno jer je osnivač Arguello akademski slikar. U prostoru odvijanja obreda uvijek je neka slika naslikana od njega, ispunjena simboličkim značenjem znanim pripadnicima. Također, i organizacija samoga obrednog prostora vrlo je važna i ispunjena simbolikom: svećenik na tronu predstavlja – glavu, propovijedaonica – usta, oltar – trbuh, a svi nazočni – udove mističnoga tijela Kristova. Jedan od razloga da se pri organizaciji prostora koristi analogija s tijelom mogao bi biti taj što se na taj način kulturni koncepti uvjerljivo predstavljaju prirodni.

3. Angažiranje okusa. Kao i drugi katolici neokatekumeni tijekom euharistije konzumiraju kruh i vino (oni su za njih Kristovo tijelo i krv). Međutim, konzumiranje grumena soli tijekom obreda povezanog s etapom „Inicijacija u molitvu“ dosta je rijetka ritualna praksa. Neokatekumeni u njoj u usta primaju grumen soli i čekaju da im se on otopi. Osjećaj nije vrlo ugodan no simbolički je važan. Katehisti ovo smatraju nužnim kako bi se shvatilo poslanje kršćana u svijetu: kao što ljudi trebaju sol za život tako i svijet treba kršćane. Oni trebaju biti sol svijeta i rastopiti se prilikom davanja za njega a kušanje grumena soli upečatljiv je način podsjećanja na ovu zadaću kršćana.

I iz ovih primjera uočljivo je da je Neokatekumenski put vrlo strukturiran i formaliziran pokret pa su na njemu očekivano razvijene i različite ideje kontroliranja tijela i njegovih pokreta. Sukladno njima, u određenom trenutku obreda očekuje se da svi ili dio pripadnika ustanu, prignu se, sjednu, kleknu, ili, npr. zaplešu. I ovi su pokreti ispunjeni značenjem koje zna svaki pripadnik, a neki od njih u određenim situacijama, primjerice prilikom pribivanja obredima koji uključuju sve katolike a ne samo neokatekumene, mogu poslužiti i kao identifikacijski marker, npr. moljenje Očenaša raširenih ruku.

Zašto je tijelo i analogija s njime tako mnogo korištena na Neokatekumenske putu? Činjenica da svi imamo osobno iskustvo tijela, dobro ga poznajemo i lako shvaćamo sve poredbe s njime,

tijelo čini osobito prikladnim za simboličku uporabu. Osim toga, naše tijelo nije pasivni primatelj podražaja iz svijeta, ono i oblikuje fenomene koje percipiramo, a time što je istovremeno iskušavano i subjektivno i objektivno pripada kako pojedincu tako i širem, društvenom tijelu. To ga čini osobito prikladnim za vježbanje društvene kontrole i oblikovanje ponašanja ili provjeru prihvaćanja društvenih pravila.

Dobro je znano da ono što je osobno iskušano provocira snažnije emocije od onoga što nije, odnosno da osobniji i intimniji izvor ritualnoga simbolizma dovodi do snažnije poruke. Posljedično, što su osjetilne provokacije tijekom obreda snažnije to su osjećaji koji se uz njih vežu jači, a kada su oni intenzivniji i „poruka“ rituala ima veće izgleda biti usvojenom, što i jest jedna od najvažnijih svrha svih rituala.

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PILGRIMAGE PLACES /
ROMARSKI KRAJI

THE SENSES, THE PATH, AND THE BUS

A SENSORY ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE SAIGOKU PILGRIMAGE

PAOLO BARBARO

This paper describes and analyzes the Saigoku pilgrimage in contemporary Japan from the point of view of the senses. The description of the most common sensescapes that pilgrims encounter and produce follows a general presentation of the pilgrimage and its broader context. The subsequent analysis of the modes of production and consumption of the sensescapes reveals the formation of similarly patterned clusters of perceptions around similar socio-cultural, behavioral, and environmental factors.

Keywords: pilgrimage, Saigoku, senses, Japan.

V razpravi je opisano in s stališča čutov analizirano romanje Saigoku (»romanje v zahodne province«) v sodobni Japonski. Opisu najpogostejših čutnih pokrajin, s katerimi se romarji srečajo in jih proizvedejo, sledi splošna predstavitev romanja v širšem kontekstu. Na tem temelječa analiza načinov produkcije in rabe čutnih pokrajin razkrije oblikovanje podobno vzorčenih skupkov percepcij ob podobnih družbenokulturnih, vedenjskih in okoljskih dejavnikih.

Ključne besede: romanje, Saigoku, čuti, Japonska.

This paper seeks to describe and analyze the experiences of the contemporary pilgrims of Saigoku, from the point of view of their senses. The Saigoku route is one of the most ancient and most popular Japanese pilgrimages. To complete it, pilgrims have to visit, in a set order, 33 specific temples situated in various locations of the Kansai region in Japan. There is no set route to go from one temple to another, and pilgrims take various roads and use various means of transportation to complete the circuit. The total length of the pilgrimage is over 1,000 kilometers. The various routes that the pilgrim can choose from are not merely physically different paths: they are different approaches to places, which correspond to patterned clusters of sensory phenomena, and which can generate very diverse experiences of the pilgrimage. In fact, from the planning of the pilgrimage onwards, the pilgrims are continuously confronted with choices regarding the use of their bodies. They are the architects of the experiential process. General choices such as the amount of walking they will do, the road to take, the kind of food to eat, and what to wear shape the pilgrimage experience in very different ways, and eventually create very different kinds of pilgrimages.

CONTEXTUALIZING THE STUDY

Before addressing the ethnography of the pilgrimage, three preliminary facts must be highlighted. The first is a methodological issue: because of the pilgrimage structure, length,

and settings, the pilgrims are exposed to a potentially very rich variety of sensescapes, and to countless sensory experiences, which cannot all be described. Therefore, to provide a satisfactory account, I employ two overlapping but complementary approaches: the environmental, or macro-perspective, and the pilgrim-centered, or micro-perspective. The former consists of describing the major factors that preside over the clustering of similar groups of sensations and the resulting sensescapes. I have identified the following frameworks: traveling season, means of transportation, pilgrimage structure, settings of the temples visited, and pilgrims' behaviors. For the pilgrim-centered perspective, I have tried to describe the most common role that pilgrims assign to each of the traditional senses.¹

The broader academic context of this paper also deserves a brief introduction. The Saigoku pilgrimage has been the object of numerous studies in Japanese,² but its existence is rarely mentioned in Western literature on pilgrimages. There are no full-length studies, and only three articles focus on it in English [Gump 2005; Hoshino 1997; Leavell and Reader 1988].³ Moreover, despite the abundance of Japanese material, no study has focused on the role that the senses play in Japanese pilgrimages. By furnishing ethnographic data on a pilgrimage little known in Western anthropological literature, and examining it from a sensory perspective, not previously applied to this subject, this paper makes a modest contribution to the future development of comparative analysis and theoretical hypotheses in both anthropology of the senses⁴ and pilgrimage studies in anthropology.

Finally, a brief remark is necessary on the use of the term "sensescape," its synonyms, and semantically close expressions, which recur frequently in the following pages. Sensescapes are not fixed entities, but processes during which the pilgrim is simultaneously the creator and the user of the environment. Sensory backgrounds, and the features composing them, are not static elements, but continuously changing situations in which the pilgrims are co-creators of their surroundings: they choose their environments, shape them through their behaviors, and recollect them (or forget them) after the experience is over.

PILGRIMAGE ROUTES IN JAPAN

The terms course, circuit, or multi-site pilgrimage refer to a form of pilgrimage unknown in the Judeo-Christian or Muslim traditions. Its existence is attested in the past in China,

¹ The choice to describe a five-senses approach is due to necessities of analytic reduction and to cultural conventions. However, this does not entirely match the more complicated reality of sensory perception.

² The research on pilgrimages in Japanese is rich. The Saigoku pilgrimage has been analyzed in numerous monographic studies and in many articles. In addition, it has a section, or at least a mention, in virtually all the texts analyzing Japanese pilgrimages [cf. Shinno 1996 (1): 1–142; Shinjō 1982].

³ A few articles and sections of books treat related issues; for example, Mac Williams [1997; 1990]. See also Reader and Swanson [1997: 225–228].

⁴ While sharing the point of view expressed by some authors on the importance of not creating a new subfield of anthropology [Benedix 2005: 3–8], I appreciate the potential of the senses approach.

and in India similar forms of pilgrimage exist. In Japan, the Buddhist tradition probably mingled with, and reorganized, pre-existing modes of religious and ascetic itinerancy, developing distinctive characteristics [Gorai 1989].

The Japanese multi-site pilgrimage consists of going to a fixed and numbered sequence of temples, following a given order.⁵ The Saigoku pilgrimage-course is comprised of 33 temples, numbered from one to 33. It is usually – but not exclusively – performed starting from temple number one or from temple number 33, following an ascending or descending numerical progression. The two directions have no special difference or significance, and usually the choice of whether to start from one point or another is made according to geographic convenience. On other pilgrimage courses, the most prominent being the Shikoku *henro*,⁶ the pilgrims start from any temple in the sequence. A circuit is considered finished only when all of the temples that form it have been visited. Sometimes, especially since the industrialization of Japan, and the consequent reorganization of work-life, which has confined free time to weekends or very short holidays, many perform the pilgrimage in legs, going as far as possible on one day (a practice known as *higaeri*), usually on Sunday, and starting over the next time from where the course was left off. Pilgrims traditionally receive a stamp or seal (*nōkyō*) from each temple they visit, and collect them in a book (*nōkyōchō*) or on a scroll (*kakejiku*).

The signifier of the circuit, a figure venerated at all the temples, can be a divinity, a group of divinities, or a holy man.⁷ The Saigoku route is an exemplary specimen of the *honzon* pilgrimage class: the main image of every temple (*honzon*) is the bodhisattva Kannon, an important figure in Japanese religion, to be examined below.

Multi-site pilgrimages are widespread in Japan. Their popularity boomed during the Edo period (1600–1868) and, since then, they have had variable fortunes: new circuits were born and old ones neglected in response to demographic and economic changes, socio-cultural transformations, fashions, or the birth of new religious groups. Nevertheless, the overall number of pilgrimage-courses has increased.

The ancient pilgrimage circuits, such as the *Saigoku junrei* or the *henro* pilgrimage in Shikoku, originated as training paths for ascetics, to perform religious austerities and progress

⁵ In addition to multi-site pilgrimages, single-site pilgrimages are also known in Japan, in which believers make devotional trips to one religious center. Among the popular ones, the Ise shrine is probably the best known and most visited.

⁶ The pilgrimage of the 88 temples of Shikoku, generally known as the *henro* pilgrimage, is an old course approximately 1,400 km long that goes around the island of Shikoku. Today it is probably the best-known Japanese pilgrimage route, and is started from any temple, disregarding the number, in both directions, although the numeric progression is usually respected. It is constructed around the figure of the Buddhist monk Kōbō Daishi (774–835). See Hoshino [1997] for a short introduction or Reader [2006] for a monographic study.

⁷ A few classification systems have been constructed for Japanese pilgrimages. The majority of them, in addition to the classes cited above, also include the “regional circuit pilgrimages,” as in Shinno [1996]. Other classifications include the types “single-site pilgrimage” and “mountain pilgrimages.” See Kitagawa [1987] and Reader and Swanson [1997].

spiritually. For centuries, they primarily attracted mystics and wandering clergy (*jugyō-sha* or *shugen-sha*). In early-modern times, these paths became very popular among the common people and laymen.⁸ Although today the great majority of pilgrims easily also fit into the class of secularized tourists, the ideal of spiritual progression through ascetic practices (*shugyō*) is strictly linked to an idealized, pure, and original form of pilgrimage. According to certain scholars, this ideal form of pilgrimage is still part of the collective consciousness of the Japanese and represents the ideal pilgrimage [Blacker 2000: 164–165].

Since its birth, the *Saigoku junrei* has been the model for the creation of other circuits, often referred to as copy-pilgrimages (*utsushi reijō*). Copies of the famous national courses are visible in all regions of Japan. Their size can range from a miniature pilgrimage inside a temple garden, comprised of 33 stones, to a circuit of 33 temples 2,000 kilometers long. From a religious point of view, the value of a copy pilgrimage is ambiguous. In fact, although the act of completing a circuit is considered a spiritual merit regardless of the circuit, some courses renowned at a national level, such as Saigoku, are held in special consideration, as shown by miracles, fluxes of pilgrims, or pilgrimage literature and discourses on pilgrimages.

The Saigoku circuit is by far the most copied of all the national pilgrimages.⁹ The copies of the Saigoku route are often named after it; for example, the “Pilgrimage of Saigoku in the country of Tosa.” Copy-pilgrimages frequently use objects to augment the sacred link with the original circuit, such as reproductions of sacred images enshrined in the original temples, or soil transplanted from the original sacred sites.¹⁰ In contemporary Japan, there are about 100 pilgrimage circuits of 33 sacred sites to Kannon,¹¹ not counting miniature pilgrimages.

⁸ Popularization is a process that took many centuries, and some say that it started as early as the end of the Heian period (784–1185). A visible rise in the popularity of pilgrimages among the common people is evident between the 16th and 18th centuries. This trend transformed (and was due to the transformation of) pilgrimages into a mainly leisure activity similar to contemporary tourism [Graburn 1983].

⁹ Although most of the Saigoku pilgrims come from neighboring regions – and although pilgrims from certain distant regions of Japan are very much a minority [Satō 1989: 192], therefore contradicting Bhardwaj’s well-accepted definition of “national pilgrimage” [Bhardwaj 1973] – it can be argued that the combination of the peculiarity of Japanese imitation pilgrimage and Saigoku’s role as a main pilgrimage model on a national scale could constitute an exception to this established definition.

¹⁰ Transplanting soil from the original sites of the temples is typical of copies of the *Shikoku henro*.

¹¹ The cataloguing of Japanese pilgrim circuits is an unfinished task. At least three compendia of pilgrimage routes in Japan have been published, plus a number of lists in guidebooks, but they are all incomplete for various reasons. Moreover, none of them distinguish between “dead” and active circuits, and none list the miniature pilgrimages. Therefore, the exact number of pilgrimage circuits in Japan remains unknown. See, for example, Nakao [1974], Ōji [2001], and *Zenkoku reijō daijiten hensanshitsu* [2000]. According to the most complete compendium, the *Zenkoku reijō daijiten hensanshitsu* [Great Dictionary of the Entire Country’s Places of Pilgrimages, 2000], which lists more than 300 pilgrimage routes, 82 are multi-site pilgrimages of the 33 Kannon.

THE SAIGOKU JUNREI

Often named Saigoku *junrei*,¹² the *Pilgrimage to the 33 fuda-sites of Kannon in the western provinces* starts in the south of the Kii Peninsula and, after a tortuous course of more than 1,000 kilometers, ends in Gifu Prefecture. The *fuda* are both name slips that the pilgrim leaves, one at each temple, and amulets received at each temple.¹³ They are usually made of paper and contain offerings, the name of the pilgrim, and his prayers. They are frequently used as souvenirs for friends and relatives.

The temples of the circuit are called *fuda-sho* (literally *fuda*-sites), or *reijō*, places where the spirits gather. The temples on the Saigoku course belong to different Buddhist schools: there are two Hossō temples, 16 Tendai-lineage temples, and 15 of Shingon-lineage. Often, the pilgrims extend their path to reach Mount Kōya, an important spiritual center and headquarters of a school of esoteric Buddhism, not far from temples seven and eight. Occasionally they visit other religious sites, such as the famous temples of Nara and Kyōto, and

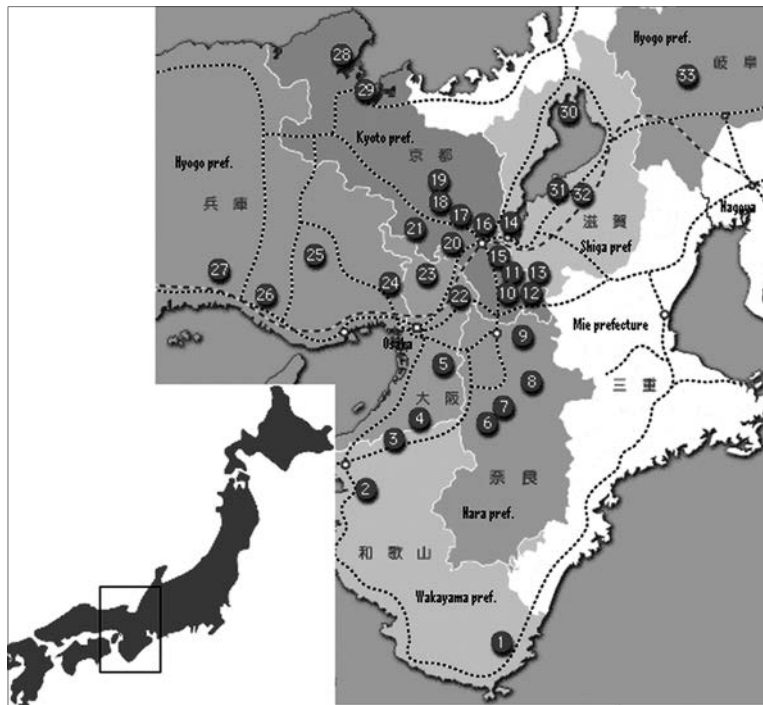


Fig. 1: Map of the Saigoku pilgrimage.

¹² *Saigoku* or *Saikoku* refers to the western provinces and *junrei* is a frequently used, but not the exclusive, word for pilgrimage. Therefore *Saigoku junrei* literally means the “pilgrimage to the western provinces.” The circuit is also referred to as *Saigoku* (or *Saikoku*) *meguri*, or with more extensive forms “Pilgrimage to the 33 *fuda*-sites of Kannon in the western provinces” (*Saigoku sanjūsan Kannon fuda-sho junrei*) and “Pilgrimage to the 33 sites where the spirits gather in the western provinces” (*Saigoku sanjūsan reijō junrei*). I have chosen the spelling Saigoku because it is more accurate.

¹³ More on *fuda* can be found in Shirasu [1974: 16–17].

especially the temples called *bangai* (literally outside the numbers): temples not included in the route, but considered of religious or historical interest as part of the circuit.¹⁴

Table 1: The temples of the Saigoku pilgrimage.

N.	Temple name	Characters	Main Image	School/Sect	Location
1	Seiganto-ji	青岸渡寺	Nyoriin	Tendai	Wakayama pref.
2	Kongōhō-ji	金剛宝寺	Jūichimen	Kuse	Wakayama pref.
3	Kokawa-dera	粉河寺	Senjūsengen	Kokawa	Wakayama pref.
4	Sefuku-ji	施福寺	Jūichimen Senjūsengen	Tendai	Ōsaka-fu
5	Fujii-dera	葛井寺	Jūichimen Senjūsengen	Shingon	Ōsaka-fu
6	Minami Hokke-ji	南法華寺	Jūichimen Senjūsengen	Shingon	Nara pref.
7	Oka-dera	岡寺	Nyōirin	Shingon	Nara pref.
8	Hase-dera	長谷寺	Jūichimen	Shingon	Nara pref.
9	Nan'en-dō	南円堂	Fukūkenjaku	Hossō	Nara city
10	Mimuroto-ji	三室戸寺	Senjū	Honzan	Kyōto-fu
11	Kami Daigo-ji	上醍醐寺	Juntei	Shingon	Kyōto city
12	Shōhō-ji	正法寺	Senjū	Shingon	Shiga pref.
13	Ishiyama-dera	石山寺	Chokufunihinyoirin	Shingon	Shiga pref.
14	Onjō-ji	園城寺	Nyoirin	Tendai	Shiga pref.
15	Kannon-ji	観音寺	Jūichimen	Shingon	Kyōto city
16	Kiyomizu-dera	清水寺	Jūichimen Senju	Hossō	Kyōto city
17	Rokuharamitsu-ji	六波羅蜜寺	Jūichimen	Shingon	Kyōto city
18	Chōhō-ji	頂法寺	Nyoirin	Tendai	Kyōto city
19	Gyōgan-ji	行願寺	Senjū	Tendai	Kyōto city
20	Yoshimine-dera	善峰寺	Senju Sengen	Tendai	Kyōto city
21	Anao-ji	穴太寺	Shō Kannon	Tendai	Kyōto city
22	Sōji-ji	総持寺	Senju Kannon	Shingon	Ōsaka-fu
23	Katsuō-ji	勝尾寺	Jūichimen Senju	Shingon	Ōsaka-fu
24	Nakayama-dera	中山寺	Jūichimen	Shingon	Hyōgo pref.
25	Kiyomizu-dera	清水寺	Jūichimen Senju	Tendai	Hyōgo pref.
26	Ichijō-ji	一乗寺	Shō Kannon	Tendai	Hyōgo pref.
27	Engyō-ji	圓教寺	Nyoirin	Tendai	Hyōgo pref.
28	Nariai-ji	成相寺	Shō Kannon	Shingon	Kyōto-fu
29	Matsu no o-dera	松尾寺	Batō	Shingon	Kyōto-fu
30	Hōgon-ji	宝巖寺	Senju Sengen	Shingon	Shiga pref.
31	Chōmei-ji	長命寺	Senju Jūichimen Shō	Tendai	Shiga pref.
32	Kannonshō-ji	観音正寺	Senjūsengen Jūichimen	Tanritsu	Shiga pref.
33	Kegon-ji	華巖寺	Jūichimen	Tendai	Gifu pref.

¹⁴ Popular *bangai* temples of the Saigoku pilgrimage are the Hanayama temple, which was one of the starting points of the circuit before its formalization in its present shape, and the Hasedera temple, linked to the figure of the legendary founder of the circuit, Tokudō Shōnin. See Shirasu [1974: 203–210].

The circuit goes through the prefectures of Aichi, Hyogo, Shiga, and Wakayama, the metropolitan area of Ōsaka, and the ancient capitals of Nara and Kyōto. As mentioned, there is no established or standardized way to go from temple to temple, and the pilgrims are free to choose the route they prefer. The region in which the pilgrimage is centered is called Kansai.

Traditionally, pilgrims dress in white clothes and a conical straw hat, and walk with a pilgrim's staff, although the number of people with these distinguishing features is fairly low today.¹⁵ The first records clearly documenting the existence of the pilgrimage date from the 12th century.¹⁶

Many texts, mostly composed during the Edo period, describe an ancient formulation of the course. These texts and their content are called *engi*. The most diffused *engi* states that the course was founded in 718 by the Buddhist monk and holy man Tokudō Shōnin, and rediscovered by the emperor Kazan in 988 thanks to a dream in which the bodhisattva Kannon explained the existence of the circuit to the emperor and asked him to re-establish it. This story is still reported in pilgrimage guides. Today, Emperor Kazan is often considered the founder of the circuit, or the authority that sanctioned its existence, and many pilgrims believe in the foundation of the circuit by Tokudō Shōnin. In any case, historical evidence shows that the contemporary shape of the course was fixed in the Muromachi period (1333–1573).

Today the Saigoku pilgrimage route attracts thousands of pilgrims every year.¹⁷ The

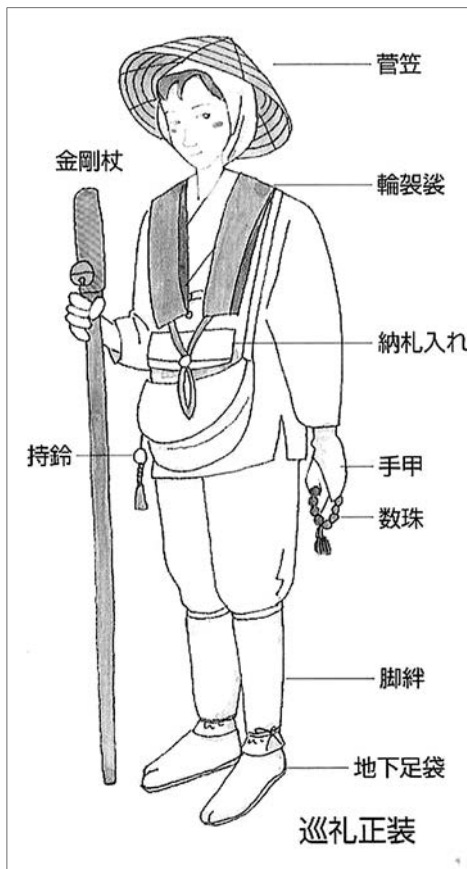


Fig. 2: Traditional pilgrim attire [Drawing from West-Japan Rail 2005: 5].

¹⁵ During field research conducted in February 2006, for example, I met a busload of pilgrims in temple number two. Only two women in the group (which consisted of about 20 people) were wearing the traditional attire, although in seasons with milder weather the percentage rises visibly, and even buses in which the majority of pilgrims are dressed in white are visible. It is quite rare to see the traditional straw hat in Saigoku. The staff is a much more common feature, and baskets of pilgrims' staffs are often at the disposal of pilgrims, ready to be used when getting out of their vehicles or entering the temple area.

¹⁶ See Gump [2005] for a brief introduction or Shinjō [1982] for a very detailed history. Shinjō [1982: 422] reports the first document and the following ones.

¹⁷ The last statistics on fluxes of pilgrims to Saigoku are almost 20 years old, and indicate fluxes of pilgrims ranging between 60,000 and 80,000 during the 1980s [Saitō 1989].

pilgrimage is made mainly by middle-aged and elderly Japanese, and most of the pilgrims come from the Kansai area or neighboring regions [Satō 1989: 192].

TOURISTS AND PILGRIMS

Although the Saigoku circuit seems to have a clear religious framework, a talk with a pilgrim or a look at a guidebook is enough to blur the assumed difference between religious and leisure travelers. The overwhelming majority of the pilgrims that I have met on the circuit told me that the major motivations for the pilgrimage are culture, nature, history, leisure, tradition, or socializing with their relatives or friends. The viewpoint that Saigoku is a sightseeing pilgrimage (often referred to as a travel pilgrimage, *junrei no tabi*) is common, and the acceptance of the fact that pilgrimages are also made because of pleasant natural settings, historical sites, good company, or tasty food is often found even in sermons written by Buddhist monks for travel guides.

The amount of time generally dedicated to religious activities is rather limited. Normally, the time spent in the temples is a modest portion of the day, and it may be argued that many of the activities conducted there are nonreligious: taking pictures, obtaining temple stamps, and buying souvenirs or amulets.

However, a clear-cut dichotomy between tourists and pilgrims on the circuit is neither feasible nor useful.¹⁸ In addition to the fact that generally *the contemporary use of the terms, identifying the pilgrim as a religious traveler and the tourist as a vacationer, is a culturally constructed polarity that veils the motives of the travelers' quest* [Smith 1992: 1], in the case of the Saigoku circuit the tourist-pilgrim division is even more evidently a semantic construction that polarizes toward two idealized stereotypes: the religious devotee and the leisure traveler. This involves a much more complex set of behaviors, acts, and cultural specificity; for example, the close link of Japanese religion with leisure, the generally non-dogmatic and tolerant approach of Japanese culture toward religion, or the fact that in Japan forms of itinerant devotion are historically superimposed onto forms of tourism [Formanek 1998; Graburn 1995].

The pilgrim-tourist duality, similar to the traveler-tourist dichotomy [cf. Urbain 1991], refers to a meta-speech on the qualities of travel and on measuring feelings, intentions, and beliefs through behaviors that is not scientific. I therefore consider a Saigoku pilgrim to be every person that visits the 33 temples of Saigoku in the given order, collecting the stamps or seals of the temples, with the expressed intention of completing the circuit, without engaging in evaluations on the pilgrims' beliefs, and in defining what a pilgrim is.¹⁹

¹⁸ The issue of the tourist-pilgrim distinction has been addressed by numerous scholars. Probably Derrida's phrase *every tourist is a pilgrim and every pilgrim is a tourist* synthesizes in a few words the heart of the problem. See Cohen [1992], Coleman and Eade [2004: 9–13] and Smith [1992].

¹⁹ The problem of precisely defining a pilgrim in Japan has been addressed by many scholars and remains a subject of debate. See Reader and Swanson [1997: 228–232] and Coleman and Eade [2004: 1–25].



Fig. 3: Pilgrimage guide-books [Photo by P. Barbaro].

KANNON

The bodhisattva Kannon (Avalokiteśvara in Sanskrit), is the main image of every temple on the Saigoku pilgrimage, the object of worship of the pilgrims, and the signifier that links the temples in a circuit. Its cult has been present in Japan at least since the 7th century AD. Represented as a male in Indian, Tibetan, and Southeast Asian iconography, this bodhisattva acquired female features in China. In Japan both female and male forms exist, although often feminine traits persist in the representations of male Kannon. In English she is usually referred to as the Bodhisattva of Compassion. Since ancient times she has held a special place among the Japanese, as also shown by the fact that in Japan the 25th chapter of the Lotus sūtra,²⁰ entitled “The Chapter on the Sammantamukha of Avalokiteśvara”, the texts that extensively narrate the story of Kannon, attained the status of an independent sacred book many centuries ago, under the title Kannon Sūtra (Kannon-gyō).

Avalokiteśvara can be translated as the ‘Lord that regards all’, and the Chinese and Japanese translations have tried to maintain this meaning. Kannon is in fact a shortened form of Kanzeon, meaning ‘[The one that] observes the sounds of the world’. According to the *Kannon Sūtra*, she is in fact the bodhisattva that

constantly surveys (kan) the world (ze) listening for the sounds (on) of suffering. Hearing sounds of distress, this ‘Sound Observer’ – by virtue of ‘unblemished knowledge,’ the ‘power of supernatural penetration,’ and ‘expedient devices’ – is able to display his body ‘in the lands of all ten quarters’. Kannon does so ‘by resort to a variety of shapes’,

²⁰ The Lotus Sūtra – *Saddharma-pundarika-sūtra* in Sanskrit, *Fa-hua-ching* in Chinese, and *Hoke-kyō* in Japanese – has a distinctly important place in the history of Japanese Buddhism.

*changing into the most suitable of 33 different forms for preaching the Dharma to save all who are suffering.*²¹

This passage of the sūtra is generally considered the explanation for why there are 33 temples in the pilgrimage. Although the sūtra cites 33 bodies,²² there are seven traditional forms of representations of Kannon in Japan.²³



Fig. 4: Image of Kannon.

Also related to the origin and development of the pilgrimage circuits is the popularity of Kannon among mountain religious wanderers. *From as early as the seventh century, mountain Buddhist ascetics (gyōja, shugenja) worshiped Kannon as a spiritually powerful divinity believed to have beneficial powers to drive away evil and beckon good fortune (josai shōfuku no gorishō)* [MacWilliams 1997: 376; see also Hayami 1970].

THE TEMPLES

The diverse locations of the temples, and their cultural, natural, and historical characteristics, are among the most appealing features of the circuit for the pilgrims. For example, the Kiyomizu-dera in Kyōto (temple number 16), or the temple complex of Kumano

²¹ Translation of the Lotus Sūtra from MacWilliams [1997: 375].

²² The 33 bodies of Kannon are listed in Tani [2002: 113]. A list of the 33 Kannon is provided in Tani [2002: 131].

²³ There are different but similar traditions in Japan, recognizing the six or seven most diffused forms of Kannon. According to the Compendium of Buddhist Images [Tani 2002: 110–131], the seven traditional forms of Kannon in Japan are: the *Sho* or Sacred (often translated Pure) Kannon, the *Jūichimen* or Eleven-Faced Kannon, the *Senju* or Thousand-Armed Kannon, the *Fukūkenjaku* Kannon, the *Nyoirin* Kannon, the *Batō* or Horse-Head Kannon, and the *Juntei* Kannon. Mixed forms also exist, such as the Eleven-Face Thousand-Armed Kannon.

(inside which is temple number one), are among the oldest and most renowned in Japan. The former is a broad ancient temple compound that includes famous features such as the Jishu shrine,²⁴ or the “love stones.” On a hill immersed in greenery in the centre of Kyōto, this temple has been included on the UNESCO world heritage list since 1994, and has a famous and picturesque shopping district, rich in traditional and tourist items, just outside its gates. However, certain routes and regions in the area between temples can be equally valuable and appealing. The temples of Kumano, for example, although located in the beautiful setting of the mountains of the Kumano National Park, and with a famous waterfall inside their compounds, are more renowned because of the ancient Kumano roads (Kumano *kodō*). The Kumano *kodō*, also included on the UNESCO list, are a network of ancient roads and paths, in the Kii mountain range, leading from the Kumano temples to Mount Kōya.

Most of the 33 temples have some special feature or characteristic, such as the famous Hōgon-ji temple (number 30 of the circuit), which is located on a beautiful island inside renowned Lake Biwa, and is accessible only by ferry. The few temples that have lost their appeal are creating new features; for example, temple number two (Kimii-dera) is carving an impressive, great wooden statue of the Thousand-Armed Kannon.

ON THE TRAVELING SEASON

A first element that should be considered is the fact that the great majority of pilgrims usually travel in the spring or autumn. Recent statistics are not available, but a number of clues can help reconstruct the annual fluxes of pilgrims with fair precision. Traditionally, pilgrims travel during these seasons because of the weather.²⁵ Transportation, tourism companies, and pilgrims’ association, including West Japan Rail,²⁶ primarily organize group pilgrimages or “pilgrimage campaigns” during these two seasons. My observations, as well as my informants’ opinions, confirm this trend. It can be roughly estimated that around 85 percent of the total pilgrimages take place in these two seasons.

This travel pattern entails three consequences. First of all, the majority of pilgrims have similar experiences from the point of view of weather. The second is that, also due to the fact that most of the temples are surrounded by green areas or woods, and include gardens in their compounds, the temples become a place where pilgrims are in a natural environment, and can enjoy the beauty of nature in its spring or fall display of colors and odors. Especially in pre-pilgrimage and post-pilgrimage discourses, temples are often associated

²⁴ In the middle of the temple complex, this Shintō shrine is frequently visited by women because it houses the god of love and good marriages.

²⁵ Through the last four centuries, this pattern has remained roughly stable, with an increase of pilgrims in autumn due to urbanization, which relieved most of the population from very busy harvest labor.

²⁶ See their guidebook *Starting the Pilgrimage from the Station* [West Japan Rail 2005].

with nature. Finally, there is a minority of pilgrims that experience totally different weather and natural settings: the winter cold and eventually snowy weather, the summer heat, or the rainy season. The main reasons behind these choices are economics (off-season prices), avoiding crowds, and work schedules.

MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION AND THE SENSES

A major aspect that frames the sensory traits of the pilgrimage is the road because it is the place where the majority of pilgrims' time is spent, and where most of the experiences occur.²⁷ The road constitutes most of the pilgrimage, not only from a quantitative point of view. Although today miracles on the Saigoku circuit seem to happen much more rarely than in the past, they traditionally occur on the road more than in temples. The road is a mental and physical space, a rare segment of time free from many everyday constraints, during which the pilgrim can contemplate his actions and thoughts.

To cover the distances between the temples, contemporary Saigoku pilgrims use various means of transportation. The most popular are bus and car, and trains are also fairly frequent for longer distances, in combination with local buses or taxis. Walkers, cyclists, and motorcyclists are a very small percentage of the total. There are no recent statistics, but judging from certain evidence (internet sites, travel diaries, and also cautious comparison with *henro* walkers), a rough estimate of 300 to 400 pilgrims walking the path every year can be assumed, which includes weekenders that walk the path between temples but use motorized vehicles to get to and from the pilgrimage. According to the latest studies conducted on the transportation of Saigoku pilgrims, in the 1980s half of the pilgrims used cars, and some 40 percent used the bus.²⁸ The choice of performing the pilgrimage by bus is particularly popular among elderly people. The use of the train is not particularly common, and motorcycles are rarely used. I do not have information about cycling pilgrims, but I would be surprised to learn that there are not any at all.

The choice of transportation from temple to temple signifies a major difference in the approach to the pilgrimage. The decision deeply involves the use of the body, and changes the perception of the experience and the senses involved in the pilgrimage, as exemplified by the road between temple number one and temple number ten. Those going by foot most certainly go through the Kumano *kodō*, enjoying complete immersion in nature (and history and religion, certain pilgrims would add) with their entire body. Train pilgrims must

²⁷ Japanese literature on pilgrimages confirms the importance of the road. With the exception of guidebooks, all the other genres (e.g., novels, diaries, and TV programs) dedicate a great part, and often the majority of space, to narrating road experiences.

²⁸ The use of cars among pilgrims has been growing steadily since the 1960s, due to the increase of this means of transportation among the common people, and this has created structural changes in the pilgrimage traditions. The most visible are an increase in the *higaeri* practice and an increase in mononuclear-family sized groups of pilgrims.

go around the coast, enjoying very scenic views where the mountains meet the ocean, in the southern part of the peninsula, whereas pilgrims in cars or buses generally enjoy less of the beauty of the Kii Peninsula than their compatriots traveling on foot or by train. As a general rule, motorized pilgrims use highways and national roads to save time, and walkers prefer paths or rural roads.

It can be argued that walking the path corresponds to the ideal form of pilgrimage. This statement is delicate, and may be contradicted by valuable arguments because the opinion that walking is a better way to perform the pilgrimage is widespread, but not unanimously accepted. Moreover, the fact that walking pilgrims are a tiny minority, and that the overwhelming majority of the Saigoku pilgrims use motorized vehicles, cannot be ignored. There are indeed individuals that affirm that walking is the only true way to make the pilgrimage, or that walking is the means to achieve progress in the inner world while progressing in the outer one.²⁹ However, there is no formal or codified religious obligation to walk the path, and most religious authorities have a very relaxed and encouraging attitude towards motorized pilgrims. In many cases, Buddhist monks organize pilgrimage buses for people of their community and act as pilgrimage guides (*sendatsu*). Some religious authorities even affirm that using the bus is a more devotional way to make the pilgrimage because more time is spent in religious activities [Reader 2006: 18]. In fact, a portion of the time spent in the bus is generally dedicated to religion-related activities, as we will see later.

If, on the one hand, the origin of the pilgrimage is in ascetic training, we must consider that for centuries walking has been not a religious choice, but the only possible way to make the pilgrimage for most people.³⁰ Since the liberalization of the transportation system in 1872, every technological innovation that made the trip more comfortable or cheaper has been well accepted and integrated into the pilgrims' set of transportation choices. The idea that walking the path is closer to authenticity has probably grown in recent times for a number of reasons, including the socio-cultural and economic characteristics of contemporary Japan, the constant human quest for signification, an idealization of and nostalgia for the past, and the mass-media's indulgence in romantically portraying the Shikoku *henro*.

Walking the circuit is a major challenge for the body. Not only is walking more than 1,000 kilometers a physical feat: some of the 33 temples, and good stretches of the route, are in mountainous regions, and some paths can be particularly hard. Walking pilgrims usually wake up early in the morning and can spend up to ten hours a day walking. The settings of the walks are very stimulating for the senses and the mind: woods and mountain paths, scenic views and delightful nature, natural smells and scents, encounters with wildlife, remote villages, important historical cities, or city traffic. Walking the path is usually described as an

²⁹ The idea that walking the *henro* is an exercise of meditating on a *mandala*, and the only true way to make the pilgrimage, is explicitly expressed in *Henro michi boson ryōkai* [2004: 2–4].

³⁰ During the Edo period, strict regulations on traffic and transportation made prices rise and forbade many kinds of independent transportation or enterprise, making walking the only possible way for the common people to make the pilgrimage.

once-in-a-lifetime experience. On the other hand, using a motorized vehicle means partially shielding the body from the world, and accelerating space and time.

In any case, it can be affirmed that today the figure of the walking pilgrim dressed in white, while representing a small portion of the total of pilgrims, corresponds to an ideal model, and is a central symbol in the collective Japanese image of pilgrimage. According to some religious authorities, a minimum amount of walking is considered an integral part of the pilgrimage, and the ascent to the temples (which in many cases are on top of a hill) is often considered part of the worshippers' duties. A Buddhist sermon included in a pilgrimage guidebook for another Saigoku pilgrimage circuit,³¹ for example, states that:

Ascending the mountains [of the temples], climbing the long stone stairs one by one, is an excellent shugyō. Don't think: 'Such a high mountain can be avoided. I'll take the bus . . .'. Actually, this tiring 'one step after another' is a precious shugyō . . . which even today gradually erases the misdeeds committed by anyone. [Saigoku aizen reijō (ed.) 1994: 34–5]

The choice of mechanized vehicles is largely due to the contemporary rhythm of life and the organization of work time,³² but the pilgrims that I have encountered often mentioned other reasons for traveling by bus: leisure, comfort, company, and economic reasons.³³

STRUCTURAL OBSERVATIONS

The structure of the Saigoku pilgrimage, constructed on the road-temple duality, strongly influences the experience, and clearly shapes it in series of alternating, somewhat opposing, and somehow repetitive, sections. Each of the two sections can be associated with specific sets of sensory environments: the sensescapes of the temples, and those of the road. This structural point of view partially challenges the distinction of pilgrims' experiences based on transportation. In fact, there are similarities between the motorized and the walking pilgrimage: the road sections of the experience are longer than the temple sections, the sensory experiences are clearly organized in alternating binary sections, and the experience prescribed to accomplish the pilgrimage, the temple, is the same whatever the means of transportation. The circuit structure divides the experience into blocks of different sensory elements, emphasizing the peculiar form of pilgrimage, but this does not imply a sacred-profane dichotomy: the Saigoku pilgrimage is usually conceived of as a unity, even when

³¹ Relying on the popularity of the Saigoku circuit, multi-site pilgrimages called "Saigoku" have developed in recent years and in the past in the Kansai region. Examples are the *Saigoku Yakushi junrei*, a 33-temple pilgrimage linked by the figure of *Yakushi nyorai*, often called the "Buddha of Medicine and Healing" in English, and the *Saigoku Aizen jūnana junrei*, a 17-temple pilgrimage constructed around the figure of *Aizen*, a divinity (*Myō-ō*) of Love.

³² Japanese average work hours are among the highest in the world, and Japanese holidays are the lowest among the G8 countries, according to the Japanese Statistic Yearbook 2006.

³³ Walking the pilgrimage path is many times more expensive than doing it with motorized vehicles.

performed in pieces during different weekends. Continuing the path is as important as the act of devotions made in temples, and only by performing both geographic progression and temple visits is the pilgrimage accomplished.

THE TASTE AND THE PLACE

In Japanese culture, taste plays the distinct role of a geographic marker. Typical food and local specialties are often important symbols in the construction of geographic imagery. As a consequence, taste often plays an important role in the road experience among Japanese travelers. This is shown in the case of domestic tourism by the example of *meibutsu*, the famous specialty of a specific geographical entity. This idea is deeply rooted in Japanese culture: there are dictionaries and compendia of *meibutsu*, and virtually every region, ancient fief, and major city has its own specialty. Pilgrimages are no exceptions: many guidebooks for the Saigoku route suggest trying some of the countless local specialties for which a village or a region is renowned. There are *meibutsu* that have been known at the national level for centuries, and others recently constructed for symbolic and economic reasons. The most famous and best-selling *meibutsu* of Japan is also linked to a pilgrimage site: the *akafuku*, a kind of rice cake (*mochi*) of the sanctuary of Ise, probably the most popular shrine in Japan. *Meibutsu* are a very popular souvenir that pilgrims bring home to relatives, friends, or neighbors, and they are abundantly consumed on spot. They seem to be important more because of their symbolic association with the definition of a place than for their culinary value. A *meibutsu* is famous and valuable before being eaten because it is made in the proper way and in the original place. In consuming (buying or eating) *meibutsu*, pilgrims participate in the symbolic construction of space, in a way similar to visiting famous sites: an act analogous, when in Paris, to seeing the Eiffel tower. In this sense, the acquisition of a *meibutsu* is a process similar to taking photos, or obtaining a *fuda*, which, for the visitor and before the members of his community, symbolically represents his presence in a specific place and the performance of the trip.

The association of tastes and places is not limited to *meibutsu*. Certain dishes, part of the national cuisine, are often considered tastier in the place where they originated. When in the city of Ōsaka, for example, visitors from Tōkyō will likely eat *takoyaki*³⁴ or *okonomiyaki*,³⁵ not because they cannot find them in the capital, but because they are originally

³⁴ *Takoyaki* is primarily sold on the streets and considered a snack or fast food. *Takoyaki* literally means ‘roasted octopus’ and is a round dumpling made of batter, diced octopus, *tempura* scraps (*tenkasu*), pickled ginger, and green onion. It is usually made on the spot in a *takoyaki* pan and served hot, generally topped with *okonomiyaki* sauce and mayonnaise, green laver (*aonori*), and dried bonito flakes (*katsuobushi*).

³⁵ *Okonomiyaki* is a pan-fried dish cooked with various ingredients, sometimes referred to as Japanese pizza. *Okonomiyaki* can be roughly translated as ‘grilled the way you like it’ because the ingredients (often a mix of vegetables, meat, and seafood) are freely chosen by the eater before grilling them

from Ōsaka, and will therefore be consumed *just to give it a try* because they are *done in the proper/original way*. Many pilgrimage guidebooks have sections dedicated to food or local cuisine, and pilgrims are usually eager to try it. Some guidebooks explicitly dedicate space for those in search of original and authentic experiences. Phrases such as *the real taste of the Japanese countryside* are common. The area's adjacent major temples, with alleys rich in shops and eateries, often offer samples of local desserts, tea, and snacks. In the JR guidebook [West-Japan Rail 2005], for example, there is a section for each temple entry, entitled *look what we've found*, dedicated to *local food experiences* and hidden *old-lady-owned cooked-as-in-old-times* restaurants.

Alcoholic drinks are another important feature of the pilgrimage. Associated with relaxed moments, leisure activities, and socialization, alcoholic drinks are often consumed while on pilgrimage, especially (but not only) at dinner and after-dinner gatherings. Although occasionally pilgrims are eager to taste local liquors, alcoholic drinks mainly serve the function of socializing and defining leisure time. Preference goes to beer, sake, and *shōchū*,³⁶ but Western liquors are also consumed. The use of alcoholic drinks is widespread even if pilgrimage “etiquette” suggests abstention from alcohol.³⁷ The custom of having a few drinks with fellow pilgrims at the end of the trip, to celebrate its accomplishment, is very common.

SOUNDSCAPES

While on the road, different sound-environments contribute to constructing the pilgrimage experience. Their differences mainly depend on the means of transportation. On the other hand, once in the temples, all the pilgrims participate in the same sound creation-perception process. On the road, walking pilgrims are completely immersed in the local (often rural or wildlife) sound environment, even if periods of intense talking, during which they are isolated from the environment, are distinguishable. On the other hand, in general motorized pilgrims live in sound-environments closed to the outside world, self-constructed and characterized by a background of engines or mechanical noises. However, car, train, and bus soundscapes differ deeply in many aspects. This is mainly due to the varying composition of the fellow travelers in the group.

Pilgrims in a car are likely to be with friends or family members, and their sound-environment is familiar and intimate: music or radio, chatting, talking, and periods of

together in a kind of pancake, and topping it with *okonomiyaki* sauce, mayonnaise, and dried bonito flakes (*katsuobushi*).

³⁶ A family of liquors obtained by distilling fermented vegetables or cereals.

³⁷ The pilgrimage etiquette is a list of eight to ten rules that the pilgrim is invited to follow while performing the pilgrimage, usually reported in contemporary pilgrimage guidebooks. These include abstention from alcohol and sex, a pure heart and language, and abstention from committing crimes and lying. Compare one version in *Saigoku Aizen Reijōkai* [1994: 34–5].

silence. For pilgrims on the train, usually traveling in small groups of two or three, the soundscape will not differ from an ordinary Japanese train: travelers tend to be quiet, the use of mobile phones is forbidden, and many passengers fall asleep. The rhythmic sound of the train is interrupted by announcements for the next stop, and sometimes punctuated by people chatting.

The case of bus pilgrimages is very different. In fact, as already mentioned, when pilgrims travel by bus, religious behaviors are more frequent. This mostly happens through the creation of religious sound-environments. Using a microphone, the pilgrimage guide tells stories about miracles or the foundation of the temples, explains the origin of the pilgrimage, provides practical and religious information, and uses words to create a symbolic landscape that enriches meaning the places visited. Moreover, he gives a feeling of participation to the event and a feeling of belonging to a group. On occasion, *sūtras* are read and *goeika* are sung.³⁸

In the temple enclosures, pilgrims generally expect to find a peaceful and quiet environment, although this is not always the case. In general, the temples on the circuit are constructed in peaceful and natural environments, and even those in the metropolitan area



Fig. 5: Pilgrims and guides singing *goeika* [Photo by P. Barbaro].

³⁸ *Goeika* are short songs, played in a simple four-beat rhythm, sometimes performed to the accompaniment of a *rei* (a small bell) and a *shōgo* or *kane* (a metal gong). Every temple in the circuit has its own *goeika*, which refers to events, history, or characteristics associated with the temple. On *goeika*, see Harich-Schneider [1973: 511, 517] and Shimizutani [1992]. Emperor Kazan is traditionally believed to be the composer of the *goeika* songs. According to Harich-Schneider's description [1973: 511], the standard *goeika* is performed as follows: *The rei . . . makes a very delicate whirring sound – it is struck once before the soloist opens the performance with a recitative 'call to prayer' . . . with the second line . . . the chorus joins in, in simple unison and without embellishments. . . . Kane and rei mark the metre; the gong strikes every first beat in a bar, the bell every first, third, and fourth beat. At the end of each stanza, the rei has one solo bar . . . after which the solo singer starts again in metronomically exact time.* Many regional variants exist, and contemporary pilgrims tend to reproduce the model above without being overly orthodox in respecting all the rules of execution mentioned. The lyrics of *goeika* are usually short, as in this example of the *goeika* of the 32nd temple: *Spring flowers, Autumn leaves, change the colors, I want to learn the Land of Buddha.*

of Ōsaka are fairly isolated from traffic and city noises. Many temples are located on hills, and the long stone stairways leading from the entrance to the main halls are punctuated by the sound of footsteps and panting. When pilgrims are asked about the most familiar sounds they associate with the temples, common answers are silence and the bell stroke before prayer. However, this ideally quiet and internally oriented sound-environment is not the only possible one. Pilgrims traveling in a group automatically generate the kind of noise that is typical of crowds, chatting and commenting, sometimes (albeit rarely) chanting *goeika* songs, and when they are in small temples they pack them with people. During the weekends and in the mild seasons, many temples are crowded with visitors and tourists. In the case of the most famous temples – for example, the Kiyomizu-dera – it is not easy to find tranquility even during weekdays. Although the majority of pilgrims do not seem to be bothered by crowds and confusion, some (especially among the walkers) are troubled by the masses and chaos, and I have heard disappointed comments about “touristification.”

SIGHT(S)

Pilgrims using motorized vehicles have a more vision-centered approach to the road than walkers. This does not mean that there is an absence of other kinds of sensory occurrences. While in the car, for example, music and the radio are played, cigarettes are smoked, and food is consumed. Sight is predominant in the fact that it is the main link with the world outside the vehicle, the sense that differentiates this trip from another one. In a kind of sensory specialization, sight alone is used to experience the outside world, with control over the geographic dimension, while the other senses are occupied with personal, intimate, or social activities, with the possible exception of taste, as we have seen, in cases in which local products are consumed. According to some scholars, this participation in places with the sole use of sight, similar to watching TV, is typical of tourist behavior of contemporary post-industrial societies, and it has been defined as the “tourist gaze.”

For the bus pilgrims as well, sight plays a similar monopolistic role. When I recently invited two informants to recall their group pilgrimage to Saigoku for me, which took place some 20 years ago, the bus parts were mainly associated with joyful group social interaction, pleasant landscapes, or tiring hours of travel, rather than with religious experience. According to them, even if religious activities took place on the bus, the trip was mainly a sight-seeing tour. The moderation of the monopolistic role of sight by the creation of a religious sound environment seemed not to exist in their memories. Sight appears to play an important role in the intellectualization and recollection of the experience.

Once in the temple areas, the other senses (especially olfaction and hearing) play a much more active role. Especially inside temple halls, where the pilgrims perform most of their acts of devotion, light is scarce and sight is limited, in favor of an expansion of the other senses. Sight maintains a dominant role in pilgrims’ accounts of their temple experiences,

which are often described in terms of visual beauty, magnificence, or other esthetic values. The abundant use of photographs also emphasizes the important symbolic role of sight.

The choice of exteriorization of the pilgrim's state is also mainly based on sight. The use of the traditional white pilgrim's outfit implies a system of signification based on visual semiotics, and is the only explicit rendering of the pilgrim condition. It also contributes to the formation of an ideal, or traditional, pilgrimage landscape.

OLFACTION

According to many pilgrims, the smell of incense is the feature that most reminds them of the temples. This is not surprising, considering the triangular link between this sense, memory, and Japanese religion: smell is a *crucial site of individual and cultural memory* [Bendix 2005: 6], and incense is burned in great quantity in Japanese temples and is mainly associated with religious services.



Fig. 6: Pilgrims breathing in incense [Photo by P. Barbaro].

The typical scent of Japanese temples is a variable mixture that always includes incense, and often the fragrance of the wooden structure and the perfumes of nature. The use of candles in temples is also widespread, and sometimes the aroma of melting wax can be perceived.

The temples' smellscape could be divided into two components: the temple-halls and the temples' open spaces. The former are characterized by an incense-wood mix of scents, with incidental odors (peoples' smell, for example), and the latter changes according to the season and the setting of the temple, but usually includes the scent of a garden or of greenery and trees. However, pilgrims do not seem to differentiate the smellscape of temples in fragmented unities: when inside the compounds, they pass from one to the other many

times, and their description of the smell of temples is a unity composed of different scents from separated places.



Fig.: 7: Incense burning [Photo by P. Barbaro].

TOUCH

Touch is the most difficult sense to analyze in the Saigoku context. It is impossible to describe the continuous tactile impressions that a pilgrim experiences, and there is no specific tactile occurrence associated with the pilgrimage. When asked about tactile experiences, my informants have difficulty finding an answer. Nonetheless, the contribution to perception by tactile impressions is fundamental and endless. The cleansing of hands, a Shintō custom often performed when entering Buddhist temples, is probably more identifiable than the sweat on the skin when climbing the temple stairways, the perception of the wind and sun, and touching the pilgrims' staff, but, together with countless others tactile impressions, they all contribute to the construction of the experience, mainly at a subconscious level. I find proprioception, the perception of body awareness, particularly important: its association with various degrees of bodily involvement, the perception of the experience, and, ultimately, philosophical and ontological matters of existence, choices, and experiences, seems evident.

ON THE ABSENCE OF THE SENSES

This breakdown of the perceptions into single-sense unities, and their subdivision and classification, is made for analytical and systematic reasons. This necessary simplification

does not render the unity of the Saigoku pilgrimage at a sensory level. The body – a social and physical construct, a recipient of the senses, and an actor in the experience – is the central pillar on which the pilgrimage is constructed. Yet the body is not only a sensory recipient: it is an active seeker of sensory experience, and a generator of sensations. Pain, pleasure, odors, and feelings are all sensations generated by the body.

Very few individuals take this fact to its extreme consequences, and actively use their body to foster sensation production, or to deny sensations, in a quest for spiritual growth. I have not personally met any pilgrim that fully engages in ascetic practices. Common ascetic practices traditionally performed are purification under a waterfall (*taki-gyō*), fasting, abstention from sex, alcohol, or eating meat or the five cereals, reclusion in caves, intensive meditation, recitation of mantras, and prayer. On Mont Kōya I encountered a monk that walked the Saigoku pilgrimage engaging in some of these practices. The absence of sensation, the denial of the body, or the use of extreme sensations (such as experiencing extreme cold) is a choice that very few pilgrims (if any) undergo nowadays. Meditation too is not widespread at all among pilgrims, the duration of prayer is very limited, and the pilgrimage “etiquette” is mainly a good manners protocol, often ignored.

CONCLUSIONS

The Saigoku pilgrimage is a multi-sensory experience, protracted in time and space, which is rich in potential sensory occurrences and variations. However, the majority of pilgrims experience similarly patterned sensory events because they have similar behaviors and make similar choices. The role of the pilgrim in creating and experiencing the sensescapes appears more influential than the (nonetheless very important) physical and environmental settings.

Four major factors direct the macro-organization of the sensory environment: the pilgrimage structure, the means of transportation, the traveling season, and the geographic and architectural settings of the temples. These features are not static, but continually changing processes in which the pilgrims act as co-creators of their surroundings. These four major factors cluster selections of sensory experiences into a small number of arrangements from which pilgrims can draw the individual sensory experiences that compose the pilgrimage.

In general, a vision-centered approach to places is observed. Nonetheless, hearing and taste make great contributions to the creation of the pilgrimage sensescapes – the former very socially oriented, and the latter associated with leisure time and with the symbolic definition of space. Sight also appears to play an important role in the intellectualization and recollection of the experience. Olfaction appears to play a minor role, especially linked to temples, defining the sacred grounds, and with memory and recalling events, whereas tactile impressions provide a continuous important contribution to the experience that remains at a subconscious level.

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ČUTI, POT IN AVTOBUS. ETNOGRAFIJA ČUTOV PRI ROMANJU SAIGOKU

Pri romanju Saigoku (»romanju v zahodne province«) v japonski provinci Kansai romar po posebnem zaporedju obiše 33 vnaprej določenih templjev. Pri tem lahko izbira med številnimi možnimi potmi, ki vse merijo več kot tisoč kilometrov. Osrednji lik čaščenja tega starodavnega romanja, katerega glavna podoba je v vseh templjih, je Bodhisattva Kannon.

Raziskava se osredotoča na opis in analizo sodobnih romarjev s perspektive čutov. Zelo razširjeno romanje vsako leto privabi na tisoče romarjev. Med njimi so mnogi motivirani z nereligioznimi razlogi, vendar jih velika večina izpolni osnovne zaobljubne in formalne prakse, s katerimi se romanje izpolni.

Avtor najprej opiše širši zgodovinski, družbenokulturni in religiozni kontekst, nato na kratko predstavi dosedanje raziskave romanja in sklene z razpravo o teoretičnih in analitičnih vprašanjih o osnovnem okviru romanja in vedenju romarjev. Bogastvo čutnih možnosti in raznovrstnost čutnih pokrajin, s katerimi se lahko romar sreča, terja opis celotnega niza telesnih izkušenj, ki jih lahko doživi romar. Tako je naloga prvih analiz poudariti najpogostejše čutne pokrajine, ki ustrezajo vsakemu pomembnemu segmentu romanja. Glavni razkriti čutni okviri so: transportna sredstva, čas in doba potovanja, struktura romanja in obiskani templji. Te možnosti niso statične, gre za nenehno menjavajoče se procese, v katerih so romarji tudi sooblikovalci, saj si izberejo svoje čutno okolje, preden stopijo vanj, pri čemer ga v času doživljanja soustvarjajo s svojim ravnanjem in ga navsezadnje menjajo, po premisleku prestane izkušnje.

Sledeč predstavitvi najbolj običajnih čutnih okvirov se razprava osredotoča na opis najpogostejših čutnih pokrajin (sensescapes), s katerimi se romar sreča. Za lažjo analitično rabo so čutna okolja razdeljena glede na dve glavni komponenti, konstitutivni za romanje, na doživljanje same poti in na templje. Pot je razdeljena glede na kategorije, ki ustrezajo transportnim sredstvom. Podobno je sestavljen splošen opis glavnih čutnih možnosti, ki jih ponuja tempelj. Hierarhija čutov je opazovana in analizirana predvsem na samem potovanju. V teh primerih velja posebej omeniti okulocentrizem – osrediščenost na oko in prevladovanje vida kot najbolj priljubljene in glavne možnosti dostopa do prostora, pri čemer se zgodi prva sistematizacija razmerij med čutnimi pokrajinami in obliko percepcije. V nadaljevanju avtor analizira vsakega od čutov. Opazna je vloga okusa v označevanju izkušnje in simbolične konstrukcije prostora, pri čemer so definirane tri možnosti: lokalne posebnosti, lokalna kuhinja in alkoholne pijače. Opisane so tudi različne zvočne pokrajine romanj, zvočna produkcija in poslušanje romarjev. Posebej izrazita je zvočna pokrajina, značilna za romarske autobuse. Pomembna je tudi vloga vonja v razmerju s tempeljskim ozračjem in spominom. Avtor sklene razpravo z ugotovitvijo, da so nekatera asketska in glede čutov restriktivna ravnanja skoraj popolnoma izginila.

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Svete Gore. September 2006 [Photo by J. Fikfak].

THE VOW AS VISUAL FEAST. HONORING ST. JOSEPH IN SICILIAN AMERICAN HOMES

LEONARD NORMAN PRIMIANO

This article discusses the home altars built by Sicilian American women to honor St. Joseph in the seaport community of Gloucester in the state of Massachusetts. Of particular importance when considering the communicative and creative esthetics of this belief and practice is the rich way this votive tradition expresses and exemplifies nine fundamental characteristics of vernacular Catholicism.

Keywords: *home altars, ex voto, Italian American, vernacular religion, vernacular Catholicism.*

Prispevek obravnava domače oltarje, ki jih ameriške Sicilijanke v pristaniški skupnosti v Gloucesterju (Massachusetts) postavljajo v čast sv. Jožefu. Ob obravnavi komunikacijske in ustvarjalne estetike verovanja in prakse je posebnega pomena bogatost votivne tradicije, ki izraža in ponazarja devet temeljnih značilnosti vernakularnega katolištva.

Ključne besede: *domači oltarji, votivi, ameriški Italijani, vernakularna religija, vernakularno katolištvo.*

I always like to present¹ a visual feast in my religious studies courses at Cabrini College by bringing into the classroom a variety of objects of religious material culture to challenge and teach the students something about creativity and religious expression. Recently, as a part of the course “The Search for Meaning” [Primiano 2001b], which is my undergraduate course on vernacular religion [Primiano 1995], I brought an object into class to help illustrate my lecture on visual traditions of the human body in everyday religious practice. This charm or talisman, a representation of a single open eye affixed to a circular dark-blue disc of blown glass, is meant to protect one’s person, family, and home against the “evil eye.” It was purchased for me by a student at a market in a village outside of Istanbul. Though illustrative of Turkish religious culture, four of my North American students on this day, and to my complete surprise, immediately related such practices to their own lives, referencing contemporary Italian American traditions about the *malocchio* or *gettatura* in their families, including the training received from Roman Catholic grandmothers concerning a variety of protections and cures against negative vibrations and intentions possibly caused by assaults of the evil eye. Such classroom experiences remind me that traditional religious

¹ This article was first presented as a part of a panel at the 2003 meeting of the American Folklore Society. The research was supported by a Faculty Development Grant from Cabrini College. I wish to thank Deborah Ann Bailey, Lourdes Barretto, John DiMucci, Margaret Kruesi, Charlie McCormick, Kathy McCrea, Kathleen Malone O’Connor, and Joan Saverino, as well as Anne Schwelm and Corey Salazar of Cabrini College’s Holy Spirit Library for their assistance. I am especially grateful to Katie Reing for her technical assistance, and to Nicholas Rademacher, Joseph Sciorra, and Nancy Watterson, who read final drafts of the article.

belief and practices can still be found among contemporary American Catholics, even in the face of secularization and an increased religious illiteracy concerning institutionalized religious traditions.²

Many of these practices still involve the home and the use of objects in it, as in the case of the Italian American Christmas Eve custom of serving a meal of “seven fishes,” or the Polish American blessings of Easter tables filled with holiday foods including dyed eggs and butter in the form of a lamb symbolizing Jesus. Secular objects such as food can be given a religious purpose, and religious objects can be used for public display such as in hanging palm crosses on doors, Marian holy corners in prominent spaces, or window displays of religious statues or images. The elaborate home altars dedicated to St. Joseph or St. Anthony by Sicilian Americans living in Gloucester, Massachusetts offer a most compelling example of such a living vernacular religious tradition. These feasts for the eyes of color, spirit, and creativity, rooted in the religious tradition of making vows to God for the granting of some blessing or healing, are at the ethnographic center of this essay reflecting on the theme of “Senses and Religion.”

The folklife scholar Gábor Barna, in his contribution to the collection of papers drawn from the first meeting of the SIEF Commission for Folk Religion in 1993, chronicles the challenges of studying domestic religious objects such as statues, prints, holy cards, rosaries, and so on in his native Hungary.³ What makes his article particularly useful is its integration of historically informed work with contemporary ethnography. He notes that historical studies of the presence of such religious material culture in the home are difficult because of the paucity of relevant available data, especially from the Middle Ages or the Early Modern period. In the case of contemporary analyses of religious objects in the home, few ethnographic studies exist concerning their use, or even the sources and distributors of such objects. With his data coming from estate inventories, from available photographs of Hun-

² Folklorist Joseph Sciorra of the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute, Queen’s College (City University of New York) has done outstanding work studying such ethnic Catholic traditions in his region including such examples as yard shrines, vernacular chapels, religious processions and feasts, and nativity crèches of the Italian American community [cf. Sciorra 1989a, 1989b, 1993, 1999, 2001a, 2001b, 2004, 2006].

³ Studies of religious objects in the homes of American Roman Catholics and Protestants have used religious magazines and guidebooks as research sources [cf. Taves 1986 and McDannell 1986, and my reviews of their work, Primiano 1987, 1989]. While not employing what I would call the ethnographic method, some studies have used surveys and some interview data on the placement and meaning of religious iconography used in the homes of Americans [cf. Halle 1993, and, more prominently, Morgan 1998, 2005] Primiano [1999] traces the source of many varieties of contemporary Catholic religious articles to one store in the suburbs of Philadelphia, which currently operates a thriving Internet business in these objects. A recent text that complements Barna’s Hungarian work, but concerns North American Protestant Pennsylvania Germans, is Yoder, *The Pennsylvania German Broadside* [2005]. Yoder offers a history and ethnographic journey through the lives of a variety of Christian “church people” and “sectarians” in Pennsylvania with special attention to sources of creation, distribution, and use of a variety of secular and religious paper ephemera, including religious prints [cf. Primiano 2007].

garian peasant homes, as well as ethnographic work within particular communities, Barna notes that in terms of the dissemination of relevant devotions and associated objects (as in the case of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the apparitions of the Virgin Mary at Lourdes or Fatima), the influence of the institutional Catholic Church has been significant. He is also attentive to pilgrimage sites with their own unique vernacular religious ecology as sources for such objects especially when *the sparse network of shops selling devotional objects ceased to exist under the totalitarian atheistic regime, and as a result the mediating role of the places of pilgrimage grew even stronger* [Barna 1994: 109]. He is reflecting on what I call “vernacular Catholicism” [Primiano 2001a: 51–58] when he considers that contemporary personal decisions about religious objects as home furnishings or worn as accessories of dress [Barna 1994: 116] reveal a transformation and negotiated flexibility of an everyday religious practice. This practice is influenced by institutional models and ideals of orthodoxy and orthopraxis. It is also powerfully formed by community and individual spiritual traditions of interpreted belief and practice existing alongside organized religious idealizations.

At the root of Barna’s research about present practice and the use of religious material culture lies issues of power (institutional Christianity’s influence over individual and community belief and practice), esthetics (what is considered beautiful, artful, or even visually appropriate within a particular ecclesiastical, domestic, or personal context, and how such ideas can shift over centuries and generations), and secularization (the loss of understanding, appreciation, respect, and sensibility for religious ideas and meanings). He therefore poses a very postmodern question: are these *objects of popular devotion or only objects of decoration* [Barna 1994: 105]?

Another way of asking Barna’s important question is whether some vernacular religious displays are both decorative and devotional at the same time. Furthermore, is there a basic set of characteristics or qualities of vernacular Catholicism helpful to folklorists working in government and nonprofit organizations as well as academic teaching and research contexts that would assist in answering this question, in identifying particular relevant expressions, and in linking diverse traditions under a broader umbrella of recognizable characteristics? For public sector folklorists, such characteristics would offer a language to communicate and explain, not only to their colleagues, but to believers themselves, as well as government administrators and funders, the quality, history, esthetic, creativity, and meaning of an object or practice. For folklorists involved primarily in scholarly work, such a synthesis provides cognitive constructs for the identification of relevant material and a better understanding and appropriate contextualizing of a practice or artifact, and its communicative and creative esthetic. To help clarify this issue, the conclusion of this article offers a basic set of characteristics of vernacular Catholicism drawn from my own research on religion, material culture, and the senses.

In 2003, I was introduced to a Sicilian American tradition vibrantly continuing on the East Coast of the United States that astonished me: namely, the building in Gloucester, Massachusetts, of home altars dedicated to St. Joseph, the foster-father of Jesus and the

husband of the Virgin Mary (Fig. 1). Familiar with the work of folklorist Kay Turner [1999], I knew that such altars remained a living tradition in the United States in communities of Sicilian Americans in Texas and New Orleans. I had also been informed of isolated examples, specially constructed in church basements in New York, New Jersey, California, and Kansas City, but not such a contemporary proliferation of domestic altars in one community on the East Coast of the United States.



Fig. 1: Statue of St. Joseph, St. Joseph Altar, LaRusso Family, Gloucester, Massachusetts, March 2005 [Photo by Joseph Sciorra].

Starting in 2003, I traveled to Gloucester to witness for myself these altars assembled as part of the 19 March feast day of St. Joseph. I was immediately struck by the quantity of altars created in the community. On the eve of the saint's feast, I participated in car caravans that drove around Gloucester neighborhoods visiting six different homes, each decorated with large altars filled with statues, flowers, family photos, and candles – an assemblage surrounding a large statue of St. Joseph, carefully layered and color coordinated (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2: St. Joseph's Day Altar, Fontana Family, Gloucester, Massachusetts, March 2005 [Photo by Joseph Sciorra].

Alongside these displays were stacks of lemons, oranges, and specially shaped breads, some marked with crosses others formed into staffs. After songs, prayers to the saint, and the recitation of the rosary, the assembled stopped for coffee and tea, and a few pastries (Fig. 3); actually, an explosion of *zeppole*, or cream-filled St. Joseph cakes, as well as *cannoli*. It was a veritable food heaven. These altars were but a small fraction of the total homes participating in the tradition: between 35 and 40 families built large and small home altars in 2003.

As I spoke to the women that had designed these domestic shrines, all Sicilian Ameri-



Fig. 3: Unidentified woman praying at St. Joseph's Day Altar, Groppo Family, Gloucester, Massachusetts, March 2005 [Photo by Joseph Sciorra].

cans, the wives of fishermen, or individuals employed in that industry, and from 35 to 75 years old, it became clear that the common element in their decision to participate in this tradition was the powerful religious practice of making a “vow” to holy figures. These altars were votive offerings to St. Joseph, as vibrant as any retablo painting or cast tin milagros of bodily organs, thanking the saint for a favor received and a blessing granted due to his intercession. With the exception of the work of Robert Teske [1980; 1985] and Joseph Sciorra [1989b], little scholarship has been done about vowing within American vernacular religion. Making a “vow” to accomplish something, an individual dedicates himself or herself to a task completely, unequivocally, and passionately. Religious vows affect a person’s entire being [Klinger 1987: 301]. They are personal promises to Jesus, Mary, and the saints; moreover, such vows establish a substantial bond between a giver and receiver. A religious vow thus both creates and simultaneously solidifies a sacred partnership based on reciprocal giving. A vow is not a pledge to the past, but to the future because *vows encourage the fulfillment of obligations and the accomplishment of certain tasks* [Klinger 1987: 303].

In Gloucester, the home altars of 19 March can best be understood as visualized narratives for the community of altar makers, relatives, visitors to the altars, the healed, and those praying for healing. The altars are materialized vows of gratitude for recovery from life-threatening illness, financial instability, emotional trauma, and a multitude of other individual and family problems.

To appreciate the nature and power of these Gloucester vows, one needs to understand something about this community, its people, and their working lives in a hazardous occupation which has continued there for 375 years. In this period, over 5,000 Gloucester fishermen have died at sea. In February 1879, 53 women became widows in a single storm. Gloucester is a community whose economic survival is based on fishing, and whose family survival is based on the resilience of women – mothers and daughters – to bear up with long hours, sometimes weeks, alone without their husbands and fathers. Wives’ responsibilities have included managing homes, shore businesses, and other needs of the community. They have raised their children alone. They have prayed that their men would come back to them, and that their husbands and sons would not drown or lose fingers or limbs at sea. They have lived with a sense of fear and a need not for saintly role models, but for saintly patrons and protectors that would guide their men home.

Italian fishing families have proliferated in Gloucester since the 1920s, especially coming from small towns in Sicily. They gradually saved money and purchased their own boats. By the 1970s, Sicilians made up three-quarters of the 400 men that fished out of Gloucester. In 1994 and 1995, federal fishing regulations curtailed massive fishing activities, and, as retraining programs started for some of these men, concerns widened to include not only fears about fishing, but about their very economic survival. In the face of such challenges, these women did not lose their Catholic faith. Instead they maintained their traditional understanding of death, sickness, unemployment, and troubled children not as God’s abandonment of them, but as a manifestation of both divine attention and the sacred mystery

of life. Katie Fontana, whose St. Joseph Day festivities include making 16 pounds of fresh pasta to feed family and friends, as well as distributing four cases of oranges and two cases of lemons to visitors to her altar, noted to me in her expression of both relationship to the saints and fatalism about that interaction: *You never know what they're [the saints] going to do to us.*

The individual vows that keep the Gloucester altar tradition alive are themselves embedded in the social environment of a religious and ethnic organization called "The Mother of Grace Club." The existence of the club is itself the result of the vow of three sisters, Katie Fontana included, made to their powerful Sicilian-American mother to keep the club alive. The Mother of Grace Club currently comprises 63 women of Italian and Portuguese descent, all wives of Gloucester fishermen. Dedicated to the Virgin Mary, the founding women of the club came together during the early 1940s to pray for the safety of their fathers, husbands, sons, and brothers off fighting in the Second World War. In response to such anxiety, the women regularly gathered together to pray, recite the rosary, and sing hymns. The focus of their petitions to Mary and the saints was the safe return of their men. Their meetings created a network of support and friendship in a time of isolation and loneliness. After they prayed, the women would eat pasta, and enjoy pastries and coffee. At the conclusion of the war, all of their loved ones returned home to them. Their devotion had worked, and their prayers were answered. These women decided to maintain their meetings and approached the city of Gloucester about purchasing an abandoned building downtown as their clubhouse.

The women, with the assistance of their husbands and network of relations, restored the building on Washington Street. The club's location makes it central to a variety of Italian American parades, pageants, feasts, and novenas that take place in the city. Within the constellation of religious activities of which the club members partake is the tradition of building domestic shrines. These home altars to St. Joseph are a direct transplant of Sicilian tradition, but fashioned for the North American context. I have been privileged to meet these women, see their altars, and enjoy their endless hospitality on a number of trips. This vibrant practice of vow-making and vow-fulfillment surrounding the design, construction, and maintenance of their altars continues, as a vow to a saint made by a mother continues to be kept by her daughter in fulfillment of a vow made to the dying matriarch.

This cycle is continuing as the granddaughters of the original Lady of Grace Club members step up to build altars to honor *San Giuseppe*. My favorite example of this continuity is the daughter of Mrs. Margaret Giacalone, who, in fact, after her mother's death and her assumption of the altar-building tradition, had her home remodeled to include the construction of two Corinthian columns to frame a permanent space to accommodate her mother's six-foot St. Joseph statue. The altar with this plaster image now remains visible and partially decorated the entire year.

These religious lives are bound up in a complex negotiated ethnic religious sensibility filled with devotionism, with belief in the efficacy of religious healing, and with a worldview open to communications from dead relatives in a series of visionary dreams and signs. In

this vernacular Catholicism, vows to dead relatives and powerful saints remain a significant means of communicating love and respect, and the communion of saints is not simply a theological construct, but a living reality. Biological and sacred families are interwoven on the altars through the careful placement of photographs of family members and petitionary letters among blessed candles and the multitude of saints' statues of various sizes (Fig. 4). Here images and words stand side-by-side interacting, alive, and open for sacred intervention concerning a family's problems; the secular family items are sacralized by their contact with the holy objects and their position on this altar of vows.

Devotion to these saints has been transferred from Sicily to America, representing well-known international Catholic saints, such as St. Joseph and Padre Pio, to more localized figures such as regional Sicilian Black Madonnas. Indeed, some of these statues themselves have made the trans-Atlantic journey, purchased in European centers of pilgrimage such as Rome, Fatima, and Lourdes, the sacredness of those places adding to the authenticity and increased possibility of their intercessor power.



Fig. 4: Saints' statues on St. Joseph's Day Altar, Scola Family, Gloucester, Massachusetts, March 2005 [Photo by Joseph Sciorra].

The day-to-day relationships with a saint like St. Joseph, whose image is central to these domestic shrines, are complex. At one point, his petitioners see him relationally as a miracle-working friend of the family, not a hierarchical holy figure. At other times, the capriciousness of his decisions makes him appear cold and forgetful of his faithful. Thus, accompanying a sense of living in relation to a saint in the process of coming to and sustaining belief is a feeling of divine fatalism, a vernacular interpretation that all events are subject to fate or are somehow predetermined. Whether such fatalism is a Catholic, Italian, or Sicilian American cultural trait, I would rather not speculate at this time. However, like the variability of the weather, the sea, or the moods and personalities of family and friends, these women of Gloucester believe that one never has total control. Life means submission to God's will. These divine relations can love and victimize, bring joy or suffering, but still paradoxically, yet very significantly, there remains the possibility for negotiation, for

dealing with the effects of the inevitable or transforming what is judged negative through intercession, vow, and miracle.

Such sacred relationships are the soil from which the artfulness of building altars and making vows arises and concepts for both altar appearance and vow dedication emerge only after serious consideration by the altar/vow-makers. The fabrics covering an altar's surfaces, for example, are carefully chosen and the colors of the candles and even flower arrangements are considered for their appropriate beauty. In the same way, the length of time for the fulfillment of a vow to a saint may take a short or extended span of commitment. Of particular importance when considering the communicative and creative esthetics of this belief and practice is the rich way this altar tradition expresses and exemplifies nine fundamental characteristics of vernacular Catholicism. I have crafted this list influenced by my ethnographic experiences in Gloucester and work with other Catholic individuals and communities.

This synthesis also owes a debt to the ideas of those pillars of religious folklife scholarship, Richard Weiss [1946] and Don Yoder [1974], as well as the American Catholic theologian Richard P. McBrien [1994]. Importantly, these characteristics are often observed as central principles of Catholic normative theology, but it is in the vernacular religious belief and practice of the people among whom they achieve their own subtle, dramatic, erratic, touching, engaging, colorful, and paradoxical vitality and reality. In this sense, these are characteristics drawn from *the practice rather than the recognition of the Church* [Broderick 1976: 518].⁴ The nine fundamental characteristics of vernacular Catholicism are:

Sacramentality: the understanding of all reality as potentially or actually bearing and expressing the sacred presence of God; the created world not only embodies the sacred, but it can itself serve as a sacred, divine, or ultimate source;

Mediation: the principle that the deity works through secondary phenomena, objects, or facts to achieve both divine and human ends;

Communion: the idea that the purpose of all religious activity both institutionally-sponsored and vernacularly conceived is the union of self, family, and community with God;

Imitation: the notion that an individual or community can create a new atmosphere by repeating acts of devotion and bringing their power to bear on the intended;

Objectification: the concept that one can take ideas and actions and make them significant holy things; that is, the idea of the holy as a transferable quality;

Historicizing: relating the history of the present to the sacred history of the past;

⁴ McBrien gives a succinct explanation of *principles or themes one might select to describe and explain the distinctive reality of Catholicism* [1994: 14]. Writing from a theological perspective, he offers useful foundational definitions of sacramentality, mediation, communion, tradition, reason, analogy, and universality [Mc Brien 1994: 8–16]. Here, I have drawn from and adapted McBrien's abbreviated definitions as articulated in entries in his edited *HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism* (cf. especially "Catholicism," 1995: 256–258, and "principle of sacramentality," 1995: 1148), as well as from his longer work on the subject, *Catholicism* [1994], from which relevant entries have been extrapolated.

Universalization: the internationalization of local religious ideas, practices, and figures;

Parochialization: the localization of internationally recognized religious ideas, practices, and figures;

Negotiation: the personal interpretation of normative Catholic belief and practice expressed in both dramatic and gentle ways by believers as a natural part of their religious lives.

These characteristics have been framed within the worldview of the traditional belief system known as Roman Catholic, but could obviously be applied to other systems of religious belief and practice as well.

The description of the theme of the “Senses and Religion” for the 2006 Fifth Meeting of the SIEF Commission on Folk Religion continued the work of Professor Barna and other folklife scholars by considering how the senses in general influence, shape, establish, and maintain the religious life of all people, and, indeed, their community, individual, and institutionalized religious traditions. These preliminary suggestions will be further fleshed out as analysis of local religious vow-making and altar-creation in Gloucester is completed. As one Gloucester consultant, Katie Fontana, fatalistically stated, we may never know what the saints are going to do to us, but we as folklorists can appreciate the beauty and creativity perceived by the senses and expressed in myriad religious forms in the anticipation. The Gloucester altars built organically from sacred vows are as much feasts of fatalism as they are celebrations of the joy of visual, tactile, auditory, and gustatory creativity and display. As bounties of vernacular Catholicism, they are both decoration and devotion (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5: St. Joseph Altar, LaRusso Family, Gloucester, Massachusetts, March 2005 [Photo by Joseph Sciorra].

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ZA OBLJUBA KOT VIZUALNI PRAZNIK.

ČAŠČENJE SV. JOŽEFA V DOMOVNIH AMERIŠKIH SICILIJANCEV

Pred kratkim sem opravil etnografsko raziskavo v prostovoljnem združenju »Klub Usmiljene Matere božje« in v skupnosti katoliških ameriških Sicilijancev v pristaniškem mestu Gloucester v državi Massachusetts. Klub je izjemno družbeno in versko združenje ameriških Sicilijank različnih generacij, večinoma so žene ribičev. Klub je nastal kot podporna skupina za ženske, zaskrbljene za varnost mož in sinov med drugo svetovno vojno. Z izročilom devetdnevnic, procesij in uličnih zabav so imele članice kluba pomembno vlogo v civilnem, etničnem in verskem življenju v Gloucestru. Versko življenje mesta se je iz medvojnih dejavnosti razvilo v močno kulturno

prizorišče. Po petdesetih letih se članice še vedno zbirajo ob molitvi, petju, druženju in hrani. Njihove molitve in upanje na blagoslov – za mlade družine, ob težavah z alkoholom in mamili, bolezni, za ekonomsko blaginjo in bogat ribji ulov – ostajajo razlog za obstoj organizacije. Številne domače verske prakse, npr. postavitve oltarjev v čast sv. Jožeta 19. marca in sv. Antona 13. junija, nadaljujejo domače versko izročilo, kakršno težko najdemo med katoliki na vzhodnem obrežju Združenih držav. Prispevek poudarja izročilo domačih oltarjev, posvečenih možu Device Marije. Oltarji, obloženi s kipci svetnikov, fotografijami živečih in pokojnih družinskih članov, svečami in cvetjem, so narejeni za izpolnitev osebnih zaobljub sv. Jožetu. Ob obravnavi komunikacijske in ustvarjalne estetike verovanja in prakse je posebnega pomena bogatost votivne tradicije, ki izraža in ponazarja devet temeljnih značilnosti vernakularnega katolištva.

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Visitors from Slovenia, singing Tito's favourite song. September 2006 [Photo by J. Fikfak].

BELIEF IN SAINTS. SENSORY REALITY
IN RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE
AS PRESENTED IN EXAMPLES OF RELIGIOUS PRACTICE IN CROATIA

MARIJANA BELAJ

Examples of people's belief in patron saints on the territory of Croatia are used in an attempt to explain the sensation of sanctity through the prism of the senses harnessed in its shaping. In the same context, some practices noticed during a contemporary celebration of Youth Day (the birthday of Josip Broz Tito) in Kumrovec point to the process of consecrating of the person and place that normally, due to their provenance, are marked as absolutely non-religious or even anti-religious.

Keywords: *saints, Josip Broz Tito, religious experience, senses, Croatia.*

Številni primeri ljudskih verovanj v svetnike zavetnike na Hrvaškem so uporabljeni v poskusu, da bi razložili občutenje svetosti v prizmi čutnosti. V istem kontekstu so bili opazovani nekateri dogodki med sodobnim praznovanjem dneva mladosti (rojstnega dne Josipa Broza Tita) v Kumrovcu, ki kažejo na proces posvetitve osebe in prostora, ki sta po svoji provenienci označena kot popolnoma nereligiozna ali celo antireligiozna.

Ključne besede: *svetniki, Josip Broz Tito, religijsko izkustvo, čutila, Hrvaška.*

My point of departure is the understanding that religious persons are active creators of their religiosity and that this process involves their entire being. As stated by Talal Asad, research on religiosity includes *the entire range of disciplinary activities, of instrumental forms of knowledge and practice, within which selves are formed, and possibilities of 'attaining to faith' are marked out* [Asad 1983: 249].

This paper is based on parts of a broader study of belief in saints that are considered patrons and protectors in various life situations in Croatian religiosity.¹ Certain saints are believed to be protectors against diseases and patrons of health in general, protectors of cattle and against pests and bad weather, as well as patrons of certain trades and professions. Generally speaking, the presence of patron saints in people's lives is twofold. Sometimes

¹ The data were gathered from collections of published works and manuscripts, as well as during my field research. The collections I used include: the journal *Zbornik za narodni život i običaje južnih Slavena* (the first fifty issues, 1896–1986) issued by the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts (previously the Yugoslav Academy); the journal *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja Sarajevo* (1889–2000); the archives of questionnaires for the *Etnološki atlas Jugoslavije*, archived at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Arts in Zagreb (collected 1960–1989); and the collection of manuscripts created as a result of the research project *Združivanja i njihovi etnološki pokazatelji*, archived at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Arts in Zagreb (collected 1983–1989). The field research was conducted from 2001 to 2005 in 12 places in Croatia (in western Croatian Zagorje, central and northern Istria, the region of northern Velebit and Senjsko Bilo, the island of Cres, Čilipi in Konavle, and Zagreb). A detailed presentation of material on the veneration and roles of patron saints in Croatia, as well as a critical analysis of sources and an evaluation of extant material, has already been published [cf. Belaj 2006: 23–211].

patron saints exist in people's minds only as a mere fact (knowing the patron saints and their roles), and sometimes they constitute an element of truly living belief. Which of these two categories unfolds in a specific situation is actually a question of how belief in the saints is expressed.

Naturally, various forms of venerating saints are well known. One should mention various prayers and prayer rituals, such as everyday prayer, vows, pilgrimages, use of blessed items and blessings, and processions and practices aimed at controlling bad weather and other misfortunes, as well as various artistic and architectural expressions: paintings decorating homes or small votive pictures carried at one's side at all times, the erection of chapels, pillars, crosses, and crucifixes; organizations such as fraternities, and so on. Various forms of saint veneration may also include fasting, going around the altar or the church (sometimes barefoot or on one's knees), touching or kissing sacred pictures or objects, lighting candles, offerings (flowers, money, jewellery, wax, wooden or metal votive offerings, hair, parts of clothes, fruits), and so on. Veneration of saints can also be expressed in stories, poems, proverbs, and divination formulas. Generally speaking, many of these forms of behaviour are frequently intertwined in religious practice.

The character of patron saints' presence in people's lives is connected with the ways that people perceive and understand the notion of the term *patron saint*. A religious person will primarily connect the notion of *patron saint* with the patron saint of the local church – who is not, or need not be, present in the person's everyday religiosity. Patron saints (i.e., church titulars) frequently gain a certain profane character in this context. For example, by emphasizing 'our' saint, as compared to 'their saint', members of a community express their identity and assign them the role of a symbol around which one gathers. Furthermore, when patron saints are directly mentioned as church titulars, they are frequently connected with their particular saint's day. On these occasions the informants strongly emphasize the importance of village cohesion and socializing, and it would seem that the religious practice, sometimes even the knowledge of the role and the function of the specific patron, is less important.

I must emphasize that such examples, even though quite numerous, do not represent a unique pattern of behaviour towards patron saints.

The questions of communal identity and village social life in which patron saints can play a significant role in the ethnological sense should not be overlooked. However, when talking about research on religiosity, numerous accounts point to the necessity of clearly separating the *knowledge of* patron saints from the *belief in* patron saints. *Belief* entails a dedicated participation in religiosity and should be reflected in the accompanying expression of religious feelings. In line with these thoughts, research on belief in patron saints at the community level, clearly distinguished from sheer knowledge about saints, requires a specific research context.

Dedicated participation in religiosity is based on activity of the senses; that is, on the presence of experience induced by an event, the goal of which is to achieve sanctity. Recog-

nizing and understanding experiences or sensations leads to the point where it is possible to determine the meanings that believers ascribe to their patron saints.

THE AVAILABILITY OF SANCTITY

An extremely illustrative reflection of the need to be close to – and have close contact with – the saint is going on pilgrimages. Without doubt, by its very nature this reveals people's need to have direct contact with sanctity. In order to attain the experience of unification with sanctity, the saint – or rather, his or her representation in a form of a statue or a painting – must often be touched, stroked, or kissed. The same thing happens in churches whose titular saints are celebrated on specific days, when major village fairs are organized. In the village of Krivi Put, in a hilly region near the town of Senj, during the celebration of Our Lady of the Snows on August 5th, touching of objects that are considered sacred appears to be an integral part of religious celebration in different segments. In the description of the events that took place on this date in 2004 [Kulišić and Vuković 2004: 256], one reads that people would, upon arriving at the church, go around the altar and touch its left and right corners, either taking a vow or simply expressing deep religious feelings. Next to the altar dedicated to Our Lady of the Snows, to its left, there is also a statue of Mary, in front of which they would also pray while touching and kissing the statue. The statue is carried in a procession, which signals the beginning of the mass. The formation of this procession is emotionally the strongest moment of the entire celebration – it results in a surge of emotions, even tears. Many people start moving towards the central aisle, through which the procession leaves the church, with the intention of touching the statue. Furthermore, during the procession, several women touch the apsidal, posterior part of the church. By doing this, as one of them said, they strengthen their prayer.

This need to be close to a saint seems to imply that the saint has a worldly address. Unconceivable and hidden reality is brought into existence in a form that can be perceived by the human senses.

Another example is found in the Church of the Holy Spirit in the city of Zagreb, where on the feast day of St Anthony of Padua believers wait in a long and slow queue to go around the central altar and touch or kiss the marked spot on the back of the altar, where the saint's relics are stored. In 2004, before the beginning of the noon mass, which was held by an Apostolic delegate, an elderly lady asked to stand in the queue in front of me for five minutes, *just to see him*. She meant St Anthony of Padua. Outside the church there was still a long line of believers waiting in front of the statue of St Anthony placed on a platform to the left side of the church. Everybody would come close to the statue, say something to it, and touch the statue, the cross on its robe, or the little Jesus. Most of them touched St Anthony's face and hands (Fig. 1). Many went around the statue, touching it at the same time.



Fig. 1: Touching of the statue of St. Anthony of Padua. Church of the Holy Spirit, Zagreb, 2004 [Photo by M. Belaj].

Placed within a statue or a painting, the saint can be felt – seen, touched, and directly spoken to. In the same group of beliefs that a supernatural blessing can be obtained by touch, we can include the belief documented in the mid-20th century near the city of Rijeka (in the Kastav region). It is recorded that on the day of St Lucy, the protector of sight, some believers came to the Church of St Lucy to wipe their eyes with the altar covering to ensure the good health of their eyes [Jardas 1957: 23]. In northern Istria it is not enough to pray to St Anthony the Abbot to protect the cattle. In order to make a saint more available and more present, his or her picture is placed in barns [Belaj 2006: 83]. It is this visible presentation that is believed to be the actual saint, the true source of power ascribed to sanctity, the power that protects from misfortunes and guarantees general welfare.

A specific expression of the living dialogue with sanctity is the blessing that is given on this saint's day or at a moment of hardship and insecurity, when a person seeks help and protection from the saint. On this occasion, various objects are used to ensure and strengthen the desired result. These may include holy water, food, or a twig. It is believed that by touching, tasting, or burning these, a person can sanctify himself and his environment. The power of these objects, mediated sanctity, is brought closer to sensory reality through this act – it is materialized in tangibility, taste, smell.

Water, the symbolic source of security and life, an instrument of purification and

the centre of renewal and rebirth, is frequently seen as the materialization of supernatural mercy in Croatian religious practice. This mercy can be obtained through direct contact with water. For example, it is almost a general belief that water has beneficial power on the day of St John the Baptist, so it is believed that people should wash their faces in it or take a bath on this day in order to obtain this blessing. In accounts describing the village of Varoš near Slavonski Brod from the beginning of the 20th century, a spring was mentioned from which water flowed into a pit, and religious people washed their faces in it. People called this spring the “little vow” to St John the Baptist [Lukić 1919: 41].

The belief that the saint’s mercy is present in blessed objects and, in this way, obtainable through our senses, can also be illustrated with examples of practices connected with St Blaise’s Day. In Croatia, St Blaise is commonly accepted as the patron of the throat. In some villages in northwest Croatia, it is believed that by eating apples blessed in the church on this particular day people will ensure that St Blaise’s protective powers are translated onto them [Horvat 1896: 242; Kotarski 1917: 195; Belaj 2006: 46]. In a village in central Istria, this supernatural mercy of St Blaise is materialized in a brandy that is drunk on the occasion [Belaj 2006: 45]. These concrete mediators of St Blaise’s power, by tasting of which you can obtain his protection, also include cookies (in a village in the Dalmatian hinterland) [Ivanišević 1905: 42] and pastry (in a Slavonian village) [Čolić 1917: 145].

In the attempt to eliminate hardships and to ensure the desired order in his everyday life, man has tried to consecrate not only himself, but also his surroundings – fields, cattle, stables, and house. In this context one can find numerous examples of using twigs blessed at church on Palm Sunday or water blessed on the Epiphany. For example, the danger of an approaching storm can be overcome by burning a blessed twig because its scent is believed to be an apparition of sanctity needed in the fight against all evil. In northern Velebit, in addition to praying to Elijah to prevent bad weather and thunderstorms, people burn blessed twigs in front of their houses while directing the smoke towards the approaching storm. An informant said: *We kept them. We used to burn three, four twigs. Evergreen smells nice . . . And it would be as if you removed it [the storm] by hand* [Belaj 2005: 384].

Some also believe that the power contained in a blessed twig can affect the crops, so they tend to put them in direct contact with the soil. Twigs are therefore stuck into fields on St Mark’s Day, for example, in Konavle [Belaj 2006: 136], or on St George’s Day in Croatian Zagorje [Kotarski 1917: 198]. It is believed that the twigs mediate the Lord’s blessing to the fields, and ensure a good crop and protection from hail.

Blessed water as a mediator of sanctity also has widespread use in folk religious practice. In a small village in northern Velebit, people would pray to St Anthony of Padua² to heal the cattle and the cattle were simultaneously sprinkled with holy water [Belaj 2006: 85]. In the same region, God’s blessing on the cattle was obtained by sprinkling the barns on the

² This transfer of the function of the patron of cattle from St Anthony the Abbot to St Anthony of Padua has also been documented outside Croatia. In his book *Praznično leto Slovencev*, Niko Kuret stated that this has gradually happened in Slovenian religiosity as well [Kuret 1989/1: 377–378].

Epiphany [ibid. 92]. Furthermore, St George's day was celebrated by blessing the cattle. In this case, the prayer for good health was accompanied with whipping the cattle with the blessed twig and sprinkling the cattle with the blessed water, or by sprinkling the cattle and burning the blessed twigs so that their smoke filled the entire barn. Some people would intensify the smell by burning garlic as well. It was believed that this smell would ensure the protection of cattle from snakebites [Belaj 2004: 147–148]. In Istria, on the day of St Anthony the Abbot, the cattle were blessed not only with holy water, but also by tasting blessed salt [Belaj 2006: 83].

From the examples mentioned above, it is evident that the frequent use of blessed twigs, water, or food in folk blessings and, generally, notions about Christian saints that are believed to have a certain influence on the natural world and earthly needs, reflect a specific relationship between man and sanctity. This is a relationship in which sanctity can be easily reached. Water, twigs, and food are materializations of supernatural mercy. In moments of any kind of crisis, this supernatural mercy is readily available and effected through tactile contact with blessed water, the taste of blessed food, or the smell of the blessed twig. The indefinite feelings of holiness here were transformed into something concrete, perceivable, and visible, and a large number of sacred objects and ritual practices enable people to fulfil their wish to consecrate their entire surroundings.

THE SENSES AND THE PROCESS OF CONSECRATION

The sources mentioned at the beginning of this article present an abundance of data indicating that people sought to transcend the uncertainties of earthly existence by bringing sanctity into the world of senses; that is, through its transformation into some sensory form. Instead of insisting on similar contemporary examples, in the same context I now present the results of my research on an event that, due to its provenance, falls completely outside the religious domain. Within the framework of this event, I also present an instance of worship of a person that has never officially been declared a saint, and never could be, but is made into a saint by the participants in the event, who then visit his statue.³ In other words, my intention is to show that the senses play an important role in the process of consecrating a person or a place.

The event in question is the celebration of Youth Day (SCr. *Dan mladosti*), which was an official state holiday in the former Yugoslavia, commemorating the birthday of Josip Broz Tito during the communist period. None of the newly formed states in southeast Europe celebrate this day as a state holiday today; however, Youth Day seems to have survived political changes. This is proved by the thousands of people that come from all parts of the former Yugoslavia and still organize and participate in this celebration in Kumrovec,

³ The data were collected during the celebration of Youth Day in 2004.

the birthplace of Josip Broz. The statue of Josip Broz⁴ beside his birth house has a special place in this celebration. The village itself, thanks to the statue of Josip Broz Tito and the historical inventory connected to it, has received the mark of a sacred place, primarily from those that participate in the celebration, but not exclusively from them.

The statue of Josip Broz in Kumrovec often acts as an intersection point of conflict between different interpretations of history. Some people feel that it should be removed, and have even planted explosive devices under it. In 2004 the statue was damaged in an explosion and had to be sent for restoration. Others are appalled at such incidents and are in favour of the statue remaining where it is.⁵

In this way, the monument to Josip Broz stops being a monument and becomes Josip Broz himself. This is the fact I will focus on.

It would be quite unusual if the dismantling or survival of a statue could solve disputes on the interpretation of history, and therefore it is certain that the meaning and importance attributed to this statue extend far beyond its sheer physical existence. Because we are talking about Josip Broz Tito – a figure about whom public opinion ranges from the extremes of ‘the greatest son and teacher of our peoples’ to ‘butcher, criminal, dictator’ – it becomes evident that, in the disputes already mentioned, all these characteristics belonging to a real person are projected onto the statue that represents him. In this way, the monument to Josip Broz stops being a monument and becomes Josip Broz himself. This is precisely why the destruction or survival of the statue is so important to each of the parties in the conflict.

The opposite attitudes towards the monument to Josip Broz are interesting insofar as they represent, at least to some people, something untouchable, “sacred”, causing them to view its desecration as “sacrilege”. To others, the very existence of the monument is “sacrilege”. In both cases, the statue is perceived as the man himself, and the rest of this paper will address exactly this aspect of the problem. However, a proper understanding of the matter is not possible through a mere sounding and interpretation of conflicting ideas because we would run the risk of taking the life out of something that in reality is very much alive. *Identities are not at first hand a question of ideas but of ordinary practice – the tactile, sensual and practical relationship to the natural and humanly created environment* [Frykman & Gilje 2003: 11]. In this sense, instead of wondering about what Tito’s monument in Kumrovec represents, I was interested in what was happening around it and what its influence was on

⁴ The statue was created by the Croatian sculptor Antun Augustinčić. It was placed beside Tito’s house in 1948.

⁵ Such phenomena are not endemic to Croatian society. Many monuments to Tito have been removed throughout Bosnia, causing graffiti such as *Tito, come back* to appear as an expression of dissenting political opinion [Ridley 2000: 460]. Contemporary and similar to these events was the spectacular overthrow of the monument of Saddam Hussein in 2003 in Iraq. Destroying statues of former rulers or dictators has long been common in many societies, while sometimes even the very mention of their names was banned. The supporters of the new order not only take vengeance through this act and right past wrongs, but also unequivocally mark the boundary between the past and the present. *To pass judgement on the practices of the old regime is the constitutive act of the new order* [Connerton 1989: 7].

those “using” it. This presents a paradox. Tito and his followers held to Marxist doctrine and publicly denounced religion. Moreover, religion was an issue that was not even mentioned, except as an opiate for the masses. Thus, the big issue is how to experience the statue of Tito as Tito himself, without this experience being religious in a certain way.

Without doubt, the statue of Josip Broz can be viewed as merely a remnant, or as an object. I prefer to view it as one side of a living dialogue, or as a subject. What kind of dialogue takes place between the statue and the visitors to Kumrovec, what effect does the statue have on them, and how do they in turn make it alive? The anthropologist Michael Jackson wrote:

The meaning of body praxis is not always reducible to cognitive and semantic operations: body movements often make sense without being intentional in the linguistic sense, as communicating, codifying, symbolizing, signifying thoughts or things that lie outside or anterior to speech. [Jackson 1983: 329]

Understanding the significance of what those attending the Youth Day festivities do, capturing the meaning of their experience, meant inhabiting their world and bodily participating in it by imitating their actions [Jackson 1996: 28–29].

A long queue leads to events around the statue; only in its outside appearance is it a queue to have a photograph taken with the statue. While queuing, the conversations of the people were imbued with that which is commonly ascribed to the domain of religion. A man from Varaždin asked me to pose for a picture with him. While watching the people taking their pictures, he said: *He was too gracious*. When I drew his attention to the people touching the statue, he explained: *Well you see, he was a god. He is a god. And we will touch him*. When our turn came, we laid our palms on the coat of the statue. *Now we're close*, he said. His experience of closeness, of intimacy, is hardly an effect of touching a mere statue. If that were the case, his experience would probably be that of the coolness of the material the statue was made of.

I approached a woman who had just been wiping away tears.⁶ When I asked her if she was sad, a smile appeared on her face and she said she was very happy. She told me how in *those days* people had had different values, how Tito deserved credit for this, and how today, pointing to the statue, *his feet should be kissed for it*. There were no great historical facts in her story, no ideological doctrine founded in this history. She told me about her personal experience of the time, the sacrifices that were made in the determination, pride, and desire to move on; of her own emancipation and the founding of her family; of a morality marked by family values and solidarity instead of materialism.⁷ It is difficult to believe that a statue might induce such memories and almost instructive narrations. I asked her:

– *Have you touched Tito?*

⁶ The woman in question was born in 1928 and was living in Križ (northwest Croatia) at the time.

⁷ It is interesting that such views are inspired by the statue of Josip Broz, who for many reasons (e.g., his automobile collection, his cigars, his private Brijuni Islands, association with Sophia Loren, etc.) was commonly perceived as a *bon-vivant*.

- *[she laughs] Many times!*
- *You said we ought to kiss his feet . . .*
- *Not just the feet, we should kiss the pedestal itself. Because what he did for man . . . You don't forget that. We were all equal. All for one, you understand. I am proud of that. And nothing can change that. Nothing! . . . Pure hearts, pure souls, and no one can take that away. They can take your life away, everything . . . but this . . . no one can ever . . .*

While she looked at the statue, recalled the events of the past, and renewed moral principles adopted long ago, I was sure that she saw a real person in it – Josip Broz himself. She was not looking at the bronze statue in Kumrovec, but at Josip Broz, who was to her the embodiment of the times and the virtues she talked about. This experience was surely stimulated by the nearness of the statue.

The statue of the person – who, for those participating in the celebration, is an epitome of virtue and ideal – provokes in them specific gestures, actions, and emotions that in turn transform this statue into the living person. Many of these actions and gestures are not simply suggestive of the religious, but are in fact taken over from religious practice. The majority of those coming to the statue were individuals that expressed and experienced their meeting with the statue in a lively manner. They talked to the statue, saluted it, cried while looking at it, or touched it.

One woman constantly kissed and touched the statue and the other ecstatically kissed its coat and feet, and then searched for the hand placed at the back of the statue in order to shake it. One woman came running into the garden and shouldered her way to the statue, obviously very excited. She stroked it several times, and at every stroke she would say: *This is for Radenković, this is for Majda . . .* and she continued with different names. After that, she kissed Tito's coat. There were groups of women that circled around the statue touching it, while some would simply touch it and cross themselves. That day, many expressed in similar ways their experiences that were the result of their encounter with the statue (Figures 2–6).

To them, and to all those that talked to the statue or saluted it, this statue had undergone transcendence, becoming the person it represented. The relationship these people had with this statue was a relationship of two entities – a relationship that is very much like that of the one formed between a religious person and his or her patron saint. In this respect, the cult of Josip Broz is similar to religiosity as manifested in the veneration of the saints. I have in mind above all the circling around the statue, saluting and talking to it, lighting candles, laying flowers at its feet, the gesture of crossing oneself in front of the statue, and touching and kissing the statue.

It is worth adding that, apart from events around the statue, one finds other interesting information referring to the presence of the religious sphere either directly or indirectly; for example, in participants' stories:



Fig. 2: Touching of the statue of Josip Broz Tito. Kumrovec, 2004 [Photo by M. Belaj].



Fig. 3: Touching of the statue of Josip Broz Tito. Kumrovec, 2004 [Photo by M. Belaj].



Fig. 4: Touching and circling around the statue of Josip Broz Tito. Kumrovec, 2004 [Photo by M. Belaj].

1. *Look, everything is important. First we went to Tito's monument. I talked to him and kissed him. I do that every time.*
2. *What more can I say: Tito, you were a god, you are a god. What else? . . . Before we couldn't go to church, we were communists. Now you can do anything, even admire Tito.*
3. *I'll tell you why I'm here – Tito is a god! I'm not religious, but Tito is a god.*
4. *I'm sorry I didn't take that big picture of Tito. I have it at home. Just like someone would put God up. And I, I have a crucifix, I have God up, but I also have Tito. He was a god and this one is God. For me, they both live. [Where do you keep the picture?] In the room. No one is allowed to take him down from there. If they do, I'm leaving home.*
5. *[Is there any other day in the year that is so important to you?] Yes, Easter is important, and Christmas too.*



Fig. 5: Lighting of candles in front of the statue of Josip Broz Tito. Kumrovec, 2004 [Photo by M. Belaj].



Fig. 6: Talking to the statue of Josip Broz Tito. Kumrovec, 2004 [Photo by M. Belaj].

Furthermore, on the banners the visitors carried at the celebration, I could see messages such as *Yesterday, today, forever Tito*, or *Tito lived, Tito is alive, Tito will live*, and in the visitors' book in the house Tito was born in there were sentences like *Rise, my comrade, and chase these guys away; In my heart you remain immortal; Peace be with you*, signed by two nuns; or *Blessed is the one that lives forever*. I should also mention the introductory speech on the stage, which started with the following: *Tito, our comrade! I am speaking to you on behalf of . . .* which also shows his actual presence in the experience of the admiring visitors.

The thing that becomes especially interesting in the expressed experiences of the statue is the transition of behavioural practices from one domain to another; that is, the presence of the elements of folk religiosity in the framework of celebrating the profane (even communist!) holiday of Youth Day. It seems that this historical distance of 15 years enabled the people that were pro-communist to drop this anti-religious ideology, and this mixture of different worldviews could be a logical outcome of this, without any consequences. Furthermore, the celebration itself, as a contemporary escape from everyday life, introduces certain emotional and mental excitement that results in changes in physical behaviour. Escape from everyday life and surroundings *lays people open to possibilities of behaviour which they embody but ordinarily are not inclined to express* [Jackson 1983: 334–335]. The celebration of Youth Day

and the living cult of Josip Broz in today's broader social context are not a part of everyday life; indeed, they are often placed at the margins and sometimes even ridiculed.

These events confirm yet another fact. Official institutionalization is not a necessary prerequisite for a place to become sacred. Furthermore, the character of certain places will never allow official consecration to take part. The consecration of such places happens through unrestrained sensory experiences and interpretations that, in their meaning, belong to the religious domain, but transform the place into a real pilgrimage centre through their importance and character. These experiences and interpretations can be so powerful as to result in a complete reversal in the meaning of a place that, in its character, is marked as completely non-religious, even anti-religious – as has happened with the village of Kumrovec.

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VEROVANJE V SVETNIKE. ČUTNA REALNOST V VERSKI IZKUŠNJI (PRIMERI S HRVAŠKEGA)

Podlaga za razpravo so nekatere moje raziskave s področja verovanja v svetnike – zavetnike v hrvaški ljudski pobožnosti. Živa vera v svetnike zavetnike pomeni aktivni dialog s svetim, tj., aktivno doživetje svetega. To religiozno izkušnjo opazujem iz perspektive čutov, ki so vključeni v njeno oblikovanje.

Izrazi pobožnosti do svetnikov kot zavetnikov so raznovrstni. Za to priložnost sem izbrala posebej tiste, ki jasno kažejo na prepletanje konkretnega in abstraktnega in ki jasno nakazujejo željo, da se tisto, česar ni moč spoznati, pojavi v obliki, ki je dostopna čutom.

Najvidnejši odsev potrebe po bližini svetnika in želje, da bi dosegli enost s svetim, je verjetno odhod na romanje. Svetnika, natančneje – njegovo podobo v skulpturi ali na sliki, je treba pogosto videti, se je dotakniti, pobožati, poljubiti, svetnika nagovoriti z besedami in molitvami. Podobno se dogaja ob prošenjih (žegnanjih). V Krivem Putu (nad Senjem) je, npr., ob praznovanju dneva Marije Snežne, 5. avgusta, dotikanje predmetov, ki jih štejejo za svete, neogibna komponenta v več segmentih verskega praznovanja: verniki se dotaknejo levega in desnega vogala oltarja, posvečenega Mariji Snežni, dotikajo se in poljubljajo Marijin kip levo od oltarja, tega kipa se dotikajo tudi ob izhodu procesije iz cerkve, nekatere vernice se dotikajo ob procesiji zadnjega apsidalnega dela cerkve, posvečene Materi Božji Snežni.

Poseben izraz živega dialoga s svetim je blagoslov na god določenega svetnika ali pa v primeru negotovosti, ko se svetnika kliče na pomoč ali v zaščito. Ob tem rabijo predmete, ki povzročajo

zaželeni učinek. Na Hrvaškem so to npr. blagoslovljena voda, jed, sveča ali blagoslovljena vejica. Vernik želi posvetiti sebe in svojo okolico z dotikom, pokušanjem, sežiganjem teh predmetov. S temi dejanji se milost svetnika, posredovana v blagoslovljeni snovi, konkretizira v dotiku, okusu, vonju. V trenutkih negotovosti in nevarnosti lahko človek nejasen občutek svetosti s takšnimi postopki prevede v konkretno, razumljivo, vidno, ter si tako zavaruje zaželeni Red.

Prizma čutnosti ponuja možnost odkrivanja religioznosti tudi tam, kjer je ne pričakujemo, vsaj ne nominalno. V tem kontekstu predstavljam rezultate spremljanja sodobnega praznovanja dneva mladosti v Kumrovcu. Gre za dogajanje, ki je po izviru popolnoma zunaj religioznega, tj. državni praznik iz časov bivše Jugoslavije, s katerim so praznovali rojstni dan Josipa Broza Tita. Sodeč po tisočeri udeležencih, ki še danes spremljajo praznovanje v Kumrovcu, je dan mladosti preživel politične spremembe. V tem praznovanju je zelo pomemben kip Josipa Broza, postavljen pred njegovo rojstno hišo v Kumrovcu.

Kip osebe, ki za udeležence praznovanja predstavlja utelešenje vzornosti in ideala, izziva v njih posebne geste, postopke in občutke. Ti, povratno, spreminjajo kip v osebo, ki jo predstavlja. Marsikateri postopek in gib kažejo, da so prevzeti iz verskih ritualnih praks. Tu v prvi vrsti mislim na dotikanje in poljubljanje kipa, obkrožanje in kroženje ob njem, pozdravljanje, nagovarjanje kipa, prižiganje sveč, polaganje cvetja okoli podstavka, celo na gesto križanja pred kipom. Odnos ljudi do kipa je razmerje med dvema entitetama, je razmerje, ki je podobno razmerju med verniki in svetnikom – zavetnikom.

Čeprav sam značaj Kumrovca ne bo nikoli omogočil njegove uradne kanonizacije, dogajanja v njem potekajo skoz nenadzorovana čutna doživetja in interpretacije, ki po svojem značaju sodijo v domeno religioznega, in ga po svoji moči in značilnostih povzdigujejo v pravo »božjepotno« središče. Zdi se, da zmorejo ta doživetja in interpretacije pripeljati do popolnega obrata v dojemanju mesta, ki je po svoji provenienci označeno kot popolnoma nereligiozno ali celo antireligiozno, kakor je to v Kumrovcu.

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THE PERFORMANCE OF A CULT OF THE SENSES. A FEAST OF FANS AT JIM MORRISON'S GRAVE IN PARIS

PETER JAN MARGRY

This article deals with the different ways fans commemorate and venerate the American rock star and poet Jim Morrison (1943-1971), at his grave at Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris and for which the senses play an important role.

Keywords: *Jim Morrison [rock star]; commemoration; senses; cultus.*

Avtor razpravlja o različnih načinih, na katere oboževalci komemorirajo in častijo ameriškega rokovega zvezdnika in pesnika Jima Morrisona (1943-1971) na njegovem grobu na pariškem pokopališču Père Lachaise. Pri tem imajo čuti zelo pomembno vlogo.

Ključne besede: *Jim Morrison [rokovski zvezdnik]; komemoracija; čuti, kult.*

More than thirty years after his death, Jim Morrison, the singer of the American rock group The Doors and a poet that would not be dictated to or let himself be controlled by anyone, was finally fenced in by authority in April 2004. Crowd control barriers, connected to one another by heavy metal rods and anchored in the ground, were placed around his grave and several adjoining graves at Père-Lachaise Cemetery in Paris [Henley 2004].

This was the culmination of a 25-year-long series of confrontations between Morrison's fans, the informal community that formed around his grave and annexed it with their specific youth culture, and the powers that be. The placement of the barriers is an intervention that has inverted the meaning and functions around his grave. On her visit to the grave that year, a German woman described it as *painful*.¹ She found it primarily painful for Morrison, but she was also very much affected herself. When she touched the cold and unmovable anchored metal of the fence with her hands for the first time, she experienced mental and physical exclusion from the person she was coming for. The fencing and the permanent surveillance by policemen and functionaries of the cemetery made it impossible for anyone to touch or stroke the grave and to have the bodily experience of proximity to the grave and physical contact with the sacred place. Several fans I interviewed all confessed that this made it difficult to experience the right feeling at the grave. The fans were no longer able to imitate their hero in his anarchistic and spiritual or shamanistic way of life. They could no longer perform the necessary rituals or reenact the social gatherings at his grave on the yearly memorial days: his birthday (8 December) and death day (3 July).

¹ Visitors' quotes come from fieldwork carried out by the author at and around Morrison's grave on 20-23 May, 2-4 July, and 8 December 2004, and 2-3 July 2005, as well as from a separate questionnaire sent out in 2005.

Sacred places are subject to contestation [Eade and Sallnow 2000]; in the case of conflict, vigorous measures are often taken to control the situation. However, at Père-Lachaise it did not start in this way at all; it was only years afterwards that the grave became a place of pilgrimage. Five days after Morrison's death on 3 July 1971, despite his global fame as a star, he was buried almost anonymously. The grave was nothing more than a nondescript rectangle of sand bounded by stone curbs, to which a nameplate was affixed. However, with the rediscovery of *The Doors* in 1978, the interest in his person and significance received an enormous boost. The iconization and mystification of Morrison and *The Doors* assumed global dimensions [Hopkins and Sugerma 1980; Densmore 1990].

If, through the growing interest in Morrison's person, his grave was subject to a material change, in an immaterial and informal sense – that is to say, in terms of the visitors and the scene around it – the changes were all the more radical. The grave increasingly became the central physical reference point for fans and devotees from around the world. Now, with hundreds of thousands of visitors, it is the most visited site in the cemetery. The fact that visitor numbers continue to rise in itself points to the peculiar significance of Morrison's grave. It has a meaning that became much broader in the 1980s and 1990s, when, through the presence and activities of a broad range of deeply involved fans, this *espace Morrison* came into being. It turned into a socio-cultural space where identification with and imitation of Morrison's life took place [Söderholm 1990; Fournier and Jiménez 2004, 2005]. The social annexation of the space was visible from a considerable distance from the grave and physically marked primarily by the large number of graffiti and inscriptions in and on trees, graves, and mortuary chapels [Reed and Miller 2005: 34–37]. The collision between the Morrison cult and the order of the cemetery is most clearly visible at the material level. The cemetery was systematically being plundered of its funerary paraphernalia. Not only this massive theft, but also the large-scale graffiti damage to the historic grave monuments sharpened the discussion about tolerating the continued existence of the informal Morrison community in recent years.

In the case of Morrison's grave, it was the ritualesque performances, the indecent behavior, and the brotherhood-like activities on and around the grave that were the main cause for the restrictions. These restrictions involved more than placing an iron curtain on the site. Because the problems related to these performances were to a considerable extent induced and enhanced by strong individual and collective stimulation of the human senses, a ban was also enacted on “inappropriate” behavior [for a photographic representation, cf. Campbell 1994, 2001].

To evaluate the Morrison cult, it is important to be aware of all the sensory components and their meanings [cf. Bendix 2005]. In general, the senses contribute to the cultural experience and agency, and these are strongly involved in the cultural practices of the Morrison cult.

This paper deals with the question of how the senses are associated with the Morrison cult and to what extent they are taken by the fans as essential for idolizing Morrison or for

the social and ritual practices at the grave. First, however, I would like to determine what circles and discourses exist around the grave, and to determine if there are people among the great number of visitors that visit the place in a religious context and perhaps with religious expectations.

The grave attracts many visitors. If we speak in figures, hundreds of thousands of people from all over the world visit this cemetery in Paris. On the basis of my initial field work, I determined two major categories that can be roughly subdivided into different circles of visitors [cf. Margry 2007]:

- A. Tourists and cultural heritage visitors (tour groups, individuals, and families visiting Père-Lachaise on their own as a cultural or historical monument);
- B. Fans (whom I concentrate on this paper), divided into:
 1. Music lovers or fans of Morrison and The Doors, who visit Père-Lachaise especially for the grave. Many of them also go there for the *communitas* of fans that comes into being on his birth and death days. They mainly come to celebrate Morrison as a rock star, performer, and icon.
 2. Fans that come to the grave with a more than ordinary interest in Morrison as a person and his textual legacy; less solely for the musical and iconic dimensions, and more for the spiritual and shamanistic qualities that are connected with his person and poetic writings. They operate mainly individually and can also be described as pilgrims.

The visitors in these two categories are of a more-or-less heterogeneous international background, but the vast majority are white Europeans and North and South Americans; in particular, Americans, Canadians, Germans, Italians, Dutch, and Swiss.²

That the grave can be seen as a shrine has been affirmed by many fans. Carmelita (born 1979) from Oslo stated, for example, that: *It's a kind of a religious place; with a religious feeling to it*, and Cecilia from London says that she *can feel the power from it [the grave]*. Other fans oppose the idea of a holy place and a connection with religion, although they do often acknowledge the shamanistic gifts of Morrison: *Yes he does have those gifts for sure* remarked Jessy from Germany. However, another category of fans opposes all relations between shamanism, sacredness, or holiness and the person Jim Morrison. All of them agree on the importance of the sensation of the senses when present at Morrison's grave. However, the senses have different meanings for each group.

THE SENSES

The cult around the grave of Morrison as an idol and role model is connected to a broad repertoire of religious rituals and experiences. It is mainly the inner circle of fans that participate in the performance of these practices and rituals. Sensory perceptions play an

² Persons of all ages are found in these categories. The category of dedicated fans differs in the sense that it usually involves persons under 40.

important role in their performance and social interplay. These are generally strongly defined by a stimulation of the senses of the participants because this was what Morrison himself practiced during his life – namely, a life of making music, and singing, but also smoking and drug use. The same is true for the drinking parties that took place at and on the grave for years, until 2004. For this socially orientated group of fans, these were the necessary ingredients for fully experiencing Jim Morrison and for constituting the brotherhood-like bond between the fans. The shared sensory experience proved to be important, not to say essential, for their collective ritualesque experiences. As one fan stated, they wanted to *share that feeling; knowing that we understand each other*. A German fan wrote that he made his visits only on the commemoration days, in order to *celebrate this with the rest of 'the Doors family'*.³ In this specific way, Turner's concept of *communitas* seemed to come into being at this grave. The fans want to *live his life on the edge*, activities which they perform at the site as an *imitatio*, in order to attain the state of leaving oneself – a trance through a general stimulation of the senses. The fans imitate Morrison's lifestyle in order to acquire some of his shamanistic or trancelike state of performance.

The name of his band, The Doors, is also symbolically important in this context. It was taken from the title of Aldous Huxley's book *The Doors of Perception* [1954], which describes his experiences with mind-expanding drugs. Huxley explored the idea that the human mind filters reality, and he wrote down his thoughts and feelings. With psychedelic drugs he perceived reality in different ways and his perceptions seem to be enlarged. Thus many people smoked at the grave: cigarettes and, before the restrictions, also hashish as well as other drugs. The Dutch fan Marcel is obliged to smoke a joint before going to the grave, in order to have *my head in the clouds*. It was not only marijuana smoke that stimulated the mind and the nose. Burning incense and, to a lesser degree, candles contributed to an atmosphere in which the nose was primarily stimulated.

Another mind-expanding agent is alcohol. Because alcohol played an important role in Morrison's life, the taste of alcohol – especially whiskey, and the brand Jack Daniel's[®] in particular – is also important for the fans. Alcohol is seen as an important tool for freeing the mind, for activating and stimulating the celebration, and for achieving a shamanistic trance like Morrison's. This idea is very much symbolized in the (empty) bottles of Jack Daniel's[®] whiskey that are found on the grave. A characteristic picture by the American photographer Michelle Campbell shows perfectly how the tomb was used as an altar for drinking (Fig. 1).³

Because it is no longer permitted to sit or lean against gravestones or tombs, or to make music or use CD-players, singing, yelling, and dancing have stopped at the cemetery, reducing the sensory possibilities to mere simple gazing. However, before this the communal musical acts and reenactments were very important for fans' celebration of their idol.

Religiously related phenomena are often expressed in an embodied way. This also

³ For those that like parallels, an altar is also a tomb on which the priest drinks alcohol.

applies to the Morrison cult: the physical presence at the grave and the possibility of making full contact made the ritual of touching central. This ritual is the most important in relation to the sensory experience. Until Morrison's bust was stolen from his gravestone, almost all of the fans laid their hand on the head during their visit. It was touched, kissed, and "signed." Next to that, the gravestone itself was touched the most.

The shamanistic gifts attributed to Morrison were felt in direct bodily contact with the grave itself. This sometimes led to undressing to attain physical contact with materiality. Sometimes women even lay down completely naked at the grave. For a great part of the fans, Morrison also represents love and sexual freedom. Because of his libertine ideas and the explicit expression of them during performances, his social fan community has also adopted a libertine attitude towards love and sex.

Before the fences were put in place, sexual activity was regularly practiced above the grave and accepted inside the inner fan group.

The imitation of Morrison is also frequently practiced in dress and haircuts. If the fans cannot resemble Morrison, they wear clothes bearing texts by or images of Morrison. Fans that wish to give physical permanence to the identification process choose a tattoo of their hero on their bodies, mostly based on the "lion head" photograph taken early in his career. The painful process of reproducing Morrison's head as a tattoo on the body is confirmation of belonging to the informal "Morrison-tribe." Therefore clothes are often partially removed in public at the grave. The Morrison tattoos are then shown, compared, admired, touched, and photographed.

The period of intensive celebration and stimulation of the senses, right on top of and around the grave, stopped in 2004. Apart from the desecration of the cemetery, the Morrison cult kept other people and tourists at distance. As a major tourist attraction of Paris, the authorities felt that everyone should be able to visit the grave. The new regulations changed the site to a major extent. The fan community had to divide their celebrations in two: more reflective, restrained, and distant behavior at the site, and the full celebration of the senses just outside the cemetery, at the La Renaissance café, which is dedicated to Morrison and is

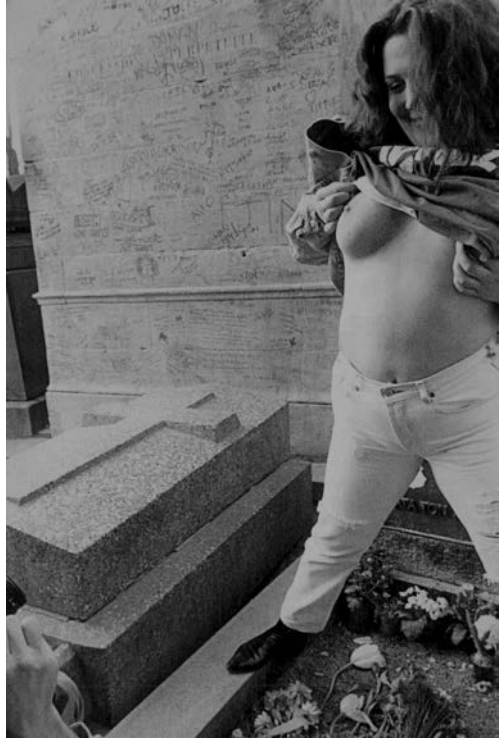


Fig. 1: Jim Morrison's grave, 1992 [Photo by Michelle Campbell].

a well-known meeting point for all Morrison fans. Here they can drink, smoke, sing along with The Doors music, yell, play around, and make new contacts.



Fig. 2: Morrison-tribe celebrating his dying day in the Café Renaissance, next to the cemetery of Père Lachaise, 3 July 2004 [Photo by Peter Jan Margry].

More contemplative and restrained experiences play a role for the second group (category B2), the more individual Morrison fans. For them, it appears that a sort of partial abstention of the senses is important. This implies, for example, that they wish to have their hearing functioning, while preferably hearing nothing. They cherish the sound of silence at the grave. These visitors prefer to stay at a distance from the mass of tourists and the noisy social in-group with their collective performances. They need to experience the quiet by the grave – or, as one young man put it, *Ruhe zum Nachdenken/peace for contemplation*. Silas, a fan from Switzerland, came in order to get more in touch with Morrison through a sort of *spiritual communication*. Dorothea, from Hamburg, who has felt a connection with Morrison's person and music since she was sixteen, has an experience with Morrison *as if the spirit of one person comes into the spirit of another, and thus I received a part of his aura*. She says, *Now and then his spirit visits me at this place and I can communicate with him*. However, these are experiences that relate more to the sixth sense, the ability to receive or send information beyond the realm of the five senses.

Thus, for most of the contemplative fans, a spiritual exchange with the cult object takes place. Jessy (born 1980) from Germany affirms: *Yes it's a holy place. I don't like it when people all around me are just talking the whole time. I prefer the silent moments*. However, for

them – as it was in another way for the social group – it is very important to be in physical contact with the grave: touching, holding, and possibly taking home sand from the grave. Since the arrival of the fences, they at least want be in visible contact with the grave. With their discrete behavior, they are often still allowed to burn incense and light candles in order to improve the contemplative ambience.



Fig. 3: Morrison bodily inscribed, Père Lachaise cemetery, 3 July 2004 [Photo by Peter Jan Margry].



Fig. 4: Postcard of the grave of Jim Morrison as it was at the beginning of the 1980's, with the first headstone and the later stolen bust.



Fig. 5: Offering of roses to Jim Morrison, Père Lachaise cemetery, 10 July 2004 [Photo by Peter Jan Margry].



Fig. 6: Reading Jim Morrison's poetry near his grave, 3 July 2005 [Photo by Peter Jan Margry].



Fig. 7: Placing of candles near Morrisons grave, 3 July 2005 [Photo by Peter Jan Margry].



Fig.8: Grave of Jim Morrisons covered with offerings and gifts, Père Lachaise cemetery, 3 July 2005 [Photo by Peter Jan Margry].

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the limited field work performed to date, it has become clear that, apart from tourist groups, there are two distinct fan groups, both of whom perceive themselves as in-groups. For both groups, the active use of the senses or a stimulation of the senses and the effects of these practices on the human mind is important for their visit to the grave and in experiencing it at its best. The senses help to evoke and cultivate the transcendental and social experiences at the grave.

The social group is noisy and joyful, and tries to constitute a bond or community of inner core fans. They miss the physical contact with the grave, although it is still possible for them to talk with one another on the spot or softly recite Morrison poetry there. They

miss the Morrison celebration and reenactment in the *espace Morrison* even more. For them, the stimulating fusion of the senses as it existed before 2004 is necessary for them to pay proper tribute to Jim on the one hand and, on the other hand, to be able to participate in the collective celebration of the in-group. They have resolved this problem by splitting the cult between the cemetery and a nearby brasserie.

The other group – who, as a matter of convenience, I refer to as the “pilgrims” – are contemplative and prefer silence. They wish to stay at distance from the loud group, which is usually actively talking, singing, and yelling. The silent fans usually operate individually and are also in great need of physical contact so that they can make a successful visit. Today they can only reflectively gaze towards the shrine, read poetry, and burn and smell incense, possibly in order to reach for the sixth sense. In this way they seek to create transcendental contact with Morrison and to evoke a personal sense of freedom, the way it is represented by Morrison.

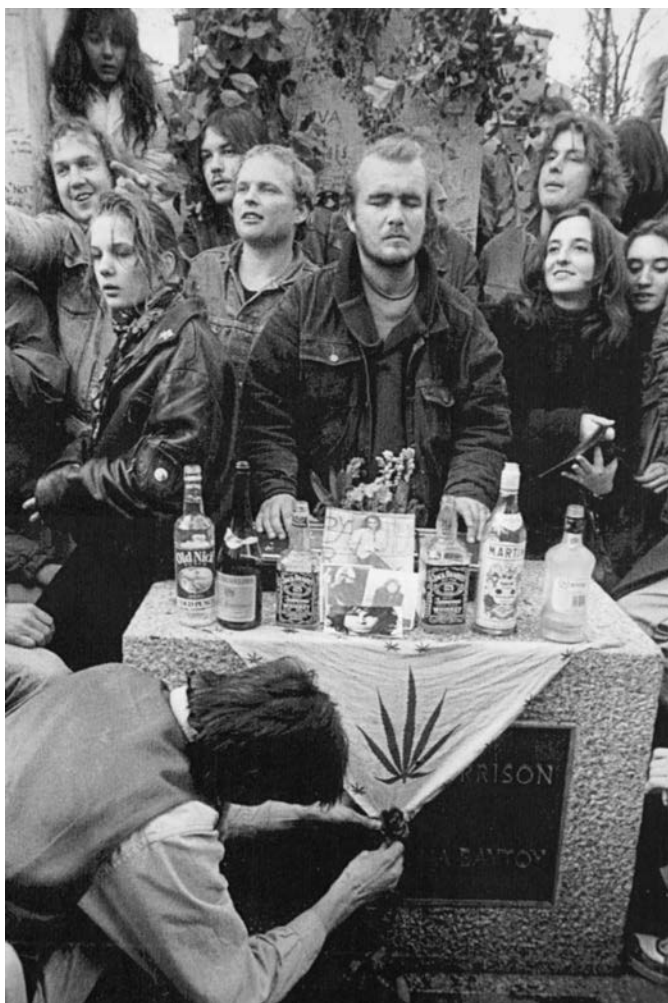


Fig. 9. The new gravestone on Jim Morrisons grave as an altar, with marijuana and liquors on top, 31 December 1990 [Photo Michelle Campbell].

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IZVEDBA KULTA ČUTOV.

PRAZNIK OBOŽEVALCEV NA GROBU JIMA MORRISONA V PARIZU

Avtor razpravlja o različnih načinih, na katere oboževalci žalujejo za in častijo ameriškega rokovekega zvezdnika in pesnika Jima Morrisona (1943–1971) na njegovem grobu na pariškem pokopališču Père Lachaise. Pri tem imajo čuti zelo pomembno vlogo.

Na osnovi krajšega terenskega dela je postalo jasno, da sta poleg vodenih turističnih skupin na grobu navadno dve skupini oboževalcev, ki se dojemata kot skupina. Za obe so aktivna raba čutov ali stimulacija čutov in učinki teh praks na človeškega duha odločilni za njihov obisk in doživljanje na grobu. Čuti omogočajo priklicati in kultivirati transcendenčne in socialne izkušnje na grobu.

»Socialna« skupina je hrupna in živahna in skuša ustvariti zvezo ali skupnost najbolj gorečih oboževalcev. Odkar so leta 2004 Morrisonov grob ogradili, pogrešajo fizični stik z grobom, čeprav je še mogoče, da govorijo drug z drugim na mestu samem ali da tam mehko recitirajo Morrisonovo poezijo. Na eni strani je zanje stimulativna fuzija čutov, kakršna je bila pred letom 2004, pogoj za ustrežno počastitev Jima Morrisona, na drugi pa so lahko udeleženi v kolektivnem praznovanju same skupine. Problem so razrešili s tem, da zdaj praznujejo kult na dveh mestih, na pokopališču in v bližnji pivnici.

Druga skupina, iz preprostih razlogov jo imenujem »romarji«, je kontemplativna in daje prednost tišini. Navadno želijo ohraniti razdaljo z glasno skupino, ki je običajno zelo dejavna, praviloma glasno govori, poje ali kriči. Molčeči oboževalci delujejo individualno, vendar imajo veliko potrebo po fizičnem stiku, s katerim lahko uresničijo uspešen obisk. Danes lahko samo od daleč gledajo na grob, berejo poezijo in prižigajo ter vonjajo kadilo, vse to, da bi dosegli šesti čut. Na ta način želijo ustvariti transcendenčni stik z Morrisonom in priklicati osebni občutek svobode, kakršno je predstavljal sam Jim Morrison.

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RITUALS AND FESTIVALS /
RITUALI IN PRAZNIKI

THE MODERN CHURCH FESTIVAL OF THE ASSUMPTION (ŽOLINĖ) IN LITHUANIA. UNDERSTANDING AND MOTIVES FOR OBSERVATION

JONAS MARDOSA

Based on information from ethnographic studies carried out during the Feast of the Assumption in Pivašiūnai on 15 August 2001 and literary material, this article seeks to determine how people understand this church festival, what aspects of the feast are important to them, and what the motives are for their participation. Information from the study showed that pilgrims understand the Assumption as a feast, and an opportunity to realize their religious needs and honour the Blessed Virgin Mary. A significant motive for participating in the church festival was seeking absolution and penance.

Keywords: church festival, Assumption, Žolinė, Pivašiūnai, understanding and motives, pilgrim.

Na osnovi informacij, zbranih pri etnografskih raziskavah v času praznika Marijinega vnebovzvetja v Pivašiūnai 15. avgusta 2001, in pisnega gradiva, skuša avtor ugotoviti, kako ljudje razumejo cerkveni praznik, kateri vidiki praznika so jim pomembni in kateri so najpomembnejši motivi za udeležbo. Zbrane informacije kažejo, da romarji razumejo Marijino vnebovzetje kot praznik in priložnost, da uresničijo svoje religiozne potrebe in počastijo Blaženo Devico Marijo. Zelo pomemben motiv za udeležbo pri prazniku je iskanje odpustanja in odveze.

Ključne besede: cerkveni praznik, Marijino vnebovzetje, Žolinė, Pivašiūnai, razumevanje, motivi, romanje.

Church festivals, or feasts, are celebrated in honour of particular saints. Of great importance are the festivals held in shrines and churches with images or altars considered miraculous [Bartkus and Aleksa 1953: 459–460]. In such cases, the church festivals last several days and have regional or even international significance. In Lithuania, such lengthy church festivals have a common feature: they honour the Virgin Mary [Lietuvių Marijos mėnuo 1937: 97] as well as the miracles and images associated with her miraculous powers. Such shrines are considered important for the entire nation. The tradition of church festivals goes back several centuries. Lithuanian theologians connect this phenomenon to the revival of Catholicism in Lithuania at the beginning of the 17th century. It was then that the image of the Virgin Mary in Trakai, not far from Vilnius, started to be venerated [Vaišnora 1958: 140], and miraculous images of the Virgin Mary appeared at the Gate of Dawn Chapel (in Vilnius) and the churches in Šiluva and Žemaičių Kalvarija (in western Lithuania). Pivašiūnai – a small town known as a pilgrimage centre in southern Lithuania since the 19th century – also has an image of the Virgin Mary considered miraculous since the 17th century. On 15 August 1988 the image was officially proclaimed miraculous, and it was titled and crowned with a special wreath by Pope John Paul II. At the instructions of John Paul II, all the necessary rituals were performed on 14 August 1988 by His Eminence Cardinal Vincentas Sladkevičius [Vitunskas 2000: 35]. Since then, the church festival in

Pivašiūnai, celebrated every year in the middle of August, lasts for an octave (the same duration as the Feast of the Assumption celebrated at other Lithuanian churches). The main day is August 15, the day of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, known as *Žolinė*¹ in Lithuanian. In today's Lithuania, this day is a national holiday.

Ethnographic studies carried out in Pivašiūnai show that the Assumption became known as a religious feast much earlier than the declaration of the church festival octave. To establish the relationship of this church festival with folk traditions as well as with the religious and secular life of the people, in 2001 (during the Pivašiūnai church festival octave of the Assumption) a study of its contemporary state was carried out [Mardosa 2004: 101–104]. On August 15, three groups of pilgrims representing different generations were interviewed (Group 1: 20–40 years old, Group 2: 41–60 years old, Group 3: over 60). Each group contained the same number of respondents, 158 altogether. In addition, a group of young pilgrims (8 persons) from southeast Lithuania (Kazlų Rūda) was asked to fill out questionnaires. This article only discusses data related to the following two aspects of the Pivašiūnai church festival: (a) understanding and importance of the church festival, and (b) motives for participating in it.



Fig. 1: Pivašiūnai. Feast of the Assumption, 15 Aug. 2001 [Photo by J. Mardosa].

UNDERSTANDING AND IMPORTANCE OF THE CHURCH FESTIVAL

People's participation in the church festival is directly associated with how they understand the festival and how important it is to them. With the religious purposes of church

¹ Related names for this festival are Polish *Matka Boska Zielna* [Ганцкая 1978: 177], Slovak *Panna Mária zelená* [Грацианская 1978: 192], and Belarusian *Zelionaya* or *Zel'naya*: [Лозка 2002: 159; 163].

festivals in mind, the answers to these questions may seem entirely clear because, from the theological point of view, the most important result of participation in the church festival is absolution for sins [Liturginis 1968: 98]. However, analysis of the respondents' answers revealed that absolution is only one of the elements in people's understanding of the feast. Another element, indicated by some portion of the respondents in each of the groups interviewed, was prayer. Most of the respondents (43.8% on average) said that they understand this day as a feast; this answer was especially popular among the respondents in Groups 1 and 2 (cf. Table 1a, item 1). These people can be divided into two groups: for one group, the church festival is a religious feast, a day to commemorate the Virgin Mary, whereas for the other group this is something like a secular feast, where one can see something interesting, meet friends, travel, and get away from everyday life for a few days. The study data show that the second perspective is more characteristic of younger pilgrims. In the group of older people, the most popular answer to how they understand the church festival was "an expression of belief". This element is rather indeterminate, but at the same time has a clearer orientation in the internal experiences of man. It was most often indicated by all the respondents (Table 1b, item 5). They argued their answer with a statement that the senses of the believer are deeply touched by absolution and penance as well as the miraculous impact of the Mother of God of Pivašiūnai.

However, most of the people emphasized an external and even visual aspect in this event, and also they also spoke about it as a means to clarify the soul, to honour the Virgin Mary, or to experience divine grace – and all of this is indicative of deeper understanding. In part, some deeper understanding was clearly demonstrated by the young pilgrims, whose questionnaires revealed their emotional impressions born during the festival and the journey to it. For them, the church festival is *the feast that fills their soul with joy and goodness that they want to share with others* (M., 17 years old), or *a meeting of believers, praying to God for help in everything* (M., 16 years old). They emphasize the attraction of the journey, the joy of being together with old friends, and learning to sing religious hymns. The spirit of Pivašiūnai is extraordinary for them because *this is a moment when everybody lives for God, and devotes time to Him* (17 years old). Their answers also show a wish to approach God and find spiritual peace.

The respondents emphasized prayer as an essential element in understanding the church festival. Especially in Group 2, they also emphasized the realization of spiritual needs through belief (Table 1b, item 5), whereas they do not so clearly express the need for absolution. It is interesting that the aspect of absolution is indicated more often by younger people (Tables 1a and 1b, item 2). Compared to the older people, they were probably more oriented toward the concept of absolution or were more familiar with the theological definition of this church festival.

Understanding	Age group		
	21–40	41–60	over 60
1. Feast	42.8	53.4	35.3
2. Absolution, penance	22.4	18.9	9.8
3. Prayer	6.1	6.7	7.8
4. Honouring the Virgin Mary	2.1	3.4	13.7
5. Satisfaction of spiritual needs (belief)	6.1	15.9	31.5
6. Tradition	–	1.7	1.9
7. Communication	–	–	–
No response	20.5	–	–

Table 1a: Understanding of the church festival (% by age group).

Understanding	Age group		
	21–40	41–60	over 60
1. Feast	19.8	–	45.0
2. Absolution, penance	7.8	12.2	1.9
3. Prayer	9.8	7.0	5.8
4. Honouring the Virgin Mary	1.9	1.7	13.7
5. Satisfaction of spiritual needs (belief)	31.2	50.8	29.8
6. Tradition	3.9	7.0	1.9
7. Communication	5.8	8.7	1.9
No response	19.8	13.6	–

Table 1b: Importance of the church festival for man (% by age group).

The older people – for whom the church festival was an occasion to honour the Virgin Mary, to enjoy the grace provided by the Pivašiūnai shrine, and to perform a Christian mission – accentuated this aspect much less. On the other hand, among the younger respondents mentioned above, who are generally better educated, there is clear a tendency to view Catholicism as an ethnic and cultural phenomenon. The participation of various generations in the church festival, which is perceived as an event important to both the church and the believer, is considered an important factor for the transmission of religious tradition. However, the formation of a tradition requires steadiness of actions, frequency of participation in the church festival (in the case of Pivašiūnai), and even the existence of some system. According to the survey data, elderly people most frequently attended the church festivals. Young people do this rarely and irregularly. This is undoubtedly an inheritance from Soviet times, when religious education was eliminated from the socialization of the younger generation. Today the biggest share of these people are middle-aged respondents. In this generation, the chain of interpersonal transmission of a religion that was practiced for centuries was interrupted. Unprepared to provide religious instruction to their children, they entrust this job to religion teachers in schools or use the experience of older people; for example, their parents. Such a mechanism, in which the religious experience of grandparents

is used to form the religious beliefs of the younger generation, is helpful.² However, the process is rather complicated because grandchildren and grandparents differ in their hierarchy of values and worldview. Fortunately, among the participants in church festivals we still can see not only grandparents with grandchildren, but parents with their children as well, this being a sign of the existence of variety in religious memory transmission and the formation of a tradition of participation in church festivals in younger generations.

The holiday factor is also of great significance when studying the importance of church festivals for man. This was especially emphasized by the oldest pilgrims (Table 1b, item 1). The Feast of the Assumption in Pivašiūnai has a great visual effect on the emotions of the participants, first of all due to its scope. The church festival is oriented toward believers and their religious emotions. One can assume that the element of the feast itself plays a very important role in attracting pilgrims to Pivašiūnai (the argument of absolution and penance was mentioned by 2 to 3 times fewer people). The opportunity to honour the Virgin Mary is quite often indicated as a very important motive among the oldest respondents. (Tables 1a and 1b, item 4). When summarized, the interview data show that the Feast of the Assumption in Pivašiūnai especially attracts pilgrims that know what they are seeking and have concrete religious aims.



Fig. 2: Believers pray at the cross, 15. 08. 2001
[Photo by J. Mardosa].

MOTIVES FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE CHURCH HOLIDAY

When watching the crowd of thousands of people – on the day of the Assumption, their number reached about ten thousand – the question of why they came to this church festival naturally arose. Motives for participation were partially revealed when discussing how people understand this feast and how important it is for them. The study data showed that

² Carole Lemée-Gonçalves calls this means of transmitting culture *transmission by jumping over a generation* [Lemée-Gonçalves 2001: 75].



Fig. 3: Believers group at the church, 15. 08. 2001 [Photo by J. Mardosa].



Fig 4: The group of pilgrims in Pivašiūnai, 15. 08. 2001 [Photo by J. Mardosa].

the focus of the church festival octave is the day of the Assumption, 15 August, which was indicated as the most important by the majority of pilgrims, including those for whom a religious factor was not most important motive for attending. Religious motives were most seldom indicated among the youngest respondents; 14.2% of these did not indicate any motives for participation at all (in fact, even more persons in this group were unable to describe what the meaning of the church festival is and how important it is for man), and as many as one third emphasized the factor of interest. If we add the portion of those seeking communication, for half of the young people the Assumption is only a formal reason for the journey. Young pilgrims for whom the Assumption was the most important motive for participation indicated tradition and belief as the most important aspects. Almost equal shares of participants (8.4 and 8.3%) attend for prayer or due to the festival itself (Table



Fig. 5: Traditional meal,
15. 08. 2001 [Photo by J.
Mardosa].

2, items 1 and 2). Among these are those that accentuate the beauty of the event and of the church, and a desire to see a miraculous image. Therefore, among younger pilgrims, not a few associate the church festival with cognitive needs, and religious needs are less expressed. On the other hand, the motives of the young pilgrims agree with how they perceive this church festival:

The church festival is a pretext to go to confession (doing this is very difficult); This is the fourth time I have come to this church festival. Here, in the church, I pray to God for health for those close to me and for myself. I ask the Virgin Mary to help me in my studies. When I came here for the first time, I wanted to see the church very much because everybody used to say that it was beautiful. I wanted to see the miraculous image too. [M., 16 years old]

Some emphasized the opportunity to approach God. One woman indicated many motives for attending:

I am here with the youth of my parish for the sixth time already. It has almost become a tradition to go to this church festival every year, which is famous throughout Lithuania. The principal aim is to spend time together, get to know each other better, communicate and make acquaintances, pray, honour the Virgin Mary, and feel how God acts in our lives.

The data from the questionnaire provide very valuable information by revealing some additional motives for attending the feast, such as seeking serenity, or meditation and prayer in an environment that helps people break free from ordinary life. On the other hand, people seeking such transcendental goals should stay in Pivašiūnai for the entire octave, or at least for the majority of it. Today, however, such pilgrims are rare.

The motives indicated by the respondents in Group 2 varied greatly, but were more closely associated satisfying religious needs, with Christian goals dominating. The main motive indicated was prayer, followed by a feast, and, in third place, satisfaction of spir-



Fig. 6: Traditional and modern form of arrival, 15. 08. 2001 [Photo by J. Mardosa].

itual needs (i.e., belief). This last motive was most clearly expressed here when compared with the other age groups studied (Table 2, items 1–3). It should be emphasized that this group as well as the first age group does not indicate the need to honour the Virgin Mary as a motive for participation at all, despite the fact that it is one of the essential reasons for organizing the festival at the church in Pivašiūnai. Only the oldest group (23.5%) associated their participation with the miraculous image of the Virgin Mary. In this group, belief as a motive for participation was indicated by 17.6% of respondents, and the wish to pray by a full 43.15%.

Understanding	Age group		
	21–40	41–60	over 60
1. Prayer	8.4	25.9	43.1
2. Feast	8.3	24.1	11.8
3. Spiritual needs (belief)	14.6	20.7	17.6
4. Tradition	16.7	12.1	1.9
5. Honouring the Virgin Mary	–	–	23.5
6. Communication	6.3	3.4	–
7. Interest	31.5	6.8	–
No response	14.2	7.0	2.1

Table 2: Motives for participation in the church festival (% by age group).

Although the church festival lasts the full octave, most respondents (90%) related their participation only to the day of the Assumption, which has the status of a national holiday and therefore provides additional incentive for the journey. The fact that the majority of the respondents associated the Pivašiūnai church festival with the Assumption means that such persons perceive the event as a religious and ethnic cultural festival. A sign of the cultural tradition in the Assumption is the custom of consecrating greenery and honouring the fruits

of farmers' labour, which was especially popular in church festivals during the first half of the 20th century [Vyšniauskaitė 1993: 106–107]. In today's church festivals, the consecration of greenery is more popular among older pilgrims.

Although the opportunity to satisfy spiritual needs is an important element of the internal structure of the church festival, this event also has clear features of a social phenomenon. In addition to the cognitive priorities that have appeared recently, the motives for participating in the church festival as indicated by the respondents in the study include a need for communication. The Soviet experience had a negative influence on people's communication. According to the respondents, before the Second World War people communicated more freely and more joyfully, and they themselves were freer, more sincere and pious, and their belief was deeper. At those times pilgrims that arrived at church festivals – on foot or by cart – would eat together with their relatives. This relaxed manner of communication while eating together – so popular during church festivals in the past – still occurs to some extent at the Pivašiūnai event (at cafes set up for the event, during solemn worship in the church, or for some brief period after worship). This is mainly affected by new means of transportation – today people go home fairly soon after the ceremony. People that go home the same day comprise 81.5% (in Group 2 this indicator was the lowest, at

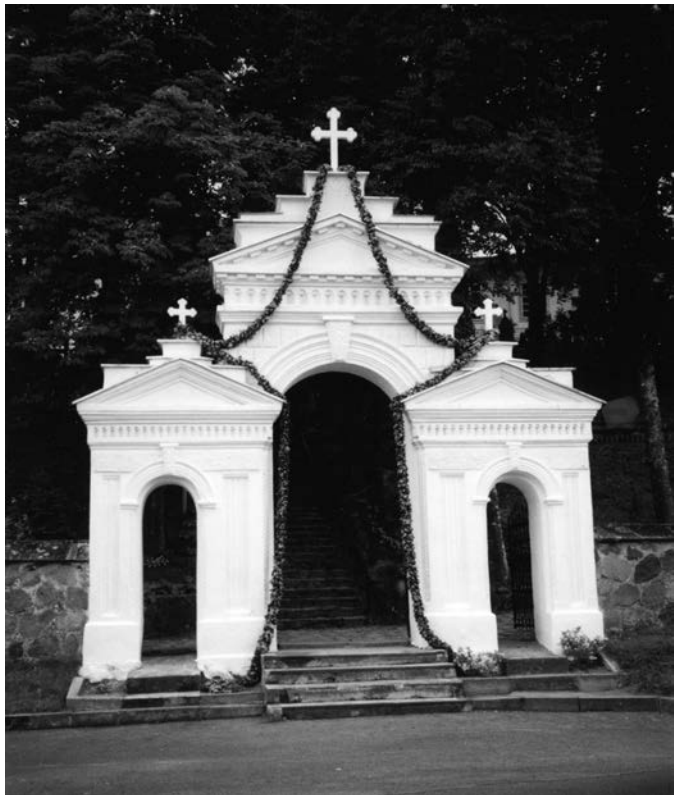


Fig. 7: Entry to the churchyard [Photo by J. Mardosa].



Fig. 8: Miraculous image of St. Mary in church of Pivašiūnai (17th century).

60.3%). Only 2.5% of respondents said they were planning to stay for a longer time, and the rest said nothing about their plans.

Thus, the Assumption – when people gather en masse on 15 August from the most remote corners of Lithuania – is noted for narrower social functions. The octave (i.e., the week after the first day of the feast) has not acquired broader significance in the church festival structure, and is confined to religious purposes only. This period is marked by the arrival of delegations of dioceses and dean's offices, as well as solitary pilgrims.

Before the sovietization of Lithuania, various cultural programmes, especially for young people, used to be organized in the town during the church festival. These traditions were interrupted in Soviet times, when the main events of the church festival took place in the church. As a result, a real divide appeared between prayer and communication. Today the social functions of church festivals are becoming stronger again, but this is mostly observed in cases when the feast does not extend beyond the borders of the parish [Mardosa 2003: 274–276]. The church festival of the Assumption in Pivašiūnai, despite the abundance of pilgrims and the fact that 15 August has been declared as a national holiday, has not yet become a feast of the town and the parish.³ Undoubtedly this is a relic of Soviet times, when

³ This feature is typical for neighbouring countries. One author that studied church festivals in Poland (in Upper Silesia) has referred to various distractions, lotteries, attractions, and dances organized during church festivals as *odpust-rozpust* [Świtała-Trybek 2000: 77; 123–145].

the social features of church festivals were suppressed and various bans were imposed. Many believers, because of their jobs or membership in ideology-related social strata, could neither go to church festivals nor openly declare a positive attitude towards religion (especially great efforts were made to isolate young people from the Church). Therefore during these times only the religious motives for attending the church festival existed. After the restoration of independence in Lithuania, together with the ability to freely confess one's faith, there appeared a more liberal (even approaching secular) approach to religion, in which participation in the feast is considered a formal expression of personal religious culture, a tourism motive. Due to this complex of reasons, today pilgrims associate their journey with the church in Pivašiūnai, but not with the town. The modern pilgrimage differs from the journeys of pilgrims popular in the first half of the 20th century. For pilgrims of that time, deep contemplation was characteristic: people used to travel on foot for some days in large processions, bearing church flags and small altars [Vitunskas 2000: 35]. Isolation from everyday troubles and marching for some days in such a procession would become a real transition from *profanum* to *sacrum*. During this study only a few small groups of pilgrims were observed arriving on foot (with religious attributes, prayers, and songs). The majority of today's pilgrims arrive by car. Those that come on foot do not have any system; their journeys are most often single events, with the aim of combining religious purposes with cognitive ones. Therefore, they usually arrive for one day: the Assumption. At the end of the 20th century, pilgrims from Western Europe and America started to come to Pivašiūnai, this being a new feature of the church festival. For them, as for pilgrims from remote places in Lithuania, especially younger ones, the Pivašiūnai church festival became an object of religious tourism.

CONCLUSIONS

As the study data show, an essential accent in the Pivašiūnai church festival octave is the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary on 15 August. On this day pilgrims seek to realize their religious aspirations and, to a lesser degree, social functions: to meet acquaintances and communicate with them.

The religious meaning of the church festival is perceived and interpreted differently by various groups. In general, the pilgrims coming to the Pivašiūnai church festival primarily understand this feast as a reflection of believers' religious senses. According to the survey, older pilgrims emphasize the opportunity to satisfy spiritual needs, honour the miraculous image of the Virgin Mary, and enjoy the emotions of celebrating a lengthy traditional religious feast. Questionnaires filled out by young pilgrims revealed their emotional impressions inspired by the journey to the church festival and the opportunity to approach God.

Regarding the church festival's importance to believers, nearly all of them value this event greatly due to the opportunity to satisfy their spiritual needs and religious aspira-

tions, but only the oldest ones value it much as a religious feast. For younger pilgrims, the Pivašiūnai church festival is not so important as a religious feast, but more important as an opportunity for absolution and penance. The pilgrims in this age group also indicated the possibility of satisfying cognitive needs as important.

Therefore the main motive for going to the Feast of the Assumption today is the opportunity to satisfy religious needs. The opportunity to realize spiritual needs, enjoy a feast, perform penance, pray, and maintain long tradition – although valued differently in the age groups studied – are the main motives for attending the church festival. Therefore the majority of the respondents planned to stay only as long as the solemn ceremonies took place. Pilgrims from other countries as well as people coming from remote regions of Lithuania, especially younger ones, consider the Feast of the Assumption in Pivašiūnai to be an object of religious tourism as well.

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SODOBNI CERKVENI PRAZNIK VNEBOVZETJA (ŽOLINĖ) V LITVI. DOJEMANJE IN MOTIVI ZA OPAZOVANJE

Z verskega vidika so zelo pomembna cerkvena praznovanja v krajih, kjer hranijo čudežne podobe ali relikvije svetnikov. V 17. stoletju je postala privlačno romarsko središče romarjev cerkev Marijinega vnebovzetja v Pivašiūnai (južna Litva), ki hrani čudežno Marijino podobo. 15. avgusta 1988 je papež Janez Pavel II. to podobo uradno razglasil za čudežno. Od takrat traja cerkveno praznovanje, v litovskem jeziku poimenovano Žolinė, osem dni, z glavnim dogodkom 15. avgusta, tj. na praznik vnebovzetja Blažene device Marije.

Razprava je nastala na podlagi študije sodobnega cerkvenega praznovanja Žolinė v Pivašiūnai, kakor je potekalo 15. avgusta 2001. Povprašali smo tri generacije romarjev (mlajšo: 20–40 let; srednjo: 41–60 let; starejšo: nad 60 let), skupno 159. Poleg tega je osem mlajših romarjev z jugovzhodne Litve (Kazlų Rūda) izpolnilo vprašalnik. V tej razpravi sta obravnavana le dva vidika cerkvenega praznovanja v Pivašiūnai: dojemanje/razumevanje in pomen praznovanja ter motivi za udeležbo.

Verski pomen praznovanja je za vsako skupino nekoliko drugačen, čeperav je za vse cerkveno praznovanje možnost, da se uresničijo njihova verska iskanja. V generaciji starejših je pomemben predvsem verski vidik praznika, pa tudi želja, da počastijo Blaženo devico Marijo; za mlajše je poleg verskega pomemben tudi družabni, spoznavni vidik.

Praznovanje romarjem omogoča, da zadovoljijo, uresničijo svoje duhovne potrebe. Izpolnjeni vprašalniki odkrivajo vrednost čustvenega doživljanja med samim popotovanjem in kot posebno vrednoto možnost, da se približajo Bogu. Občutja miru in transcendence kakor tudi globoka molitev v okoliščinah, ki so daleč od usakdanjega sveta, so pomembni za mlade, najbolj pa to doživijo tisti, ki preživijo tam večino osmih dni. Za večino vprašanih romarjev je glavni vidik cerkvenega praznovanja v Pivašiūnai sam praznik Žolinė.

Eden glavnih motivov za romanje v sodobnosti ostaja religiozne narave. Podatki kažejo, da si vprašani želijo odpuščenja in odveze. Religiozne motive mladi manj poudarjajo: za nekatere je pomembno, da se ohranja dolgoletna tradicija, na splošno pa mladi romarji povezujejo cerkveno praznovanje z medsebojnim spoznavanjem in tako je religiozni moment manj izrazit.

Za srednjo generacijo je značilno, da postanejo prevladujoči religiozni motivi in želje. Zelo pomembna je molitev, sam praznik pa nekoliko manj. Verniki iz te skupine poudarjajo željo po zadovoljitvi duhovnih potreb. Medtem ko romarji srednje generacije ne poudarjajo želje počastiti Blaženo devico Marijo in njeno čudežno podobo – kar je pravzaprav glavni razlog za organizacijo samega praznovanja – pa v generaciji starejših prevladuje prav ta motiv, ko se odločijo za romanje v Pivašiūnai. Poleg tega motiva je odločilna možnost, da v tem romarskem središču molijo, pomembna dejavnika pa sta tudi vera in krščanska dolžnost.

Nekdaj popularna skupinska peš romanja so danes redka in neorganizirana. Večina romarjev pride z lastnim vozilom na sam dan Žolinė. Med njimi so ljudje iz daljnjih litovskih mest in okrajev, iz tujih držav, vendar večina priroma z južne Litve in sosednjih pokrajin.

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THE IMPERIO IN THE AZORES.

THE FIVE SENSES IN RITUALS TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

MARIA SANTA MONTEZ

The author describes what senses are significant, and how, in the ritual Imperio festival that takes place in the Azores and has been connected with the veneration of the Holy Spirit since the 13th century. This deeply-rooted ritual practice has a special collective value within local communities and is especially cherished by emigrants to the United States and Canada.

Keywords: *Holy Spirit, Imperio, Azores, sense, ritual.*

Avtorica opisuje, kako in kateri čuti so pomembni pri ritualu "Imperio" (vladar) na Azorskih otokih. Obred je povezan s čaščenjem Svetega duha, ki je poznano že od 13. stoletja. Globoko zakoreninjena ritualna praksa je posebna kolektivna vrednota v lokalnih skupnosti, posebej je pomembna priseljencem iz Združenih držav Amerike in Kanade.

Ključne besede: *Sveti duh, »Imperio«, Azorski otoki, ritual, čuti.*

The Azores archipelago is a part of Portugal located in the North Atlantic, halfway between Europe and North America. It is of volcanic origin, with recent eruptions and constant earthquakes. According to an old legend, it was here that Ulysses landed on his way back home. Some mysterious and rather esoteric legends attempt to explain why the cult of the Holy Spirit has remained active here in such a deep and genuine way.

The veneration of the Holy Spirit dates back to the 13th century in Portugal. It survives in a few places on the mainland, but it is clearly in the Azores that it has retained a very special and strong folk religious tradition.

In the old days, a man was elected "emperor" by the village community to govern in a spiritual rather than political sense for a period of one year. Nowadays the emperor is a boy under eleven that is crowned in great pomp and circumstance during the festivities. Each village has its own coronation day, which means that throughout the Pentecost period a different village elects and crowns its own emperor every Sunday.

These festivities are the object of various sacred and profane rituals involving the sacrifice of an animal, usually a calf or an ox, which is slaughtered to provide meat to be served at the banquet for the entire population. Foreign guests are invited to partake as well.

The methodology of my research on these festivities includes personally recording the events, with special relevance given to the involvement of the five senses in folk ritual. Color, music, sound, taste, smell, and touch are omnipresent.

The cult of the Holy Spirit in spontaneous folk religion is associated with the ancient

conception found in the Old Testament; it is a breath of life that imparts life to all living beings: people, animals, and plants.

The festival of the Holy Spirit, or Pentecost, is traditionally held seven weeks after Easter. The word *Pentecost* is derived from Greek *pentēkonstē* ‘fiftieth’, which refers to seven weeks or 50 days. It was formerly a rural festival to mark the beginning of the harvest and it was a time to renew promises and contracts like its predecessor *Shavuot*, which was the Judaic feast of the renewal of the old covenant established on Mount Sinai between Yahweh and His people. Throughout the centuries, in Christian tradition Pentecost has also been commemorated either on Ascension Day or on the Sunday after Pentecost. In Portuguese religious tradition, it has been associated with Ascension Day, a very important day of the year when people in rural areas still go to the fields to gather several plants to make up a bundle of greenery that will be exchanged among family members and friends: a sprig of olive, a spike of wheat, a red poppy and daisies or other native wild flowers. This bundle is kept at home to bring good luck for the rest of the year. It is therefore easy to understand the connection established between the beginning of harvest time and this festival – as a symbol of hope, renewal, and fertility.

The cult of the Holy Spirit may have been introduced in Portugal in the 13th century (in 1296, to be precise) by Queen Elizabeth, who was married to King Denis of Portugal. The queen was a princess from Aragon, a kingdom in the Iberian Peninsula, when what is now Spain was made up of several kingdoms. Elizabeth was so affected by the extreme poverty in Portugal that she took the initiative to create the *Misericordias*, a charitable institution that provided shelter and primary healthcare to people in need. The symbol of this institution was the royal crown, to which the dove of the Holy Ghost was added. The first ceremony took place in Alenquer, north of Lisbon, when food was distributed to the poor on Pentecost Sunday.

The underlying tradition of this institution may be a custom dating back to Greek antiquity, with the *bouphonia* aimed at abolishing hunger in certain regions when sacred animals were slaughtered and their meat distributed. The *bouphonoi* were the priests that participated in these rituals. This old nomenclature is still used nowadays.

The decision made by Queen Elizabeth (or *Isabel*; her name may come from *Isis-Bel*) and King Denis (from *Dionysus*) could have been inspired by the Franciscan way of thinking, from Joachim of Fiore and the *spirituali*, and certainly as a successor to the same type of charitable institution in France, which was the *Ordre du Saint-Esprit*, founded in 1160. Queen Elizabeth was deeply religious and was later acknowledged as a saint.

Some esoteric currents have established a connection between Queen Elizabeth and the holy dove: a symbol of divine knowledge, the third *logos*, the *sanctum-sanctorum*. It may not be just by chance that Elizabeth, a symbol of Mother Earth, spread the devotion to the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit.

Gradually, several villages and towns in Portugal started the custom of organizing a festival during Pentecost week with the purpose of distributing free meat and bread to the

poor and anybody that might wish to join in. This entailed the crowning of an “emperor” who would be the central character of the whole festival – surrounded by a hierarchy of assistants that organize the event – in close connection with the religious ceremony in church. A community meal lasting the whole day on Pentecost Sunday was the main objective.

This custom has nearly disappeared from mainland Portugal – with some remnants in the Beiras region, in Tomar and Sintra, among other places – although it survives with a very special charisma in the Azores archipelago. Through emigration, the Portuguese diaspora has taken this tradition to remote places in North America, Brazil, Africa, and even Hawaii.

This presentation describes the tradition of the *Imperio* (i.e., ‘emperor’) festival, which has such a lively tradition in the Azores. Although forbidden by the Inquisition, whose power was felt in Portugal until the 18th century, these festivals have survived and are the most important folk religious events in the islands. The Azores archipelago is composed of seven islands, and each island and each village has its own special features related to these festivals.

The *Imperio*, which is dedicated to the Holy Spirit, takes place from Pentecost onwards through May and June, but not on the same day in every village or place. The most important symbols are the crown (because the emperor is crowned) and the dove, the symbol of the Holy Spirit.¹

THE NOMENCLATURE

The village group organizing and participating in the *Imperio* is composed of the following persons:

The emperor was traditionally drawn by lot among the *mordomos*, or the group of men organizing the festival, although the emperor may also be chosen because he provides a generous grant for the event. He may also be a young boy, usually the son of one of the most important donors. He may offer to be the emperor as a way to fulfill a former promise (*ex-voto*).

The empress is the emperor’s wife. The emperor is the most important person but has no power of decision because the one that rules the event is the *trinchante* ‘president’; he wears a white or colored scarf and a gown, and he is the one that makes all the decisions,

¹ The *New Testament* passage in the Gospel of St. John describing Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan River says that, after Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, He came out of the water and John the Baptist saw *the Spirit of God descending upon Him from heaven like a dove* [John 2:32]. The dove was already a symbol at the time of the Phoenicians: in their mythology, the world was created from a cosmogonic egg; when it hatched, the living beings were the sons of Phoenix. The goddess Astarte was represented in the form of a dove and *Shekinah*, which in Genesis incubated the waters before Creation, was also a dove. The dove is also a symbol of Israel *Israel is a silly dove . . . which I (Yahweh) will catch in my net* [Hosea 7:11–12].

sets up the calendar and the timetables, grants permission to the priest in the church for the ceremony to begin, and gives orders to all the other attendants.

The *foliões*, who number three to six, wear silk scarves and headpieces similar to a bishop's tiara.

The *briadores*, three in number, have long staffs and are assistants to the *foliões*.

The *menino da mesa* is a child that may represent the emperor on certain occasions. The *copeiro* is in charge of distributing the wine.

The *cozinheiros* are the cooks that prepare the meal. The *serventes* are assistants to the cooks. The *aguadeiros* are in charge of bringing water as well as firewood for cooking.



Fig. 1: Crown and dove, Ponta Delgada, Azores, 2006 [All photos by the author].



Fig. 2: The *trinchante* governs and the *foliões* lead the event, Ponta Delgada, Azores, 2006.



Fig. 3: The oxen are slaughtered and offered as a holocaust, Ponta Delgada, Azores, 2006.



Fig. 4: Oxen, star, and the Holy Spirit, Ponta Delgada, Azores, 2006.



Fig. 5: Free wine for all, Ponta Delgada, Azores, 2006.

THE SEQUENCE

The custom is for everybody in the village to participate and contribute by making a donation to the *Festas do Espirito Santo* well in advance. During the harvest, women and girls go around with a basket decorated with a white wooden dove, asking for a few handfuls of corn or wheat for the Holy Spirit, and the same occurs during the wine-making season.

The emperor is elected on Trinity Sunday, as mentioned above, and he receives the crown and staff, the symbols of his status, which he takes home until the Sunday after Easter. Two weeks before Pentecost, several village women start baking cakes. In some places the rosary is said in the community throughout the entire week.



Fig. 6: Cakes for the procession, Ponta Delgada, Azores, 2006.

On Pentecost Friday there is a procession through the village with the calves or oxen that will be taken to be slaughtered. They are wreathed with flowers, various decorations, and symbols of the Holy Spirit (see photos). Before being slaughtered, the animals are offered to the Holy Spirit: they are touched with the scepter while facing the imperial crown.

The oxen are important in these festivities² and their meat is to be distributed among the people. The cows that are slaughtered for the Holy Spirit meal are also referred to as

² The use of oxen as an offering goes back to ancient times in several cultures. This is known as the hecatomb or holocaust to Jupiter, or to God (i.e., Yahweh) in the *Old Testament*.

“oxen;” this goes back to an old tradition according to which the male is the one to be offered in the holocaust so that it can transmit its strength and magical power to humans.

In the meantime, the bread that is being baked is displayed at the emperor’s home and blessed by the priest. After the oxen are slaughtered, their meat is also displayed at the emperor’s home and blessed by the priest.

On the Saturday before the festival there is a procession with the food, displayed in beautifully decorated oxcarts (*carros de bois*) and followed by the band and the entire community. It proceeds to the *Imperio* chapel, which is not the village church but a special, tiny chapel strictly used for this occasion.

On the morning of the *Imperio*, soup is freely distributed – this is the called *sopa da manhã*. After this the procession is organized and it proceeds to the village church. The *trinchante*, who gives the orders, grants permission to the priest to start the ceremony. The priest places the crown on the altar, he crowns the emperor, and mass follows. At this moment fireworks burst in the air, and noise and odor blend. After mass, the procession goes from the church to the *teatro*, which is where the community meal takes place.

THE MEAL

The meal is freely available to everybody; even visitors and passersby are invited to participate. The main course is *alcatara*, very tender ox meat, cooked in a special way with bread (*pão levedo*) and *sopas do Espírito Santo* (a special soup made of ox bouillon), with cabbage, bread, and wine.

The people from the village offer a *pão da mesa* as an *ex-voto*. This is a round loaf of bread decorated with flowers (roses and carnations). Occasionally, one may see a woman going around the churchyard carrying a huge loaf of bread on her head, wrapped up in transparent paper; she is fulfilling a vow before bringing it to the meal. The *Espírito Santo* meal lasts all day long.

In the evening, when all the meat and bread have been eaten and nothing is left on the table, the crown is taken to the emperor’s home or, in some cases, to the home of the next emperor (if he has already been elected for the coming year), where it is displayed for three days. However, this ritual varies from island to island and from village to village. In some places, the leftover bread is auctioned and the money is given to the poor.

CONCLUSION

The *Imperio* festivities to the Holy Spirit are kept alive in the Azores with special charisma. They are so deeply rooted in the collective values of the communities that they survive and are cherished by the population. The role of former emigrants (who have usually gone to

the United States and Canada from the Azores) that return to their native islands is crucial because they bring with them modern values that blend with ancient traditions. They also help to fund the festivities because they are wealthier than the locals.

Nobody can precisely assess the real essence of this cult of the Holy Spirit in strictly religious terms. However, it is certainly an old tradition and a holy occasion for the entire population to join together in worship that is more profane than sacred.

The most important element is the meal served to the entire population and the sacred meaning surrounding it; in worship dedicated not to God the Father, not to God the Son, but to the Holy Spirit, an abstract element connected with the *nađve* and pure soul, as well as the impact of power and wisdom.

"IMPERIO" NA AZORSKIH OTOKIH. PET ČUTOV V PRAZNOVANJU SVETEGA DUHA

Avtorica opisuje, kako in kateri čuti so pomembni pri binkoštnem ritualu "Imperio" (»vladar«) na Azorskih otokih. Povezan je s čaščenjem Svetega duha in poznan že od 13. stoletja.

Na Azorskih otokih to praznovanje ohranjajo s posebno pozornostjo. Praznovanje vodi »Vladar«: včasih je bil to starejši moški, ki ga je izvolila lokalna skupnost in je skrbel predusem za duhovno blaginjo skupnosti, danes pa jih vodi deček, mlajši od 11 let. Eden glavnih dogodkov praznovanja je kronanje vladarja, ki se zgodi z velikim pompom. Vsaka vas ima za kronanje v binkoštnem času določeno svojo nedeljo; tako se kronanje vsako nedeljo dogaja v drugi vasi. Ob praznovanju, ki vključuje svete in profane obrede, zakoljejo žival, navadno tele ali vola, ki je glavna jed na pojedini, pripravljene za domače prebivalstvo in povabljeni udeleženci.

Globoko zakoreninjena ritualna praksa je v lokalnih skupnosti posebna kolektivna vrednota, posebej je pomembna za priseljence iz Združenih držav Amerike in Kanade.

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THE RELIGIOUS FEAST OF ST. AGATHA. A MODERN INITIATION RITE IN CATANIA

ELISABETTA DI GIOVANNI

This religious feast is one of the most important in the Mediterranean area. It attracts a very large number of the faithful, especially young people, who live out this commemorative moment like an casual appointment with the patron saint of Catania, a town in the Sicilian region of southern Italy. This analysis shows how the event represents not only a religious feast, consecrating the annual encounter between the saint and her local community, but also a kind of modern youth initiation rite.

Keywords: *patron saint, initiation rite, youth, community, participation.*

Verski praznik sv. Agate je eden najpomembnejših na sredozemskem območju. Privabi številne vernike, posebej mlade, ki doživijo ta kome-morativni dogodek kot priložnostno srečanje z zavetnikom Catanije, sicilijanskega mesta na jugu Italije. Analiza pokaže, da ta dogodek ni le verski praznik, namenjen letnemu srečanju med svetnico in lokalno skupnostjo, marveč je tudi vrsta modernega mladostniškega iniciacijskega rituala.

Ključne besede: *svetnik zavetnik, iniciacijski ritual, mladost, skupnost, udeležba.*

Celebrations in honor of Catania's patron saint start immediately after the Epiphany (6 January). The range of religious events and expressions of popular devotion during January give locals and visitors a flavor of the feast itself, held in February. The program includes pilgrimages to places connected with devotion to St. Agatha (Ital. *Sant'Agata*), conferences, visits to monuments, a display of the towering votive candles (Ital. *candelore*), concerts, performances, sports competitions, and much more, connecting the holy element with the profane. The many churches dedicated to St. Agatha are places of interest because of the spiritual, historical, and hagiographic journey they take visitors on.

The church of St. Agatha the Vetust (Ital. *S. Agata la Vetere*) stands on the site of Agatha's trial, and houses evidence of the torture she was subjected to as well as archeological and iconographic items dating from before the terrible earthquake of 1693, from the Norman and Byzantine periods. The church is also home to the *candelora*, or huge symbolic votive candle. The church of the Carcere encloses the remains of the Roman prison where Agatha

was held, which coincides with the area of the third century governor's or magistrate's hall (the *praetorium*).

On Sundays in January, the sanctuary (*santuario*) hosts solemn rites in honor of St. Agatha, who was left to the mercy of a lion during that month in A.D. 251. The powerful virginal veil, or *flammeum*, which was used to shroud the saint's body immediately after her death, is displayed in the triptych alcove of St. Agatha's martyrdom during the last ten days of the month. Local associations of the faithful organize moments of prayer and tributes to the patron saint, including torchlight processions in which the veil is carried under a red canopy.

At 7 pm on the Saturday before the last Sunday, a procession leaves the Church of St. Agatha at the Furnace (Ital. *S. Agata alla Fornace*), where the faithful have their traditional white smocks (Ital. *sacco*) blessed. The procession makes its way to the church of the Collegiata. The *candelore* begin their circuit on the second Sunday in January, with a wax effigy of the people's bishop, Bishop Ventimiglia, and a *candelora* restored courtesy of the town authorities. The church of Saint Francis houses the greatest number of effigies, and on 20 January the butchers' votive candle with an image of Saint Sebastian is carried around Ursino Castle. On the last Sunday, it is the turn of candles borne by associations of grocers, greengrocers, and pasta makers. These guarantee spectacular scenes in the fish market (Ital. *pescheria*), at the fruit and vegetable market, and in the old town. The locals usually wait impatiently for the turn of the fishmongers' candle, which is the first market, and at the port, where the procession is accompanied by a display of fireworks. The center of the celebration focuses on 3–5 February, when three days of cult activity, devotion, folklore, and tradition begin, involving all of the local community and visitors arriving from elsewhere in Italy and abroad.

THE CANDELORA DAY. A SUGGESTIVE POPULAR USAGE

Agatha was a 3rd-century Sicilian virgin martyr persecuted by a Roman proconsul (Quinziano) whose love was not returned. He persecuted her because of her Christian faith. Among the tortures she underwent was having her breasts cut off. She is therefore often depicted iconographically carrying her excised breasts on a platter.

Between legend and history, it is known that after Agatha's death a terrible earthquake devastated the country and Quinziano ran away with his horse, finally falling into the Simeto River. This episode represents the epilogue because Quinziano's body was not found.

Agatha's name is Greek and its etymology means "good." Historical sources report many miracles attributed to her. Today, people say Agatha protects Catania from natural phenomena, demonstrating her love for the town. An example is the eruptions of the volcano Etna in 252, 1444, and 1669, which were all averted by presenting Agatha's veil (*flammeum*) in front of the lava flow. The legend says that the original white color of the veil, a symbol



Fig. 1: The religious procession in the crowded street in Catania [All photos by the author].

of candor and purity, then changed to red. Today the veil is preserved in a reliquary. Other natural phenomena include the earthquakes of 1169, 1693, and 1908. Finally, legends refer to epidemics in 1575 and 1743. In both cases, people began to pray spontaneously in procession, entreating St. Agatha for protection. In addition, it is known that this cult has adopted some elements inherited from the Egyptian cult of the goddess Isis: the seafaring rite, the white linen tunic similar to the *sacco*, Isis' veil, and women's prominent involvement recall the *'ntuppateddi* masked women of the 18th century.

In the late 19th century, the prominent Sicilian folklorist Giuseppe Pitř noted that few saints in Sicily had as great a cult as St. Agatha: Palermo, the capital, and Catania competed in honoring her, until Palermo finally recognized another patron saint (Santa Rosalia) in 1625, after her intervention against an epidemic.

Catania's local faith is so strong that the monogram "A" appears on the civic emblem, on the front of the town hall,



Fig. 2: The characteristic votive *candelora*.

and in the university crest. For this reason, the three-day celebrations in February constitute three different moments and also consolidate them all. The first day represents an old custom that goes back to 1450: the votive offering made by municipal delegations as sign of devotion. On this subject, many religious feasts in the Mediterranean area express the local community's need to establish closeness with the patron saint, in order to manifest the necessity of protection and support on earth.

The *candelora* consists of a large, tall wooden structure housing a tall candle. The wooden structure is richly decorated with little statues of saints, angels, *putti*, sculptural groups, scenes from Agatha's life, ribbons, flowers, and *ex voto*. On each side there are strong rods used to lift it (the entire object weighs 500 to 700 kg). The *candelora* symbolizes the feast for the virgin's purification; the candles are blessed on this occasion. In the 17th century, *candelore* were called *gigli* or *gilli* 'lilies'. Their parade is a living example of the baroque in motion; today there are 11 of them with an established order in the procession: the first is the Bishop Ventimiglia *candelora*, the last is St. Agatha's Circle, and in the middle there are the grocers' *candelore*. This procession also includes municipal delegations, clerical deputations, and professional corporations.

For forty years there has been an international foot race in the afternoon. This event clearly represents a profane element of the entire celebration. It appears to express an attempt to refunctionalize the feast in the contemporary age. In any case, the aim is the same: aggregating the locals around the patron saint. In the evening a fireworks display closes this first day. In the 17th century there were songs and concerts.

THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN ST. AGATHA AND HER FAITHFUL. THE CROWDED EMBRACE

The second day of the celebration begins at dawn and is the more suggestive and exciting one. It is an expression of this festive time, very different from the working articulation of the day. In fact, at 4 am, the square in front of the cathedral is filled with people, not only believers but many visitors from across Sicily and emigrants as well. It is an extra-religious gathering: believers and non-believers await the appointment with Agatha.

Devotees both young and old are recognizable because they wear the *sacco*, which is composed of five elements: a white linen tunic, a black hat (Ital. *scuzzetta*), a cord, gloves, and a handkerchief. The *sacco* represents the devotee's uniform. Some believe the *sacco* recalls the white tunic worn for the goddess Isis, and according to others it represents the white nightshirt that the people of Catania wore in August 1126, when Agatha's reliquary came back from Constantinople to Catania. According to a third perspective, the *sacco* could be a penitential habit and the color white would symbolize purity. Finally, the white gloves could be worn as sign of respect in honor of the saint, and the cord may represent chastity. The last element, the handkerchief, serves to express joy and exultation. In Duomo Square, white

becomes the main color; adolescents and young men in particular place themselves right in front of the main gate and by the side gates, waiting for 5 am. For them, the event has an atmosphere of initiation; they are prepared to demonstrate their ability in front of the entire community. Their aim is to reach the high altar (Ital. *cameredda*); that is, the niche closed with an iron gate, from which the “master of devotional equipment” (Ital. *mastro di vara*) and his staff will remove Agatha’s silver bust.

When the gate is opened, the running becomes frenetic and frantic: at this point the high altar is covered by devotees and the entire church overflows with people. The codified behavior usually observed in a holy place is forgotten: every method for reaching the best position to see the saint is permitted. Some go up onto the side altars. The emotion rises very quickly:

when the bust is taken to the high altar, people can be heard intoning the well-known hymn “Semu tutti devoti tutti . . . Citatini! Evviva Sant’Aita” (We are devotees . . . Citizen! Long live St. Agatha), which is repeated three times, in accordance with the magic number. At the same time, all the devotees start waving their handkerchiefs, creating simultaneous movement in the cathedral. The traditional exclamation is an expression of faith, jubilation, or recall. It is also an expression of the unity of the local community that feels so near



Fig. 3: The silver bust of Sant’Agata.



Fig 4: The believers offer candles to their patron saint during the procession.

to its saint. Like many rites, the annual celebration seeks to rediscover its collective essence.

Before beginning the procession, St. Agatha's bust is collocated on the devotional equipment (Ital. *fercolo* or *vara*) and the solemn mass is celebrated; then the *fercolo* exits the cathedral travels around the streets all day. The devotional equipment is decorated with white carnations on 4 February, and with red carnations on the 5th. The white carnations represent purity and the virgin's faith, and the red carnations martyrdom and Agatha's mysticism.

In the crowded streets, devotees follow the holy canopy, lighting candles and more candles. The floor becomes very treacherous because of the melted wax; and the young people snake along in a procession. They do not seem very interested in religious prayers; instead they seem to take part in the celebration as though it is a trial that they cannot afford to miss. During the morning of February 4, while the procession continues, they prepare themselves for the second crucial test: the Capuchins' slope (Ital. *salita dei Cappuccini*). Here the *fercolo* is pulled by devotees, especially the young, who take a running start to better pull the devotional equipment. As in many religious feasts, this trial is a dangerous test: the slope is very steep and the *fercolo* is very heavy. Then the procession continues for the entire day, with many stops: the saint is with her faithful, who do not wish to leave her side. The round therefore finishes in the middle of the night, when the "little saint" (Ital. *santuzza*) returns to the cathedral for the night. On the next day, the 5th, the festivities start again.



Fig 5: The return in the Cathedral.

On this day, the devotees continue to take the *vara* around. During the procession, they arrive at Saint Julian's slope (Ital. *salita di S. Giuliano*), which constitutes another difficult trial because it is steep. Here expert devotees advise the youngest on how to avoid tripping: it is necessary to maintain a constant speed with one's foot in a different position from that of the next devotee. All the people assisting applaud and exhort. If the trial is passed well, this means that the coming year will be good. After other prayers and meditation, the procession prepares to return to the church. At this moment, devotees hold on to the *fercolo* because they do not want to be separated from their patron saint.

Every year the procession slows down hour by hour. When the holy bust reenters the church, the desperate devotees shout from fatigue and fanaticism. They will see their patron only on 17 August, at the "little procession" when the bust is exposed. They know that the celebration is concluding. In 2004, the procession concluded on the 6th at 8 am, about 25 hours late.

The cult of St. Agatha is not strictly Catanian: the saint is venerated all over the world. St. Agatha is the patron of 44 Italian municipalities, and 14 of them bear her name. In addition, St. Agatha is among the patrons of Malta and San Marino. In Spain, she is worshipped in Andalusia and in Jčria (Valencia). The chapel in Barcelona where the Catholic sovereigns welcomed Christopher Columbus back from his first trip to America is dedicated to St. Agatha. An interesting tradition takes place in Zamarramal (Segovia): on 5 February, women are the masters of the city. In Portugal, St. Agatha is the patron of Agueda. In Germany, Agatha is the patron of Aschaffenburg. In France, Agatha is venerated in Le Fournet (Normandy). The cult was grandiosely celebrated in Constantinople, and in Greece the saint is extremely popular, especially in the Aetolian region. A cult of St. Agatha even exists in Viayawala, India, and in Argentina, where she is the patron of firefighters. The cult is widespread in Italy, especially in Lombardy, but also in Rome, Florence, and Naples. However, the number of participants and variegated events makes Catania the most important expression of the spectacle and folklore of this religious cult.

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VERSKI PRAZNIK SV. AGATE. SODOBNI INICIACIJSKI RITUAL V CATANIJI

Religiozni praznik sv. Agate je eden najpomembnejših na sredozemskem območju. Vsako leto privabi izjemno število vernikov, posebej mladih ljudi, ki doživijo ta komemorativni trenutek kot priložnostno in neobvezujoče srečanje z zavetnico Catanije v tridnevnem praznovanju med 3. in 5. februarjem. Prvega dne je procesija z darovanjem voska, mednarodno tekmovanje in zvečer ognjemet; drugi dan sta na sporedu obisk – srečanje s podobo sv. Agate in tek skozi skozi mesto, zvečer pa se praznovanje razširi ob vsej poti, kavarne so odprte vso noč, naposled sledi še ognjemet; tretji dan podoba sv. Agate potuje po drugi poti, zvečer je znova ognjemet. Sodelovanje pri teku, pridržano za mlade, je znamenje ljubezni in vdanosti sv. Agati.

Analiza pokaže, da ta dogodek ni le verski praznik, ki slavi letno srečanje med svetnikom in lokalno skupnostjo, marveč je s tekom in drugimi dejavnostmi mladih tudi nekakšen sodoben mladostniški iniciacijski ritual.

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SENSES AND NOTIONS /
ČUTI IN PREDSTAVE

WORSHIPPING, NOTIONS, AND SENSES

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This article addresses a folk concept, the notion of people's senses, and their religious convictions and beliefs in connection with God (or Divinity) among the Greek people. The author primarily deals with practical functions for approaching God through the senses and notions.

Keywords: worship practices and objects, language, communication, icons, ritual food and drink, smell.

Razprava obravnava ljudski koncept, pomen čutov, religioznih prepričanj in verovanj v povezavi z Bogom (ali Božjim) med grškim ljudstvom. Avtor se pretežno ukvarja s praktičnimi funkcijami približevanja Bogu skozi čute in predstave.

Ključne besede: prakse in objekti čaščenja, jezik, komunikacija, ikone, ritualna hrana in pijača, vonj.

GENERAL OUTLINE

The transition from the mundane world to that of worshipping God (or the Divinity), to that of the sacred for people, is an animation and elevation of the soul, one could say, a step of passage, because the human being feels the Virgin Mary and the saints to be near him, close to him. This joins the human being with God without any barriers, without any separation line. For Greek worshippers, these are closely connected and are not separated from one another; there is coexistence. In contrast, people separate the sacred, which they respect appropriately and do not use without the permission of the priest.

It should be noted that folk belief and worship have their own approach, their own interpretation that is directly connected with the needs of the people, with the concept that they want God to be with them, close to them, even in simple wishes, and human thoughts.

Man's language of worship gives direction to his will and his concept of the divine, his fellowship with God, and his companionship with God. He wants the divine to participate in all functions of his life.

The participation of the Greek people in religious rites is mainly an expression of thanks and an appeal to God to continue to help. In rituals they find the place and the atmosphere to express themselves and communicate more easily with God, Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the angels than in any other place. People have direct communication and direct contact with God, an elevated position to express their thanks for what God has done for them. People consider their participation similar to that of companionship in family feasts. For this reason, they appeal to their appropriate special divine figure and tell them all of their problems.

The Greek people honor saints with special attributes; for example, doctors, such as

Saint Panteleimon for every illness [AP 2002–2004; Pagonis 1909: 414; Manolakos 1915: 612; Defner 1926: 570; Salvanos 1929^a: 125; Bios 1929: 185; Aikaterinidis 1957: 579], Saints Cosmas and Damian (known as the *Anargyri*) [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 141; Manolakos 1915: 612; Salvanos 1929^a: 124, 127; Bios 1929: 185; Paraskevaïdis 1953: 154; Papachristodoulou 1962: 89, 92; Asvesti 1962: 206], Saint Paraskevi for curing eyes, madness, and any special request [Megas ZEL3: 145; SS 1951: 112; Megas 1960: 484], and the Virgin Mother for cures for every problem [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 3, 7, 8, 147, 151; Pagonis 1910–1911: 467, 468, PL 1912–1913: 210; Tsoumeleas 1915: 637; PL 1917^a: 293; PL 1917^b: 318–319]. For childbirth, they also ask for the help and protection of Saint Stylianos [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 157; Kyriakidis 1915: 339–340; PL 1917^b: 343–344; Bios 1929: 170, 186; Oekonomidis 1962: 487] and Saint Eleftherios [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 32; Lorentzatos 1910–1911: 300; PL 1917^b: 339 ff.; Vrontis 1934–1937: 535, 566; SS 1951: 181]. Saint Modestos is invoked for ploughing animals [Megas ZEL3: 33; Kyriakidis 1934–1937: 677; Slinis 1938–1946: 94; SS 1951: 111], St Trifonas for vines [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 62; Kyriakidis 1910: 407, 417–418; 1917: 614–615; Slinis 1938–1946: 96; Kizlaris 1938–1946: 396], the Virgin Mother, known as *Kapsodematoussa*, for fields of grain [Megas ZEL3: 141–142; Koryllos 1917: 656], and so on. It should be noted that for every subject matter there is an appropriate patron saint, the Virgin Mother, Jesus Christ, or angels whom people can address.

It should be emphasized that the Virgin Mother is invoked for all reasons and especially by women to solve their problems. This is in contrast to God, about whom it is said that “He climbs and descends scales, and nothing is done without His will,” and “neither a leaf falls from a tree onto the ground without His will;” however, people appeal to, address, and make requests directly to the Virgin Mother, and not to God.

For this reason there are many names referring to the Virgin, such as *Odigitria* (i.e., the guiding one), *Gorgoroepicouos* (i.e., the one that immediately hears the requests of people and fulfills them) [Megas ZEL3: 8; PL 1912–1913^a: 13], *Xesklavotria* (i.e., the one that frees us from all bad and terrible things) [Megas ZEL3: 8], *Ponolytria* (i.e., the one that frees us from pain) [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 9], *Lehoussa* (i.e., the one that protects begetting mothers) [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 9], and *Eleoussa* (i.e., the one that gives mercy) [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 9; PL 1917^b: 343; Vrontis 1934–1937: 549, 563. For other studies, see Wrede [1987: 1644–1647].

It is emphasized that two forms of ceremonies are valid for rites and links to the sacred. The first has to do with participation in liturgies on Sundays, feasts, and so on, which are held according to ecclesiastic rules, and the second has to do with private rites and liturgies. In the latter case, a priest is invited to celebrate the saint in a church, monastery, or chapel, following a solemn promise. People also hold liturgies in private monasteries, where the priest is invited by the owners to celebrate a saint or to fulfill a solemn promise. This participation is primarily an expression to thank God or to make a request to help to solve a problem (e.g., illness, a wedding, an appointment, etc.).

Other ways of communicating with God for the same purpose as above, for making a request, and for solving a problem and expressing thanks to God are a) prayer and b) direct communicative speech. Prayer is not analyzed in this paper.

COMMUNICATIVE SPEECH WITH GOD, THE VIRGIN MOTHER, THE SAINTS, AND ADDRESSES AND GREETINGS

There are a great number of traditions referring to people's communication with God. Man speaks to God, the Virgin Mother, and the saints and says (for instance) "God, my *Afenti* (master)," [AP 2002–2004; cf. Megas ZEL3: 6; Beth 1987: 961–962], "allow me to sleep well and get up in good shape" (in Greece and Cyprus). The name *Afenti* (i.e., master) refers to men and is an address corresponding to the father of the family. It mainly occurs in patrilineal kinship systems and it is encountered and used in mainland Greece and some islands. Other speech forms refer to where people are going and what jobs they have to do, for instance: "Grandfather Saint Nicholas," [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 8] "I am leaving home and going to the farms." "I am going to the icons and saying good night my Virgin Mother." When people leave home, they say, "I am worshipping your Grace, my Virgin Mother, help me come back safely" [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 8].

All of these are a product of the belief that God and the saints are with a person and accompany him. Thus one can hear "I have the courage to say what I want" or "how could I dare to ask for so many things if I left my icons in the dark" or "if their candle is not lighted." Even if people do not have enough oil because they use butter instead, they prefer oil for their votive light, and they say: "I have the oil for the votive light, not for cooking." Here are mentioned only a few examples referring to the relationship between God and people because these are endless. Those mentioned above are examples of common use that are encountered among the population that employs communicative speech with God, with the faith that God is always with them and helps them when needed. It is said that "God sees" and "God distributes his clothes when it is cold" [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 6, 8; cf. Seligmann 1987: 701].

All of these ethnographic systems display and project the popular feeling of God and the cosmic world, the sacred and the mundane world, the cohesion of God with people, and at the same time they secure faith in the supernatural power of God.

Communicative speech serves as direct communication of people with God. As a ritual point of reference, is it usually the icon or only people's faith that God will help them and is near them. The church is not the only place for worship and it is not the only means of communication with God to request solutions to problems; instead, anyone can address God at any time, anywhere.

Of course, it should be noted here that the usual point of reference is the icon, as a very common and well-known means of communicating with God because it can be carried to

any place and kept at home, after being blessed in the church by the priest. The icon is not only used as a means of appealing to and making requests to God, but also as an oracular means, used to find something out or to guess something. Indeed, the connection of all the communication mentioned above between people and God is fulfilled not only through icons located in the home or through any other icon that belongs to the family and is associated with the entire family's worship; people also use miraculous icons belonging to churches or to other families.

The icon celebrates the memory of a saint; specifically, the feast day of the saint that is symbolized and depicted on the icon. This icon is celebrated in a church through rites and other rituals, ritual foods, and offerings [see also Pfister 1989: 1288–1291]. These icons belong to the miraculous category and shed tears, have voices, and reply to speech; they are moving icons, icons not made by human hands [PL 1917^a: 293; Oekonomidis 1960: 45, 47–49; Megas ZEL3: 10; Sakellariou 1890: 1, 218; also AP 2002–2004], icons that are dark due to fires; in such cases, everything was burned except these icons.

All these icons are used either by the people touching the icon or touching the man with the icon, or they hold a service celebrating it and they touch the icon, depending upon what the appropriate icon is that is needed to solve their problems. This clearly includes touch – touching the icon and the benefit and energy this icon gives to the people.

Touching the priest's sacerdotal vestments during the service is part of the same semantic nucleus [Koukoules 1926: 462], as well as touching the Epitaph on Good Friday [Kyriakidis 1934–1937: 668; Konstantinou 1934–1937: 465 f.] and worshiping, kissing, or touching icons and relics of saints. At this point I would like to stress that, in addition to its beliefs and convictions, the official orthodox church refers in its liturgy as follows “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . be with you and remain with you for ever and ever.” At this point, especially in the villages, people come in front of the royal gate, the gate of the high priest, where the priest stands holding the altar liturgy cloth and touches it to their heads. The priest also uses his stole to bless people and grant them remission of their sins so that they can receive holy communion. All these rituals are classified into the same category of meaning, the same semantic context.

Particular attention and special emphasis should be given to the linking with the Divine, an action that is stronger than touching and equates to a kind of incorporation with God as follows: There are people that cut their flesh and insert tiny particles of holy wood (representing the cross). Others open their veins and put molecules of holy wood into them [AP 2002–2004; also Megas ZEL3: 11; Jacoby 1987: 480–482].

For the Greek worshipper, the icon includes a bundle of beliefs for solving his problems, but at the same time as the outcome of an event becomes known there is also a notion of the coming future, a kind of prediction, sign, or omen [AP 2002–2004; cf. Megas ZEL3: 10–11]. Thus, people pay attention to the creaking of an icon or to perspiration on an icon [Bios 1929: 172], which are signs guiding people to find out whether someone will be cured or not. Perspiration on an icon usually indicates a good thing, it is a good omen,

but sometimes it indicates a bad thing. An important element is the location where the icon was found and, if it was found outdoors, in the countryside, then the soil from this place is used for curative purposes [AP 2002–2004; cf. Megas ZEL3: 11, Athanasopoulos 1911–1912: 664; Loukopoulos 1912–1913: 41; Zervakis 1912–1913: 516; Giamalidis 1912–1913: 646 f.; Koukoules 1926: 87; Pharmakidis 1926: 610; Loukolpoulos 1938–1946: 7–8]. The falling of an icon and the sound it makes indicates a bad thing. If an icon that is transferred to cure a person is heavy [AP 2002–2004; also Megas ZEL3: 11], then the sick man or woman will die (Pillion, Thessaly, region). It is also believed that something bad will happen if a tear drips slowly on an icon [AP 2002–2004]. This involves activation of the senses of hearing and sight.

An important sign of linking God with people through the icon is the writing on the back of it. This writing indicates the two important landmarks in the life of a man: his date of birth or baptism, and his wedding. This is done to mark his progress and success in life. This writing may also denote earthquakes and shortages of wheat, which are related to the memory and obligation of people to hold religious services, liturgies, and rituals in order to avoid repetitions of these events (attested in many places [AP 2002–2004]).

MEANING, NOTION, AND PARETYMOLOGY

A worshipper's intellect, his ability to interrelate developments, known and unknown information grasped by and through his senses, has created a particular and specific world, constructed with the building materials of a person's belief and the conviction of his own world in relation to God. This inherent self-defense of man, his need to acquire some help from a supernatural power, to acquire protectors, and finally support so that he can confront any difficulty and be protected from any threat, has created a cluster of meanings, actions, rites, expressions, prayers, and man's own approach to God.

Thus the creation of thoughts, rituals, and daily routines are interwoven with man's social order, organization, and so on and his recourse to the divine, as he considers. He connects God with his needs and problems. He continually wants the Deity to take care of him and be occupied with his insignificance, a subject that was formerly non-existent.

Since ancient times, the Greeks have created deities – God, demon, Saint – to cover their needs. Christianity gave its own finish to the old Divinity because it was impossible to eradicate the created cycling folk beliefs among the people and popular faith, which are always built upon human problems, with an earthy human approach. This concept and sense of divine power created many paretymologies, differential and faulty meanings built upon this thinking, on this semantic base. Thus, for example, Saint Eleftherios frees [AP 2002–2004; also Megas ZEL3: 7, 32; Lorentzatos 1910–1911: 300; PL 1917^b: 339 f.; Bios 1929: 170, 185 f.; Psychogios 1951: 346; SS 1952: 181; Vrontis 1956: 215; Papa-christodoulou 1962: 73], and Saint Eustathios became Saint Stassis (i.e., stops something)

and stops bleeding (in Karpathos) [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 7]. Saint Hermogenis became Saint Armogenis (i.e., joint), who cures the joints and rheumatic pains of men. Saint Clemes became *Agioklapsinos* (i.e., *klapsa* ‘weeping’) [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 7] and cures weeping. Saint Procopis is invoked for a newly married couple. The same saint is mentioned in the marriage contract [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 7; Anagnostopoulos 1915: 16; Salvanos 1929^b: 532–533, 537] to ensure that the couple gets along well and that the family will be happy and live in prosperity. Saint Acovos (Jacob) became Saint Acoufos (i.e., deaf) [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 7] and cures the deaf (in Cyprus), Saint Stylianos strengthens babies [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 7, 157; Kyriakidis 1915: 339–340; PL 1917^b: 343–344, Bios 1929: 170, 186, Oekonomidis 1962: 487], and so on. One could continue with many other examples with the same nucleus meaning.

Among the population a nucleus meaning also functions, built on the same thinking of pareymology, but the perspective indicates the spectrum of punishment. According to folk belief, a punishing saint punishes man because he does not respect him by working on his feast day (worshippers should not work on his day at least until the service is over). Thus there is Saint Onoufrios, who became *Roufnis* (i.e., suck up), who sucks up the ears of wheat when somebody works on his feast day [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 7; Kandilaptis 1926: 255; Kyriakidis 1934–1937: 672]. One might mention *Panayia Kapsodematoussa* (i.e., burns the bundle of wheat; celebrated on 28 July), because she burns all the bundles of wheat [AP 2002–2004; cf. Megas ZEL3: 9; Koryllos 1917: 656; Kyriakidis 1934–1937: 672]. *Agios Yiannis* (Saint John, celebrated on 29 August) is named *Thermologos* or *Rigologos* (i.e., shivers) [Megas ZEL3: 9; Kyriakidis 1934–1937: 673] because he imposes the punishment of shivering and fever on those that do not respect his memory, *Spazocaroutas* [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 9] or *Spassokadis* [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 9] because he breaks the bucket, and so on; this meaning is built on some misconception of faith and of a form of the divine approaching. One also hears *Agia Sotira* (i.e., saves) [AP 2002–2004; also Megas ZEL3: 146], the correct form of which is *Metamorphosis* (i.e., the Transformation of Jesus Christ), which became a cult to save man from misfortunes and from any other problem that occurs in life. The people also say *Acathistos* (i.e., standing) [Megas ZEL3: 8–9] when they refer to the hymn to the Virgin Mother and this is connected with the concept of not being seated, but standing in order to be helped in requests.

There is also another category that is not based upon pareymology but renders the connection of men with God according to his folk property. Thus people honor the *Kayliotis* [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 8] in Symi, Dodecanese, referring to the Archangel Michael because he burns the hearts of men. The same archangel is named *Kourcouniotis* because he knocks on doors and asks for people’s souls (Symi) [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 8; Karanikolas 1957: 431].

THE INTELLECT, SENSES, WORSHIP, AND MAN

All ethnographic worship systems contain the intellect, notion, and senses. The participation of man's notions, intellect, and senses in the sacred, in holy affairs, is firmly fixed; this involves a kinship approach, affinity of God with man, rather than a strictly official ecclesiastical aspect. I have already stressed that the believer wants God, Jesus, the Virgin Mother, and the saints with him in every aspect of his life and in every movement of his. For man, the holy is something inviolate, but he wants God to be with him, to be occupied with him and participate in his activities. This is expressed in ritual actions and prayers with this particular dimension. From this large field, I limit myself in this presentation to only a few examples, primarily examples from ritual information connected with touch, smell, and taste because examples from other senses are very well known.

TOUCH AND WORSHIP

We have already dealt with and presented ritual information referring to touch in the first section of this presentation, in communicative speech with God. Here, are provided some samples of a different approach that, I think, show the origin of the information. This is a theme that will not occupy us in this presentation. These samples are connected with stones, earth and soil, water, fire, and various other ethnographic actions.

Stones

This involves touchstones; for instance, for Saint Apostoles in Preveza, Epirus [Megas ZEL3: 18], where people touch a stone. In Kios, touching marble is also connected with Saint Spiridona [Megas ZEL3: 18]. In Crete a pebble is taken from the spring of Saint Nicholas, named *Kourtaliotis* [Megas ZEL3: 12]. It is placed upon dough, and without any yeast the dough becomes ready for baking.

Earth and soil

People touch soil from the Holy Sepulcher [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 22]. Here, one could say that there is also a connection with Christ's grave, but certainly the touch is beyond any doubt.

Water

Here the "touching of water of the well" is observed. One also notes that water from the first of April, which is connected with various established customs, is used for medication against fever. The water of some particular springs contributes to easy delivery and fertility of barren women [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 17; for this custom among other peoples, see Huennerkopf 1987: 113–116]. At Saint Panteleon, Asia Minor, Sinopi, holy

water springs up between the rocks. Those suffering from colds bathe here and become well [Megas ZEL3: 12]. There is also the “immortal water” [Megas ZEL3: 12; Adamantiou 1911–1912: 436 ff.; Salvanos 1929^a: 151; PL 1904: 1,309, 2,1192 ff.] and its link with ethnographic systems and narratives.

Sprinkling fields, people, and animals with blessed water is also attested [AP 2002–2004; cf. Megas ZEL3: 22–23; SS 1951: 100 f.; Karanastasis 1952; 227 f.; Karanastasis 1956: 82, 93; Proiou 1956: 267; Paschalidis 1957: 283 f.]. Women in Crete also apply holy water to themselves [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 12; PL 1909^b: 456; Adamantiou 1911–1912: 415; Vrontis 1934–1937: 546; SS 1938–1946: 290; SS 1951: 108, 110–112, 208; SS 1952: 170 ff.; Megas 1956: 325; Oekonomidis 1960: 30 f.; Megas 1962: 553]. They use the holy water of Saint Nicholas of Kourtaliotis to prepare bread [Megas ZEL3: 12]. Placing a small phial containing holy water from Saint Kyprianos [Megas ZEL3: 12] over the door of a house to protect it from evil and magic spells is based on the same thinking.

Fire

There is much ethnographic information about worship associated with fire [Megas ZEL3: 16–17]. Examples include men being touched by Saint John’s fire on the 24th of June [Megas ZEL3: 136–137; Salvanos 1929^a: 139; Tasios 1929: 262; Polymenis 1929: 268; Zoirou-Passa 1934–1937: 122; Vrontis 1934–1937: 582; SS 1951: 107], various fire walks [Megas ZEL3: 128; Megas 1960: 478, 484 f., 487 etc.], the holy light, and the new light of the resurrection of Jesus Christ [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 107–108; Kyriakidis 1910: 410, 422; PL 1911–1912^b: 354; Loukopoulos 1938–1946: 22; Karanastasis 1956: 96].

Various other ethnographic rituals

This ethnographic information includes sacrificial rites in which a cock, hen, or sheep is sacrificed at the wedding ceremony [cf. Megas ZEL3: 20] and people dance with the wash-basin containing only the blood of the animal and they sprinkle it on the doorstep and the walls of the house of the newly married couple. Blood from a *kourbani* (an animal that is sacrificed in honor of a saint) is also sprinkled on people [Megas ZEL3: 20–21; Kyriakidis 1917: 212–213; Kyriakidis 1921: 457].

Among votives, offerings, and other ritual actions, one might mention the “belting” of icons through the use of a thread or ribbon to ask for help. For instance, when someone suffers from malaria he goes to the church of Saint John and makes a belt with thread from the icon of saint. Then he sleeps with this thread on his waist for two or three days and then he melts wax and uses the thread to make a candle, and burns it in honor of the saint. He thus believes that he has burned the illness [cf. Megas ZEL3: 19]. The *slavoma* [Megas ZEL3: 21; PL 1911–1912^d: 689–690; Kyriakidis 1951: 350–360; Oekonomidis 1962: 513] of a man (a dedication by a man) to a saint is made with a ring [cf. Megas ZEL3: 22] that is worn by the believer. This particular action also has a double meaning because it involves the symbolism of circle.

In addition, there is a large nucleus of touch involving touching of the cross [cf. Megas ZEL2: 8–10; Megas ZEL3: 11; Menardos 1910: 281 ff.; Evangelidis 1910: 675–676; PL 1910: 676–682; Philippou 1912–1913: 527–536; Manolakos 1915: 610; Anagnostopoulos 1921: 219; Koukoules 1921: 336] or when people are crossed [cf. Megas ZEL3: 22] for various purposes (e.g., for the evil eye, etc.). It should be noted that sleeping in a church [cf. Megas ZEL3: 17–18; PL 1911–1912^a: 39, 43; Adamantiou 1911–1912: 91, 107] for any problem involves touching, as well as touching of the relics.

There is another large category of haunted trees with souls [Koukoules 1926: 461]. It is believed that if someone touches and cuts them or sleeps under them that these souls have influence over him.

TASTE AND WORSHIP

The sense of taste covers a very large and varied area of worship systems. I mention only a few examples associated with various religious systems: –those referring to sacred tastes blessed by the priest (i.e., drinking blessed and holy water) and –those referring to worship foods.

Sacred tastes

Within this material associated with celebrations and religious taste, and which is spread throughout Greece, I mention only holy communion and blessed bread [cf. Megas ZEL3: 25–26; PL 1911–1912^a: 50; Koukoules 1917: 543 f.; Bardakis 1926: 245; Koukoules 1926: 489; Chrysoulaki 1957: 396], which are sanctioned by the church. All people refer to and are familiar with these religious tastes. However, the frequency with which they are eaten and, in general, the belief and faith of people in their great power, in the extraordinary power that these foods offer, as well the way they link and join people with divinity through taste, is interwoven with the worshipper. The taste of bread is also known from the rite of *artoclassia* (the ceremony of breaking, blessing, and distributing the holy bread) [cf. Megas ZEL3: 17–18; Kasimatis 1910: 624, 628; Karanastasis 1952: 252; Oekonomidis 1962: 530] and the *obley* – that is, consecrated bread for the celebrated saint. When somebody is celebrating a saint, he asks the priest to come to his home and bless the *obley* [cf. Megas ZEL3: 26; Loukopoulos 1938–1946: 15 f.; Oekonomidis 1962: 530]. This is a ceremony that primarily takes place in mainland Greece and occurs when a man is celebrating, where the patrilineal descent system of blood relationship is valid. The members of the patrilineal lineage and whomever the celebrating individual chooses are able to partake of this *obley*-bread. All of these ritual actions are classified as tastes. They are communions and all these tastes seek help from God.

The bread of *artoclassia* is also called demon's bread [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 25–26] and I believe that this provides insight into older rituals, cycling in the same trajectory

from very old times, which have been received and adopted by Christianity because they were impossible to eradicate. Indeed, the beliefs about the rites of kneading are differentiated; for instance, the way of kneading the *obley*, which should take place inside the church. In addition, it may not be kneaded by a woman having her period.

Here I mention various first-fruit ceremonies. [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 24–25, 147; Koumas 1910: 383 f.; Sakellaropoulos 1910: 699; Adamantiou 1911–1912: 93; PL 1911–1912^c: 676, 680; Vrontis 1938–1946: 104; SS 1951: 112; SS 1952: 180; Grigori 1953: 162–164]. These primarily involve grapes and olives, but wheat is also carried to the church to be blessed and then all people taste and eat the food. With regard to wheat, immediately after ripening, people cut the first ears of the grain, grind it, and prepare an *obley*. After this is blessed by the priest, it is offered for tasting by all the people [AP 2002–2004; AP 1964: 219 f.; cf. Megas ZEL3: 17; PL 1911–1912^c: 679; Slinis 1938–1946: 103; SS 1952: 180]. There are also other rituals. For instance, people prepare cakes and go to a spring or a well to make an offering [AP 2002–2004]. This is connected with the demon of the water and belief in the spirit of the water, well, or spring. Afterwards, they taste and eat the cakes, which are offered at the well or spring. The people also call the new bread made from new ears of wheat *tzitzirokolico* [Megas ZEL3: 24–25; PL 1911–1912^c: 679; Grispos 1934–1937: 262] and it is tasted by all present at the ritual. All of these are classified in the meaning of the agricultural economy and the former rural life of the Greek people, and the rites associated with them for a good harvest, for their survival and sustenance (usually wheat, oil, wine). All these kinds of foods, which are prepared with wheat, and the related rituals are classified as *pemmata* or *pelenous* and similar dishes (any kind of dressed food, pastry, cakes sweetmeats, etc.) of the ancient Greeks [AP 1980: 134–136, 211 ff.].

Another large area refers to animal sacrifices offered to Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mother, the saints, and the archangels. This is only mentioned to stress the respect felt for them. Among all the ritual customs, I especially emphasize the distribution of a sacrificed animal after it has been cooked [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 20–21, 27, 28–29; Megas 1911–1912: 148–159, 162 f.; Dekazos 1911–1912: 505; Kyriakidis 1934–1937: 671; Kapodistrias 1953: 152 etc.]. In general, worshipers boil the meat of a sacrificed animal and then offer it to the people, always with the faith in tasting the animal and linking the divine with the worshipper on the one hand and, on the other hand, in order to have good health. This is a tasting action of communion.

Another very interesting category of tasting information is contained in the feast of boiled wheat celebrations [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 27; PL 1911–1912^a: 23–27; Kyriakidis 1934–1937: 677; Loukopoulos 1938–1946: 15 f.; SS 1951: 106, 203, 205, 230 etc.] or to honor the dead [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL1: 131–132; PL 1911–1912^a: 23; Oekonomou 1912–1913: 324 f.; Kapsalis 1912–1913: 407; Sarros 1912–1913: 748 f.; Loukopoulos 1921: 33; Felouki 1929: 462; Syngollitis 1934–1937: 409–411; Kyriakidis 1938–1946: 530; SS 1952: 171–199; Chrysoulaki 1957: 404; Petropoulos 1959: 28; Chatziioannou 1962: 3 etc.] and also the feast of offering a common meal on the grave of the dead.

Worshippers travel to areas in Greece to taste or drink holy water at various shrines, churches, and chapels, as well as sanctifications performed by a priest primarily on Epiphany [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 55–56; Koukoules 1926: 91, 231; Kyriakidis 1934–1937: 663; SS 1951: 202, 206; Karanastasis 1952: 227 f.; Proiou 1956: 266; Paschalidis 1957: 283], on the first day of the year, on the first day of each month [AP 2002–2004; SS 1951: 100 ff.], and in other cases. I therefore do not analyze this matter further, and I believe that what has already been mentioned above is sufficient.

Worship foods

It is known that this area is a broad and large one [AP 1985: 34, 36 f.; 39, 42, 47 f.; also Riegler 1987: 504–507]. Here I mention only that rites connected with the tasting and eating of these foods and their ritual associated with God show and project the importance of celebrating food for the worshipper because it is a point connecting the worshipper with God. People also taste these foods for health, prosperity, and happiness for themselves and their families.

I mention some very well-known foods. These are *barbara* [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 30–31; Kyriakidis 1910: 409, 420; PL 1911–1912^a: 33; Kyriakidis 1934–1937: 677] or *sperna*, a memorial offering of boiled wheat in honor of Saint Barbara (4th December) and for smallpox. These special foods are distributed to all and especially to children to protect them from this illness.

On the feast day of Saint Savas [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 31; Kyriakidis 1934–1937: 677], the 5th of December, people offer, distribute, and eat pureed peas with onions, especially within family groups.

On Saint Nicholas' day, people offer, eat, and taste *coftos* (ground and boiled wheat) [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 32; Kyriakidis 1934–1937: 677] for good fortune. One could continue and mention many special foods and their taste connected with saints during their feast days, but it is impossible for me to deal with all of them in this presentation. I also emphasize the New Year's cake [AP 2002–2004; AP 1985: 115; Megas ZEL3: 43–46; PL 1909^a: 398; Lazarou 1912–1913: 307; Loukopoulos 1917: 134; Bikas 1917: 171; Kyriakidis 1929: 557; 1934–1937: 662; 1938–1946: 534 etc.] and various other special foods for Easter, Christmas, Saint Basil's day, and Saint George's day, as well as for the first day of May [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 121; SS 1951: 102 f.], the first Monday in Lent [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 76; Kyriakidis 1934–1937: 664 f.; SS 1951: 207], Carnival [AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 72, 74; Kyriakidis 1934–1937: 664 f.], and other religious holidays. All these special foods relate to taste, and they are tasted in order for people to have goods, health, prosperity, and a link with God. One also notes rites for foods relating to Lent, which contain a large spectrum of beliefs and narratives and aim at their survival, whereas all customs influence and connect people with God.

SMELL AND WORSHIP

The link of the sense of smell with worship, beliefs, and people's faith seems to have a different perspective for every worshipper. The existence and the use of this perspective seems to depend on the strength of a person's faith and his beliefs. What the worshipper smells is always connected with a sweet smell, a very good smell, a fragrance, an aromatic smell. This aromatic smell that worshippers smell is connected with the Deity and holiness. Thus the relics of saints or any other holy object have an aromatic smell [AP 2002–2004]. The body of a saint exudes a pleasant aromatic smell when his grave is opened and it continues to smell. It is clear that this pleasant smell is contrary to what happens biologically, because it is connected with a mortal body, which gives off a bad smell, a stench in fact. Thus this smell, which is connected with the body of a person, is considered a miracle, testament to the holiness and sanctity of a person's life.

Smell also seems to be connected and interwoven with people's faith that the church is the residence and home of a saint. For instance, for Saint George's church, which is dilapidated in the area of Perivolia, Crete, it is said that "Saint George is alive. One night, past midnight, we passed our evening outdoors in the alley. Suddenly, a fragrance, a very sweet and light aroma, came from the dilapidated church. I went there to see what was going on. The aromatic smell was becoming stronger and stronger, and I worshipped his grace." [Kirmizaki 1940: 324; AP 2002–2004; Megas ZEL3: 10] "It was the time of the saint's arrival at the church."

For all the examples mentioned above, many narratives circulate among the people. These narratives also cite the places of worship linked with the faith, and it is impossible to mention all these beliefs here.

However, I also note the very familiar smell of incense with its many links with worshippers' sense of smell. It is sufficient to emphasize that smelling incense [AP 2002–2004; Kosmatos 1910: 188; Megas 1911–1912: 152; Diamantaras 1912–1913: 509, 511; Anagnostopoulos 1915: 46; Megas 1923: 515; Anagnostopoulos 1921: 219; Bios 1929: 196; Kyriakidis 1934–1937: 661; Slinis 1938–1946: 94–96; SS 1951: 220; SS 1952: 185; Papachristodoulou 1962: 71–73], and in general smelling various flowers from ceremonies during holy days, seems to have an influence on the creation of these types of beliefs.

To conclude this presentation, I would like to stress that communicative speech with God, the intellect, notions, meaning, and all of a person's senses function and are linked with God and rituals as well as with established customs and worship systems, and all of these together contribute to the formation of a person.

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ČAŠČENJE, PREDSTAVE IN ČUTI

Jezik čaščenja kaže na človeški koncept božjega in na njegovo razmerje do Boga. Ljudje govorijo z božjim ne le v molitvi, marveč v vsakdanjih situacijah, ko npr. zjutraj gredo od doma ali ko se uležejo zvečer v posteljo; v komunikativnem govoru se usmerjajo k božjemu. Devico Marijo in svetnike ljudje nagovarjajo glede na njihove posebne attribute, ki velikokrat izhajajo iz napačne etimološke interpretacije njihovih imen ali vzdevkov. Ikone niso le sredstvo za komunikacijo z božjim, ko se človek glede na svoje potrebe zahvaljuje ali za nekaj prosi; ikone, gibanje, govor itd. so tudi orakelska sredstva, s katerimi je mogoče razbrati prihodnost, tj. odgovor Boga, Device Marije ali svetnikov tistemu, ki se je obrnil k njim. Telesni stik, dotikanje ali poljubljanje ikon, duhovniških ali drugih oblek, čaščenje na veliki petek, svetniške relikvije, sveti les, idr., vsi ti objekti – elementi, povezani z božjim (posebni kamni, zemlja, voda, ogenj itd.) so pomemben sestavni del ljudskih religiozних prepričanj. Okušanje svete hrane in pijače pri svetem obhajilu ali prazničnih jedi na patrocinih, niso le sredstvo, ki pripomore k boljšemu zdravju, uspehu in vsemu dobremu za človeka, ampak tudi konstituira krščansko skupnost. Vonj ima zelo pomembno vlogo v čaščenju in religiji. Tako z božjim človeka povezuje npr. vonj cvetja, saj razkriva svetost in navzočnost božjega v tem, kar človek zaznava s čutom vida v relikvijah svetnikov in na določenih mestih, npr. templjih.

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SENSUALIZING AND THEORY /
ČUTENJE IN TEORIJA

RE-SENSUALIZING RITUAL THEORY¹

RONALD L. GRIMES

Ordinarily, ritualizing and theorizing are construed as polar opposites, but if one attends to the performative dimensions of theorizing, this dualism dissolves. We better understand theories when we comprehend their relation to the lives and times of those who create and consume them. John Bourke's account of the Hopi Snake Dance is used as a case study to illustrate the narrative and performative underpinnings of theory construction.

Key words: ritual, performance, theory, Hopis, John Bourke.

Navadno sta ritualizacija in teoretski premislek konstruirana kot opoziciji polov, a če natančneje premislimo performativne dimenzije teoretskega premišljevanja, se ta dualizem razreši. Teorije razumemo bolje, ko dojamemo njihovo razmerje do življenja in čase tistih, ki jih ustvarjajo in rabijo. Poročilo Johna Bourka o Hopi kačjem plesu je uporabljeno za študija primera, s katerim želi avtor ilustrirati pripovedne in performativne utemeljitve teoretske konstrukcije.

Ključne besede: ritual, uprizoritev, teorija, Hopi, John Bourke.

In the gossip columns, ritual and theory are not a happily married couple. Their relationship is torqued into an overdrawn dualism. Theory, we hear, argues with ritual. Whereas ritualizing is sensuous activity, theorizing is *desensualized inactivity*. Ritual dances, the feet pounding upon the ground, while theory thinks, the head floating abstractly above a desk. Ritualizing is collective and bodily, whereas theorizing is individualistic and disembodied, a captive of the academic ivory tower. Ritualizing is something ordinary people do, whereas theorizing is something the educated do, or worse, it is a cover-up for doing nothing at all.²

For over thirty years I have wrestled with simple-sounding but difficult questions: What is ritual? What do rites do? How do ordinary practitioners cultivate, enact, and assess ceremonies? More recently, it was disconcerting to stumble over another set of questions

¹ Originally delivered as the inaugural oration for the Chair of Ritual Studies, Radboud University Nijmegen, April 27, 2005, this lecture has been revised and re-revised several times as it was presented at the following: Yale University, as the keynote lecture for "The Senses of Religion" (2006); Lund University's Center for Theology and Religious Studies (2007); the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Colorado, Boulder (2007); and finally for the Dynamics of Ritual Project, University of Heidelberg (2007).

² Robert Campany puts it this way: *Until quite recently, our discourse on other cultures and religions was premised—almost totally unconsciously—on at least one fundamental difference between "us" and "them": we had the theory, while what they could provide amounted only to "raw" data; we theorized about their practices; we philosophized, they acted.... To study ritual theory as a mode of practice is to look [in some detail] at what we [and others] do when we theorize about ritual.* [Campany 1996: 87]

with a familiar but different ring: What is theory? What do theories do? How do ordinary scholars cultivate, enact, and assess theories?

The phrase “theory and method” currently exercises incantatory force. Research grant applications must display their theories and methods or go unfunded. Deans will instruct you that graduate research is distinguished from undergraduate research by “advancements in knowledge” and that such advancements are possible *only* by using explicit theories and methods. Graduate students complain about being saddled with such baggage, and faculty sometimes confess in private that theory and method issues are the bane of academic existence. Even so, both students and faculty pledge allegiance to “theory and method.” The pledging renders theorizing a scholarly ceremony, a performance of ultimate values espoused by the academy. To question those values is to venture into a snake pit.

THEORIZING IMAGINED

In popular parlance, the phrase “in theory” is the opposite of “in reality.” A street definition of “theory” equates it with an unproved idea, a statement out of touch with reality.

In scientific parlance, “theory” denotes concepts and procedures that facilitate testing, explanation, prediction, and public verification. A theory is a more or less accepted hypothesis. In theory, scientists question theories, but in reality they sometimes resist questioning them, because science, like religion, is a tradition with a certain predictable inertia, a resistance to change.

Because of the hegemony of science, one sometimes has the impression that theory belongs to science and that any other use of the term “theory” is an act of theft. In religious studies debates about theory and method, colleagues instruct us that we must use the terms to mean what scientists mean or be accused of indulging in covert theology. Two Canadian religious studies scholars, Don Wiebe and Russell McCutcheon, equate “academic” with “scientific.” They do so religiously, and they caricature or attack others who think differently. [Wiebe 2003: 37; 1999; McCutcheon 2003a; 2003b] In their view, the *only* alternative to “scientific” is “theological.” They utterly exclude models grounded in the arts and humanities rather than the sciences.

But who really owns the word “theory?” Who is stealing from whom? You only have to scratch the surface of the term to encounter meanings that diverge from both the popular and the scientific ones.

In ancient Greek, *theorein* means generally “to look at.” Specifically, it connotes the contemplation of a dramatic action. *Theoria* is what an audience does when it allows itself to be drawn into rapt identification with deeds transpiring onstage. In its ancient Greek sense, *theoria* is not a passive gaze. It is an act of deep receptivity. *Theoria* is what happens when spectatorship is transformed into visual and emotional participation.

Early Christian usage appropriates but transforms the classical Greek idea. For instan-

ce, Gregory, Bishop of Nazianzus, treats *theoria* and *praxis* as a pair. *Theoria*, is the divine vision that restores human beings to their original nature. *Praxis*, or practice, is the resulting service to humanity that arises from *theoria*. Theory and practice are necessarily a pair; each requires the other.

In contemporary arts and humanities the term “theory” has at least two connotations. In one usage, it labels almost any collection of concepts used to frame discreet bits of information. In a second usage, characteristic of postmodernism, the term “theory” refers to concepts capable of orienting a transformation or intervention. In critical-theory circles, “theory” has an activist ring.

One common feature of the six uses of the term that I’ve just sketched is this: They assume a chasm between perceiver and perceived. Another feature is a visualist epistemology, one that conceives the act of knowing as analogous to looking at something at a distance, as if using a telescope to spy a deer across a canyon. Even though the lens analogy is useful in reminding us that distortions necessarily accompany insights, it also signals the reduction of theorizing to a single sense.³ This prioritizing of sight above others senses, this visualist reductionism, is a serious methodological mistake.⁴ Visualism is ethnocentrism not at the level of ethnic prejudice but at the epistemological level. Rooted as deeply as a dandelion at a preconscious level, epistemological ethnocentrism is much more difficult to eradicate.

A RITUAL STUDIES SCENARIO

It helps a little to understand various meanings of the word “theory,” but it helps more to examine the actual practices of working scholars. For this reason, I conducted interviews with thirty researchers who study ritual. The result of this more empirical approach is a less idealized picture of theory and method than is usually presented theory books. But here I will not analyze those interviews; that comes later. Rather I will consider a historical example, that of John Bourke’s research among the Hopis of Arizona. His encounter is with the Hopi Snake Dance is a telling example of a ritual studies scenario. I do not choose Bourke because his research scenario is exemplary but because it is transparent; his compulsive journal-keeping and candid accounts allow us to peer into his research process.

The year is 1881; we are in the American Southwest. U.S. Cavalry officer, Lt. John Gregory Bourke, is riding west from Santa Fe, New Mexico. He is accompanied by others wheeling along in a horse-drawn field ambulance. They are traveling toward the Hopi mesas of northeastern Arizona. Bourke has been given a year’s leave to conduct an ethnographic scouting mission on the rites of several tribes. Besides being a soldier, he is an anthropo-

³ The analogy of a lens might also suggest that theories are no more successful than myths and theologies at explaining rituals. Myths and theologies, in effect, extend or add to, rituals, but they do not really explain them. Or, if they do, they obscure as much as they reveal.

⁴ The most sustained critique of visualist bias in ethnographic research is Paul Stoller [1989].

logist who is about to witness the Snake Dance and write the first and most widely read, account of it.

Bourke, a graduate of West Point Military Academy, is only thirty-five years old. Even so, he is already a seasoned soldier, having fought in the Civil War at age sixteen, then in two of the fiercest Indian wars, those with the Apaches and the Lakotas. Bourke is regarded by Indians and soldiers alike as dogged, courageous, fair-minded, and literary. Bourke's Apache friends call him "Captain Cactus" and "Paper Medicine Man." When Apaches want favors, Bourke, ever the scholar, trades favors for religious knowledge. He writes, *I did not care much what topic he [an Apache] selected; it might be myths, clan laws, war customs, medicine—anything he pleased, but it had to be something, and it had to be accurate.* [Bourke 1971 [1891]: 124]

Then as now, no site in North America has been continuously inhabited for a longer time than the three high desert mesas inhabited by the Hopis. They have a ritual tradition that is one of the most enduring in the Americas. Compared with many other First Nations rites, which were either obliterated or subsumed into Christianity, those of the Hopi were, comparatively speaking, intact.

Then, as now, the Snake Dance is partly sequestered in underground ceremonial chambers called kivas. However, Hopis say they sing and dance not for themselves alone but also for the planet. Despite this planetary aim, ritual knowledge is not public. Even many Hopis do not have access to it. To give away kiva and Snake Clan secrets would be to court disaster and death.

Then, as now, Hopis say their lives depend on the performance of the Snake Dance. Without rain, which their deadly ancestors, the serpents, bring, the Hopis would die. They dance in order to be Hopi, in order to be human. Reimagined kinesthetically, ritualizing is the act of stepping in to be, whereas theorizing is the act of stepping back to know.

Another ethnographer, Frank Cushing, of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, has already told the Hopis they should admit Bourke to the Snake Dance, which occurs every second year in late August.⁵ Bourke's visit has no official government status, and the kiva is not open to most Hopis, much less to American soldiers. Because Bourke anticipates resistance, he and his men stage an improvised ceremonial entry. His men pay him exaggerated homage as if he were a revered personage on a mission of great consequence. Therefore, when Bourke arrives at Walpi on First Mesa, the Hopis responded with a great display of courtesy.

When the Hopis protest Bourke's intrusion into the kivas, he pretends not to understand. Hoping to distract them, he aggressively shakes their hands, pump-handling them like a politician. He pushes past those who would obstruct him, climbs down the ladder, and enters the underground ritual chamber. Inside the kiva now, Bourke himself tells us what he encounters:

⁵ A scene similar in certain respects to that encountered by Bourke might be imagined on the basis of the Hopi photographs taken by Edward S. Curtis [1977].

The stench had now become positively loathsome; the pungent effluvia emanating from the reptiles, and now probably more completely diffused throughout the Estufa [kiva] by handling and carrying them about, were added to somewhat by the rotten smell of the paint, compounded, as we remember, of fermented corn in the milk, mixed with saliva! I felt sick to death, and great drops of perspiration were rolling down forehead and cheeks, but I had come to stay, and was resolved that nothing should drive me away. [Bourke 1984: 150]

These words come from a man who sweated only half as much in the face of Geronimo and his greatly feared Apache warriors. On the one hand, Bourke's description is a confession of fear; on the other, it is a ritually induced awakening of his senses. This olfactory awakening jolts him momentarily out of his visualist bias. The underground portion of the rite, executed in close, dark quarters, requires the handling and herding of rattlesnakes with eagle feathers. The sheer tactile and olfactory power of the scene terrifies Bourke. But, with military discipline, the lieutenant⁶ does not abandon his post, although his compatriots evacuate theirs.

Later, above ground, Bourke describes another scene, which, again, we will see through his eyes:

Fill every nook and cranny of this mass of buildings with a congregation of Moqui [Hopi] women, maids and matrons, dressed in their graceful garb of dark-blue cloth with lemon stitching; tie up the young girls' hair in big Chinese puffs at the sides; throw in a liberal allowance of children, naked and half-naked; give colour and tone by using blankets of scarlet and blue and black, girdles of red and green, and necklaces of silver and coral, abalone, and chalchihuitl [turquoise].

For variety's sake add a half-dozen tall, lithe, square-shouldered Navajos, and as many keen, dyspeptic-looking Americans, one of these a lady; localise the scene by the introduction of ladders, earthenware chimneys, piles of cedar-fuel and sheep manure, scores of mangy pups, and other scores of old squaws carrying on their backs little babies or great ollas [clay pots] of water, and with a hazy atmosphere and a partially-clouded sky as accessories, you have a faithful picture of the square in the Pueblo of Hualpi, Arizona, as it appeared on this eventful 12th day of August 1881. [Bourke 1984: 156]

Although Bourke's narrative is poly-sensuous, his visualist preferences dominate; this description is a picture postcard. The ritual description is only a portion of the book. The account is propped up with two bookends. At the front is a travel narrative; at the back is a theory.

The book is a classic of early American ethnography, a rare work of observation, even though John Bourke and Peter Moran, whose job it is to sketch the rites, cannot keep up with

⁶ Later, he is promoted to captain.

the pace of the ritual actions. The Snake Dance liturgy, he says, lasts for sixteen days, not for an hour or two on Sunday morning, so the scholars are exhausted. Bourke has no idea what the costumes, objects, and spaces mean, nor does he know what will happen next. Bourke is keenly aware that the complexity of the event far exceeds his ability to observe and document; it also exceeds his linguistic abilities. Consequently, his arrogance in breaching the secrecy of the kiva is softened with genuine humility about his ethnographic account of the rite.

Bourke carries away what tourists and photographers such as Edward Curtis will soon be carrying away: pictures. Whereas his pictures are verbal, those of tourists will be mainly visual. Bourke also carries away tactile and olfactory memories. In the end, he will publish the visual materials rendered as verbal data, but the tactile and olfactory memories covertly determine the tenor of the theory, eventually undermining it.

Bourke is unable to make friends with the Hopis in the way he had with Lakotas and Apaches, even though he had fought the Lakotas and Apaches and had only observed the Hopis. To his credit, he records a discussion with Nanahe,⁷ an exceptionally frank Hopi who tells him the truth to his face:

I saw you in the Estufa [kiva] at the dance; you had no business there; when you first came down we wished to put you out. No other man, American or Mexican, has ever seen that dance, as you have. We saw you writing down everything as you sat in the Estufa [kiva], and we knew that you had all that man could learn from his eyes. We did not like to have you down there..., but we knew that you had come there under orders..., so we concluded to let you stay.... One of our strictest rules is never to shake hands with a stranger while this business is going on, but you shook hands with nearly all of us, and you shook them very hard.... You being a foreigner, and ignorant of our language, can do us no harm.... A secret order is for the benefit of the whole world, that it may call the whole world its children, and that the whole world may call it father, and not for the exclusive benefit of the few men who belong to it.... If they [the secrets] became known to the whole world, they would cease to be secrets, and the order would be destroyed, and its benefit to the world would pass away. [Bourke 1984: 182–184]

In this stinging critique of Burke's visualist ethnocentrism, Nanahe both compliments and criticizes him in a succinct sentence, *We knew that you had all that man could learn from his eyes.*

Bourke's intrusiveness challenged, he leaves the Hopi mesas, going to visit the Mormons, who have been busy as bees trying to convert Hopis into Christians. Although he turns something of an ethnographic gaze upon the Mormons, he is so relieved at being away from the kivas and rattlesnakes that he does not actually begin to theorize until later.

After leaving Walpi, Burke compares what he has witnessed there with what he can learn

⁷ He had been adopted by the Zuni.

from books about rites in Greece, Guinea, Scandinavia, and Polynesia. His conclusions are partly determined by Hopi data and partly by reading. His theorizing is comparative, but the comparisons are not always even-handed. Some of them are driven by the desire to show how the American way is superior to the Hopi way. Occasionally, he inverts the hierarchy, suggesting the superiority of Hopi ways. Out of the comparison, he constructs a theoretical category, “ophiolatry.” The Snake Dance is classified as the worship—really, the idolatry—of serpents. This classificatory act is his most fundamental theoretical move.

By 1891, only seven years after the publication of *Snake-Dance*, Bourke’s theory of Hopi ophiolatry crashes under the critique of Jesse Fewkes, another ethnographer, who conducts a more prolonged study examining variants of the Snake Dance at three other Hopi villages. Driven by data and details rather than drama, Fewkes concludes that the ceremonies are not about idolizing snakes but about ancestor veneration and rain-making. [Fewkes 1986 [1894–1898]: 307]

Even though Bourke’s theory is displaced by Fewkes, Bourke’s book nets considerable cultural and academic capital. Eventually, he is elected president of the American Folklore Association. For Bourke, who dared to step down into a snake-filled kiva, this stepping back to write, lecture, and theorize was also a stepping up.

A few years after the publication of *Snake Dance*, other anthropologists arrive at the mesas. In the wake of scientific and popular publications by these social scientists, a sea of gawking tourists swamps the Hopis. The Santa Fe Railroad issues a tourist’s guide for the Snake Dance and begins using Snake Dance images on posters to attract ticket-buying tourists. The Hopi Snake Dance becomes one of the most photographed, painted, and written about indigenous rites in the Americas.⁸ Consequently, as late as 1984, Emory Sekaquaptewa, a Hopi and an anthropologist, has to complain about white people who simulate Hopi performances and who believe that non-native people have a right to Hopi rites, as if they were in the public domain.⁹

In 1895, the year before his death, Bourke is patronized by Buffalo Bill’s Wild West show. Along with defeated Indians, whom Bourke had fought and written about, he and other aging soldiers are put on display. Only in his late forties, he is already being cast in the role of an old war horse. When he dies at forty-nine, this lifelong student of indigenous ritual is buried without ceremony in Arlington National Cemetery.¹⁰

⁸ For example see Earle R. Forrest [1961 [1906]] and H.R. Voth [1973 [1905]].

⁹ In the foreword of Bourke [1984: xv].

¹⁰ Bourke later writes other important works such as *Scatalogic Rites of All Nations*, which is on the religious character and ritualistic use of urine and human feces. He also writes important treatments of Mexican nativity plays. He lectures, serves on panels, and in 1893 plays a role in the World’s Columbian Exposition, which hosts the World’s Parliament of Religions. He becomes an active critic of governmental Indian policy and is eventually disillusioned with the military, as well as in trouble with Washington bureaucrats. His friend Frank Cushing writes that Bourke is *killing himself with too many hours a day at the Congressional Library*. Bourke is wearing himself out, Cushing thinks, trying to turn fifteen years of journal writing into publications. Bourke’s doctor tells him that nature is calling a halt, but soldiers do not obey orders from nature.

A summary of the dramatic arc of Bourke's research scenario would run something like this: A protagonist hears a story about strange ritual behavior. In the process of gathering information about the rite, he triumphs over adversity and returns to theorize about it. Building upon an ever-widening comparative perspective, he brings home the boon of knowledge, which politicians, educators, and artists can put to good, culture-enhancing use. He theorizes and story-tells his encounter with the Hopi Snake Dance. On the basis of both the stories and the theories, others arrive at the scene. Soon, it is media-constructed, photographed by Edward Curtis and hundreds of other camera-carriers.¹¹ As a result, today the rite is, as far as I can tell, completely sequestered. No longer available as an object of study, it is today the object of fantasy-driven art and speculation-driven scholarship.

Bourke's method has several features. Like Frank Cushing, an ethnographer working with the nearby Zunis, Bourke observes rites firsthand, but, unlike Cushing, Bourke does not participate or live among the people. Like Cushing, he is intrusive, but unlike Cushing, Bourke stays only for a short time and does not learn the language. Both men took copious notes and both sketched or brought sketch artists. Although both were courageous and showed more respect for native people than many of their compatriots, both theatricalized dishonestly and invaded sacred precincts without proper invitation.¹² By today's standards, their fieldwork ethics were imperialistic and disrespectful.

Writing strategies are a key feature of one's method. In observing and writing, Bourke mobilized the senses with metaphor. Watching Peter Moran, his sketch artist, Bourke wrote,

As long as he [Moran] could manage to endure the noisome hole, his pencil flew over the paper, obtaining material which will one day be serviceable in placing upon canvas the scenes of this wonderful drama. [Bourke 1984: 141]

Quite deliberately, Bourke wrapped the rite in dramatic and artistic metaphors. He saw the Snake Dance *as if* it were drama and art. In doing so, he was a better writer than many scholars who write about ritual today, partly because he was able to capture ritual's sensuousness. We would do well to imitate the sensuality of his writing but not its sensorium organization, because it renders *multisensory* activity into visualist scenes warped by his revulsion at the overwhelming tactile and olfactory dimensions of the Hopi rite.

Bourke's book on the rite was preliminary, the outcome of a scouting mission. It was neither a full-blown theory nor a fully developed ethnography. His writing is a mixed-genre patchwork rather than a systematically applied theory governed by a scientific method. Bourke's conclusions were determined less by his theory than by his worldview—the taken-for-granted values and the sensorium organization of Victorian America.

It is easy to debunk Bourke's theory of religion. Because he was an American soldier

¹¹ On the relation of photography to postmodern theory, see Docherty [1990], chapter 3.

¹² Enlightened by postcolonial and postmodern theory, we know better than to dissemble in conducting field research, push our way into sacred precincts, or assume there are primitive minds inferior to ours, right?

who lived in the colonial nineteenth century, we can readily see how culture-bound he was. When, for example, he confesses his antipathy toward snakes, referring to them as “mankind’s first enemy” [Bourke 1984: 141] rather than as promising but dangerous relatives, we can feel him shiver. The shiver twists his theorizing into a Christian judgment on serpents. Whereas Bourke’s seeing the rites *as* drama and *as* art is constructive although visualist, his feeling and smelling of snakes is obstructive theorizing, because it eventuates in their becoming symbols of evil.

Bourke, like his anthropologist colleagues Jesse Fewkes and Frank Cushing was known for his descriptions, not his theories. In late nineteenth century American anthropology, reputations were made mainly on the basis of ethnographic descriptions embedded in journey narratives. Even though he was obliged by scholarly convention to push his data in the direction of theory, theorizing was not what built nineteenth century academic reputations.

THEORIZING REIMAGINED

From a Hopi perspective, the Snake Dance is liturgy, a sacred rite. From Burke’s viewpoint, it was a visual-verbal illustration of a theoretical category, ophiolatry. From the point of view of tourists, it was a spectacle. From my point of view, on this occasion, the Hopi Snake Dance is part of a ritual studies scenario, an illustration of the dynamic loop that knots together a religious rite with the sensory data of field research and the tenets of a theory.

Today, journeys and narratives about these journeys continue to shape ethnographic research on ritual. But the tendency in twenty-first century scholarship is to shrink or omit the narratives, leaving ritual descriptions to serve as grist in the mill of theory. Whereas nineteenth century descriptions of rites were largely narrative-driven, twenty-first century ones are more theory-driven. The *intention* in making such a shift is to render research publicly accountable and scientifically respectable, but the *effect* is to disembodify research, severing it not only from the researcher but also from the research narrative (which one typically hears over a beer) and the research performance (which one hears on ceremonially framed academic occasions such as this). The outcome of much current theorizing about both religion and ritual is to desensualize or hypervisualize the study of ritual. As Nanahe observed, we have learned what can be learned using only our eyes, but our feet, noses, and tongues are ignorant. Because our theories and methods require of us performances that are both imperial and inept, because our theories and methods do not require of us kinesthetic, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory attentiveness, we have much information but little understanding of, little sense for, the Snake Dance.

Reimagined kinesthetically, ritualizing is the act of stepping in to be, whereas theorizing is the act of stepping back to know. Theorizing, like ritualizing, is a bodily, therefore sensory, act. Since Bourke stepped down and into Hopi liturgy in order to know, rather than to be, from a Hopi point of view, he just did not “get it.” His, and others’, not getting

it motivated Hopis to re-sequester the rite, and not getting it was also the irritant that drove Bourke to theorize about it.

In differentiating Hopi ritual practices and early American ethnographic practices my intention is not to set up a binary opposition. It is, rather, to distinguish and relate the ritualizing and theorizing. So let me say it plainly: Theorizing, like ritualizing, is a performance. Magically, it transposes ritual into data. Ceremonially, it enables theorists to exercise power by stepping back, then up into positions of academic authority. Theorizing ritual is the academic ceremony that goes on after the indigenous liturgy ends. Who knows, maybe theorizing is as essential to First World life as the Snake Dance is to Third World Hopi life. With the Snake Dance, Hopis make it rain. With our theory dances we scholars makes things predictable (on rare occasion, even profitable). Hopis paint their faces, while academics put on dark robes and funny hats. Hopis enter kivas; the educated elite enter ceremonial chambers like this one. Each group dances its own kind of dance. Each way of masking exercises its own kind of authority. Theorizing, however public and scientific its mask, is incubated underground, where smelly things writhe in the dark.

When I treat theories as tacit narratives or incipient performances, some scholars react religiously, like Hopis protesting that a sacred boundary has been violated.¹³ In European and North American academic circles, storytelling, singing, dancing, and ritualizing are given bit parts, not lead roles. Stories and rites and songs are stigmatized as “local,” “ethnic,” or “indigenous” whereas theories are exalted as “empirical” or “academic.” However, when I am allowed to direct the academic show (which isn’t very often), I insist that the role of theorist is just one voice among many.

Like ritualizing, theorizing has its own sensorium organization, as well as its own geographical and conceptual space.¹⁴ Because theorizing is an act performed, it transpires in a setting or on a set. Staged, it is place-specific. We are used to locating rites in space but not used to locating theories in space.¹⁵ However much the magic of words makes it appear that theories dwell either nowhere or everywhere, they, in fact, arise and decline some-where. It may be true that theorizing enables perspective, but the theorizing eye is not really panoptic; it is neither universal nor divine. As Apaches say, *Wisdom sits in places* [Basso 1996]. In other words, it would be wise to theorize as if the place where you do it matters.¹⁶

Reimagined as sensory, if not sensual activity, ritualizing is the act of stepping in to be, whereas theorizing is the act of stepping back to know. The two activities are different

¹³ Ritualization is, in itself, neither good nor bad. But once we reimagine theorizing in this way, we can no longer assume that it is either superior to, or utterly different from, the Snake Dance or any other liturgy. Religious studies scholars have objected to my saying such things, because they like to rank theories above storytelling and ritualizing.

¹⁴ More on sensorium organization see in Grimes [1990: 53, 94].

¹⁵ Since scholars do sometimes write histories of theories, we are more accustomed to recognizing a theory’s time-boundness than its space-boundness.

¹⁶ Spatializing theory helps counteract the danger that words assume a »godlike agency in western culture” [Stafford 1998: 5].

but dialectically related. Eventually, the one activity passes over into the other. Ritualizing becomes theorizing; theorizing becomes ritualizing. The theorizing reflex, this stepping back, is a kinesthetic response to danger and disorientation. In search of safety and orientation, students of ritual back away from kivas and sanctuaries, in order to cope with the dissonance. However much theorizing is governed by information gathered in notes, it is also driven by a desire to escape alive and tell the story, erect a theory, or otherwise generate academic capital. Theorizing is an attempt to control an object of perception experienced as unmanageable, by stepping back and then taking up a tool that renders the dangerous ritual into a visual scene more predictable and less threatening.

Now, to summarize the essentials of a re-sensualized approach to theorizing about ritual:

1. Theorizing, like ritualizing, is performative. It is acted out in public and embedded in a research scenario. Theories, like rites, should be understood in the context of these scenarios and understood in their social and historical contexts. Because theorists are embedded in places, times, and communities, we better understand theories when we comprehend their relation to the lives and times of those who create and consume them.
2. Theorizing is not superior to ritualizing; these are just different kinds of enactment.¹⁷ There should be no hierarchy between those who ritualize and those who theorize about ritual.
3. We theorize more fruitfully if we recognize theory's reliance on imagination and the senses, its roots in metaphor, its entanglement with narrative, and its dependence on performance.¹⁸
4. Theorizing in the arts should not ape theorizing in the sciences. In a science-dominated era, theorizing ritual will be more productive when our methods require of us multiple theoretical styles played out in counterpoint using multisensory channels. And...
5. In short, the theory and method implied by multisensory theorizing about ritual requires the following: focusing on the social drama and politics of human interaction; attending to the bodies, voices, and roles that animate both the practice of ritual and research on it; examining the scripts and conventional genres that dictate cross-cultural encounters with ritual events; narrating the stories that suffuse the material culture that concretizes these events; and understanding the settings that frame them.

¹⁷ Terry Eagleton articulates a similar view, *If theory means a reasonably systematic reflection on our guiding assumptions, it remains as indispensable as ever. But we are living now in the aftermath of what one might call high theory...* [Eagleton 2003: 2].

¹⁸ Arjun Appadurai writes, *All these expressions [art, myth, dream], further, have been the basis of a complex dialogue between the imagination and ritual in many human societies, through which the force of ordinary social norms was somehow deepened, through inversion, irony, or the performative intensity and the collaborative work demanded by many kinds of ritual.* [Appadurai 1996: 5].

To conclude: Theorists, like snake-handling Hopis, engage in a dangerously elevated activity, so it is only proper that we who aspire to theorize ritual receive instruction (and a few whiplashes) from practitioners. We should learn not only *about* the Hopi but also *from* the Hopi. What Hopis do with their own worst fears and greatest hopes is to sequester or mask them, rendering them sacred. Then, they unmask, or they set loose ritual clowns, who both police and mock liturgical activity.

The Koyemsi, or mudhead clowns, are sometimes depicted as dolls riding Palölökong, the feathered water serpent. He slithers up out of a jar, becoming erect in the process. He rises up precipitously toward the sky.¹⁹ Such serpent-ancestors are as essential as rain, but they are also as dangerous as the devil. The Hopi scenario requires that sacred clown, like theorists, ride high. However, it also requires that they be thrown off into the dirt. So be assured: Like others who aspire to theorize about ritual, my landing spot is predetermined.

Hopis, I imagine, would consider the act of theorizing about ritual to be like trying to contain sidewinder rattlesnakes. By whisking them ever so lightly with eagle feathers, Hopis herd the snakes, capturing them temporarily in clay pots. Later, dancers release the snakes in kivas and on the plaza. Finally, they recapture the snakes and, having blessed them with corn meal, let them go. In two years, the whole process starts over again.

So I am guessing that Hopis would tolerate our theorizing about indigenous people's rites if, in the end, we promise to break our theory pots and let the data go so they will be plentiful when the whole round starts over again.

Reimagined kinesthetically, ritualizing is the act of stepping in to be, whereas theorizing is the act of stepping back to know.

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¹⁹ Terry Eagleton writes, *At the very moment when the United States government is flexing its muscles more insolently than ever, some cultural theory has begun to find the very word 'theory' objectionable. This has always been the case with some so-called radical feminists, who distrusted theory as an imperious assertion of the male intellect. Theory was just a lot of callow, emotionally arrested men comparing the length of their polysyllables* [Eagleton 2003: 54].

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ZA-ČUTENJE TEORIJE RITUALA

Navadno sta ritualizacija in teoretski premislek konstruirana kot opoziciji polov, a če natančneje premislimo performativne dimenzije teoretskega premisleka, se ta dualizem razreši. Teorije razumemo bolje, ko dojamemo njihovo razmerje do življenja in čase tistih, ki jih ustvarjajo in rabijo. Poročilo Johna Bourka o kačjem plesu Hopi je uporabljeno za študija primera, s katerim želi avtor ilustrirati pripovedne in performativne utemeljitve teoretske konstrukcije.

Ob domnevi, da je teoretski premislek o ritualu bolj ploden takrat, ko so številni teoretski stili odigrani v kontrapunktu, se avtor v razpravi zavzema za priznanje teoretskega zaupanja imaginaciji, njenih korenin v metafori, njene prepletenosti s pripovedjo, in njene odvisnost od uprizoritve. Metodologija, ki jo implicira performativni pristop k teoretskemu premisleku rituala zahteva: artikulirati raziskovalni scenarij, v katerega je vključen študij rituala; razumeti socialne drame in politike človeške interakcije; treba je biti pozoren na telesa, glasove, in vloge, ki animirajo rituale; preiskati velja skripte in konvencionalne žanre, ki jih diktirajo; dokumentirati materialno kulturo, ki jih konkretizira; nenazadnje identificirati okolja, ki jih okvirjajo.

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