Contested Knowledge

Political Dimensions of European Ethnology and Folklore Studies in Post-War Europe

Edited by
Konrad J. Kuhn, Hanna Snellman and Lauri Turpeinen

Studia Fennica
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Introduction

Political Dimensions of Ethnological Knowledge in Post-War Europe*

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Ethnological knowledge has always played an important role in the shaping of the political history of Europe. In fact, ethnological knowledge and political thought have been entangled with each other since the earliest days of ethnological research. Folklorists and ethnologists alike have contributed to the production of such ethnological knowledge, stabilizing it through, for instance, field research and archival investigations, and subsequently embedding it within broader social contexts. However, its previously rather inconspicuous and taken-for-granted political dimensions became particularly noticeable as the subject of critical discussions in the years following the Second World War.

The war had brutally shaken the world and left much of Europe in ruins. Previous certainties were placed in doubt. Its immediate aftermath was characterised by a sense of disorientation, but it was also a new beginning. Amid all of this upheaval, the ways in which the ethnological disciplines saw themselves began to change profoundly. Not only did the ethnological disciplines—despite their at times divergent disciplinary genealogies—begin to engage in closer cooperation between folklore studies and ethnology; they also overcame divisions concerning methodological approaches and epistemological orientations.

Ethnological knowledge in its broadest sense continued to play a crucial but ever more complex and contradictory role in the search for new orientations in a post-war Europe overshadowed by the emerging Cold War. It continued to wield influence in the realm of science but also provided political and cultural reassurances while dealing with the lasting impact of the war.

Produced by ethnologists and folklorists working on culture as an academic practice while also actively constituting it, ethnological knowledge proved to be ambiguous and polyvalent in its application. On the one hand, it was utilised to bolster assertions of ethnic uniformity and cultural superiority or to legitimise nation states and political

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systems (see Anttonen 2005). On the other hand, it has always carried the explosive power to destabilise such notions of cultural homogeneity, due to its closeness to the nuanced life realities of diverse milieus; producing knowledge as messy as everyday life itself that does not lend itself easily to one-dimensional political instrumentalisation.

The ethnological disciplines in Europe underwent a transformation process after the war that was somewhat uneven. Its course depended on differing local circumstances and national histories as well as on international connections to researchers in other countries (see, e.g., Kuhn and Puchberger 2021). It also mattered on which side of the Iron Curtain an ethnology or folklore studies department found itself after the war. However, in spite of these variables, there is a shared difficult intellectual history in all of the ethnological disciplines; always present, smouldering under the surface, it can be ignored only with difficulty. In some national contexts, addressing the difficult aspects of their disciplinary history succeeded better. In others, the rehabilitation process was more precarious. A complex and sometimes difficult process of change within ethnological and folklore scientific organisations, along with fundamental shifts of epistemological perspectives and methodological innovations, was necessary to position the ethnological disciplines where they are today.

Some did frame this complex, non-simultaneous, and fundamentally open-ended process as a 'disciplinary reform', which began sometime around the early 1960s. A lot has been written about this move in European ethnology towards contemporary social sciences, the concomitant methodological advancements, and the simultaneous politicisation of the subject's topographies of relevance (see, e.g., Bausinger 1986; Bendix & Hasan-Rokem 2012; Bula & Laime 2017; Eggmann, Johler, Kuhn and Puchberger 2019). However, a closer look at the different national developments in Europe reveals more nuanced narratives. This wealth in nuances is particularly true for the close yet consistently conflict-ridden relationships between ethnological knowledge, politics, and propaganda in post-Socialist states in Central and Eastern Europe (see, e.g., Ķencis 2023; Hann, Sárkány and Skalník 2005; Mihăilescu, Iliev and Naumović 2008; Ķencis, Bronner and Seljamaa 2023).

The post-war years in Europe as a context for ethnological research were in many ways unprecedented. In Germany, the discipline of *Volkskunde*, previously an important provider of impulses particular to ethnologists in the Nordic countries, was compromised because of its collaboration with the racial ideology and (self-) integration into scientific organisations of the National Socialist regime. Previously existing transnational ties between ethnologists in different European countries had been severed and had to be re-established. On a larger societal level, new political divisions and tensions flared up, in particular between the East and the West. The Cold War loomed on the horizon. In addition, the years immediately after the Second World War were characterised by scarcity, masses of displaced persons, severe political persecutions, and deportations in the countries occupied by the Soviet Union. All of this created a highly volatile situation, making a challenging starting point for new beginnings in the ethnological sciences. Nevertheless, ethnology and folklore studies survived, even if not entirely unscathed. The monumental challenge of finding a new direction and a critical self-investigation of the interrelations between ethnological research and harmful political ideologies awaited, a process of rehabilitation that many later commentators found to be lacking.

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The case of German *Volkskunde* – which despite its strong influence also on ethnologists and folklorists in other European countries is not addressed article in this edited volume – illustrates this well. The post-war situation of the ethnological sciences has received scientific attention, especially in the German-speaking countries (see, e.g., Moser et al. 2015; Eggmann et al. 2019). This literature does address the instrumentalisation of ethnological knowledge and the cooperation of ethnologists with the National Socialist regime in Hitler's Germany. After the war, Heinz Maus' famous essay (1946) even demanded that *Volkskunde* be entirely abolished. Yet, others like Will-Erich Peuckert, the first post-war professor of *Volkskunde* at the University of Göttingen, worked tirelessly towards a rehabilitation of the discipline (Peuckert 1988). Extensive and profound argumentative efforts were necessary to stabilise the situation of the ethnological disciplines and to achieve scientific relevancy. In this context, the post-war work of Swiss ethnologists also had a pacifying and stabilising function, because it made it possible to continue ethnological work on a 'neutral ground' (see Kuhn 2017).

In many cases, however, the beginning of this rehabilitation did not go hand in hand with personal consequences for the implicated ethnologists or even represent a genuine new beginning. In fact, there were numerous instances of personal and thematic continuities in the German context in the years following the Second World War. It took until well into the 1960s before the droning silence about National Socialist entanglements was addressed in any meaningful manner.

At the same time, Finnish *kansatiede*, traditionally strongly oriented toward the German-speaking research landscape and with most pre-war publications and dissertations published in German, appeared to quietly detach itself from the previous scientific instigator of *Volkskunde* right after the Second World War and started to look both inward and for new role models among its Nordic neighbors and across the Atlantic. In the 1960s, relations with German ethnologists slowly picked up again, but at first research visits were organized solely between Finland and the GDR, not the FRG. Hereby, Finnish ethnology somewhat detached itself not only from a now spoiled previously dominant provider of scientific impulses but also from the fruits of the slowly beginning post-war reform processes in *Volkskunde*, which is why *kansatiede* remained fairly traditional up until the 1980s with research often still focusing on the analysis of examples rural material culture while a more critical orientation in terms of methodology, theoretical foundation, and the choice of research topics became common in the German-speaking context as the post-war years progressed.

In the context of the German rehabilitation process, some ethnologists even expressed the view that their ethnological work was inherently unpolitical in character. One example was the German ethnologist John Meier, whose career as an academic began in the Weimar Republic and continued seemingly unimpaired by the 'Third Reich' and also after the liberation of Germany in 1945. He stated in a public lecture in 1954 that the discipline of *Volkskunde* had, regardless of the severe political turmoil and crisis of the preceding decades, always continued its scientific work unperturbed. Meier further explained that he saw distancing from any form of political ideology and organisations as an absolute necessity to safeguard academic freedom and the integrity of research, a world that in his view follows its own laws and must not be contaminated by any kind of political interference, no matter from which direction such political influences may come (Kaschuba 2012, 79–80).

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No matter what it was that John Meier had hoped to achieve with his insistence on the allegedly unpolitical character of ethnological research then, the contributions of this edited volume show clearly that the work done by ethnologists and folklorists can never be fully detached from its historical and political contexts. While relying predominantly on national case studies, it is our aim to combine them in a transnational perspective that will provide readers with a broad horizon of contemporaneous developments in both ethnology as well as folklore studies in different European countries after the Second World War. As the chapters selected for this edited volume will show, ethnology and folklore – despite their national perspectives – had already re-established transnational networks and connections soon after the Second World War. These ties existed in the personal biographies of scholars in exile, research cooperation across national borders, or the re-activating of international ethnology and folklore associations, as Bjarne Rogan's research on the post-war history of the *Commission Internationale des Arts et Traditions Populaires* CIAP and of the *Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore* SIEF has explored in detail (Rogan 2015).

It is the intention of this edited volume to gather articles that shed empirical light on the interplay of the personal agency of ethnologists and folklorists after the Second World War and the different political ideologies and contexts inherent in ethnological research. These persist, for instance, in the shape of the lingering remnants of nineteenth-century nationalistic-romantic thought but also as an external, highly tangible force curtailing or steering research conducted under the mantle of ethnology and folklore studies.

One aspect that already became evident early in the work on this edited volume was a certain ambivalence also with regards to some heavily charged and difficult – yet undoubtedly also central – terminology. This includes challenging concepts like nationalism, which, as some of the contributors from the post-Soviet countries had pointed out in our discussions, can take on a different connotation if considered in the context of Cold War Eastern Europe; other participants also rightly pointed out the problems and dangers associated with this perilous concept. This example picked from the discussions surrounding the formation of this edited volume indicates the value the contributions can bring to discussions about the intellectual history of the ethnological sciences. After all, it is of central importance also for contemporary ethnologists and folklorists to be aware of the long-lasting, difficult ideological legacy the ethnological disciplines carry. These scholars will be the custodians of this intellectual history, and it is their responsibility to engage with it actively, critically, and with great care.

The chapters are divided into three categories. The first section *Individual Choices* presents the varying ways in which individual ethnologists from the Baltic countries negotiated the restrictions placed upon them by the Soviet Union. While some made the choice to continue their research in exile, others stayed and tried to create niches for themselves within the Soviet fabric, so as to be able to pursue their research. The section *Constructed Nationalisms* comprises three chapters that explore the role of different nationalisms within ethnological knowledge production, for instance, in the shape of competing nationalisms, as a concept in research, or in the context of funding for ethnological research. In this way, the articles cover examples from a broad geographical framework spanning Turkey, Croatia, and Finland.

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The last section *Changing Paradigms* presents two chapters that offer a perspective on the changes that occurred in ethnological research and in folklore studies after the Second World War, both in terms of the creation of new perspectives within the research conducted and in the context of the discipline's entanglement with day-to-day politics and history. Dealing with academic institutions in the Nordic countries as well as with the interconnection between society and folklore studies in post-war Italy, the articles in this section show the close relatedness of ethnological knowledge and societal issues.

The common theme lingering in the background of the chapters presented in this edited volume is the question of what it is that facilitates the political appropriation of folklore studies and ethnology by political regimes. Is it the focus on empirical material combined with a positivistic approach? Or is the reason to be found in the intellectual history of the disciplines and remnants of national romanticism? Or is it because the disciplines since their inception were focused on investigating the life-worlds, practices, and beliefs of the common folk, the masses, be they rural peasants or urban working-class populations, the non-bourgeois segments of the general public that in history often have been the main audience for the mobilisation efforts of political movements. It follows here that ethnological knowledge lends itself to be appropriated in these contexts for two main reasons. First, the ethnological disciplines – if the research was indeed conducted diligently – provide crucial information for political movements on the perspectives and values of the general public, which is pivotal in the effort to win people over to a political cause. Secondly, it could also critically be asked how and if ethnological and folklore research has contributed to the construction of sociopolitical milieus in producing easily appropriated ideologically infused imagery as a revanchist opportunity for identification for those segments of the population that see themselves as disenfranchised.

Thus, it follows that it remains a central responsibility for everyone engaged in ethnological and folklore research, as professional custodians of a problematic intellectual history containing difficult and repeatedly misappropriated terminology, to remain aware of the perilous and easily weaponised knowledge that ethnologists – both then and now – work with on a day-to-day basis. This is ever more important in these contemporary times of renewed uncertainty characterised by a resurgence of fascist movements and by renewed ethnicisation within nationalist concepts. Particularly in light of this perilous present, it is vital to better understand from a historical perspective the intimate connections between political instrumentalisation, co-opting, and the ideological underpinnings of the ethnological disciplines. At the same time, acts of (often silent) resistance, responsibility, and a striving for ethical integrity have always been present, offering grounds for hope. This may, perhaps, also help to chart a path towards a brighter future.

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Individual Choices

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Between Political Ideology and Personal Professional Interests

Ethnology in Soviet Latvia

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Introduction: Soviet Ethnographic Practice in the Latvian SSR

This chapter studies the history of ethnography in Soviet Latvia, that is, the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic (LSSR). In the Soviet Union, the term 'ethnography' was used to describe the academic field dealing with the origins and development of ethnic communities, their material and spiritual culture, and so forth. While 'ethnography' in the Soviet sense was roughly analogous to the understanding of 'ethnology' in Europe at that time or the American field of 'sociocultural anthropology', 'ethnology' was described in the Soviet Union as a 'bourgeois science', in order to distinguish it from the Marxist-Leninist theoretical basis of ethnography, and the term 'anthropology' was restricted to biological and physical anthropology (Kuhn and Puchberger 2021, 61; Hirsch 2005, 10). A type of qualitative holistic social and cultural field research that corresponded to ethnology was practised by Soviet ethnographers. Still, that term was not used to describe their approach.

The main focus of this chapter is the relationship between the State and the researcher through the analysis of ethnographers' publications and archive documents from between 1956 and 1969, with the following aims: 1) to understand the politically administrative planning-control system, which determined the activities of Soviet ethnographers and which was coordinated from the central government institutions of the Soviet Union in Moscow; and 2) to understand the strategies of individual researchers for studying particular topics and for preparing publications.

The second half of the 1950s and the 1960s marked the Thaw after the exposure of the Stalin cult. Soon in Latvia, however, the turn of the decade was marked by the defeat of the National Communists in 1959–1961 (Bleiere 2022, 89–111) and the intensification of political and ideological tensions. A new generation of ethnographers announced themselves in the field and later formed its core. All had obtained their degrees in Latvia during the Soviet occupation, and most were graduates of the Faculty of History at Latvian State University. This period was the richest in the ethnographers' publications, mainly in two scientific periodicals of the Latvian SSR, reflecting the results of ethnographic research in Soviet Latvia: *LPSR ZA Vēstis* ('Bulletin of the Academy of Sciences of the Latvian SSR'), dating from 1947, and the series of scientific papers *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija* ('Archaeology and Ethnography'), whose first volume was published in 1957. In 1969, the collective monograph *Latviešu etnogrāfija* ('The Latvian Ethnography') was published, a compilation of 15 years of work (Strods et al. 1969).

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Importance of the study and the theoretical background

In recent years, Soviet-period research in ethnology and folklore has received considerable international attention (Ķencis et al. 2024; Kuhn and Puchberger 2021; Jääts 2019; Ķencis and Ūdre 2021). The Communist system affected many lives in a very large territory over a long period of time. It was not only limited to the Soviet Union but also affected the whole so-called Socialist Bloc (Ķencis 2024, 3–4). It is important to understand the processes that took place within this political system to make sense of the impact the political ideology of the Soviet rule left on the societies under its influence and on our own time. The study of the history of ethnology during the Soviet occupation period is one way to understand the system of creating, sharing, and controlling knowledge.

The history of Latvian ethnology is still only partially studied, although there are already several international publications in this field (Karlsone 2019, Karlsone & Boldāne-Zeļenkova 2021; Boldāne-Zeļenkova 2019). However, there are still many aspects for further research that could improve our understanding of the way of life in a limited democracy, which nevertheless allowed the society to survive. There is a consensus within the frame of postcolonialism that the Soviet Union may be analysed as a colonial empire (Hirsch 2005; Annus 2012; 2016; 2018; Ķencis et al. 2024; Račevskis 2006; Moor 2006). Its policies correspond to the most universal definition of colonialism, as given by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak:

> When an alien nation-state establishes itself as ruler, impressing its own laws and system of education, and re-arranging the mode of production for its economic benefit, "colonizer" and "colonized" can be used. (Collier et al. 2003, 15; Spivak et al. 2006, 828)

The concept of colonialism/postcolonialism (Annus 2012; 2016; Kelertas 2006) is also used in this chapter, as the author regards it as an important tool to gain a more thorough understanding of the processes that took place in the Soviet republics, including the Baltics (Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia), and Latvia in particular. The USSR's colonialism has been reflected to some extent in Latvian historical research (Ivanovs 2007; Mintaurs 2014), but only the first steps have been taken towards understanding its expressions and its impact on creating knowledge in the humanities, including folklore studies, and ethnography (e.g. Ķencis et al. 2024; Karlsone & Boldāne-Zeļenkova 2021; Boldāne-Zeļenkova 2019; Karlsone 2019).

The first part of this chapter will provide an understanding of the administrative system of control in the field of ethnography in the Soviet Union. It is impossible to adequately assess the researchers' choices and actions without knowing the restrictions imposed during the time period in which they were working. The second part of this chapter will deal with ethnographic publications and their compatibility with the obligatory research topics imposed from Moscow. The third part of the chapter will study individual authors' strategies for preparing publications by analysing research articles in scientific periodicals of the Latvian SSR.

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Sources

This research is based on written sources from the period of Soviet occupation. Materials from the National Archives of Latvia, the Latvian State Archive (NAL LSA), and the Repository of Ethnographic Materials of the Institute of Latvian History of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Latvia, were used in this study. They include the personal files of employees in the Sector of Ethnography and minutes of the meetings of the Scientific Board and the Sector of Ethnography that illustrate everyday work: discussions of work plans, reports, and publications; reviews of other ethnographers' manuscripts; preparation for expeditions (fieldwork), etc.

Publications from the period of Soviet occupation provide a significant source of research for this study. *LPSR ZA Vēstis* (from 1947) was the official periodical of the Academy of Sciences of the Latvian SSR (AS LSSR). This periodical closely followed the template of the leading periodical of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union had a strictly planned economy, and the planned development of sciences was part of it. The formal introductions of the *LPSR ZA Vēstis*, as well as information about the decisions made at the Communist Party's regular plenary and congress meetings, provide a good understanding of the administrative and ideological framework within which ethnographers had to work.

Scientific publications comprise another source used in this study. The ethnographers of Soviet Latvia had limited options for publishing their papers. Very rarely, they were accepted in the leading periodical of the field, *Sovetskaia Etnografiia* ('Soviet Ethnography'), which was published in Moscow in Russian. Only two periodicals were suitable for the local community of ethnographers, and both were published in Riga. The periodical *LPSR ZA Vēstis*, which represented all scientific fields, published papers and information in Latvian and Russian. However, it was a single periodical for all scientists. Ethnography was a small portion of the research carried out by several institutes of the Department of Social Sciences; therefore, ethnographic research was rarely published in the journal. The series *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, on the other hand, was a special periodical, which combined papers from archaeology, ethnography, and related studies. It was first published in 1957, with irregular periods between the volumes. During the period that concerns this study, eight volumes were published. This periodical became very popular not only among Latvian ethnographers and archaeologists but also members of the public who were interested in these subjects.

The structure of the publication, the description of the research material, the terminology used, and the style of writing can all provide evidence about the authors' research projects, their contents, and their quality in terms of creating objective knowledge.

The political and administrative frame of the ethnographers' work: The structure of scientific institutions

To evaluate the particularities of ethnographers' work under Soviet rule, it is necessary to understand the bureaucratic and organisational conditions for any such work. In this case, Latvia was under complete occupation and fully integrated into the Soviet

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Union. The historian Daina Bleiere has effectively described the essence of the Soviet Union:

> Formally, it was a union of independent republics, but in reality, it was an empire-like (in terms of hierarchy) structure, in which the absolute priority of the "Centre" was using resources from the republics to achieve the goals of the whole union, and the republics were therefore strictly controlled. (Bleiere 2022, 89)

In the Soviet Union and its republics, all scientific work, including ethnographic research, existed within the Academy of Sciences. The main task of the Academy was to organise and oversee research in all sciences, which included determining the total number of scientists in each field. The first clause of the AS Latvian SSR by-laws provides evidence that the institutions of Moscow oversaw its work, and the by-laws stating that the Academy of Sciences 'unites the best scientists of the republic' (AS LSSR By-Laws, in *LPSR ZA Vēstis* 1947, 146) suggest that the research carried out in its institutes was highly valued. Staff from universities, museums, and archives also undertook research, but work in the Academy of Sciences was regarded as more prestigious, as it was the leading scientific institution. The Academy of Sciences also managed and oversaw international collaboration.

As suggested by the annual reports for scientific development in the Latvian SSR, which were published in *LPSR ZA Vēstis*, local institutions of the Soviet republics were part of the united Soviet system, and the directions and aims for their development were issued in Moscow. The Soviet Union's colonialist policy for managing the Soviet republics can be described as controlling guardianship. This policy maintained that without the leadership of the Centre (i.e. institutions in Moscow), no meaningful development, growth, or achievements were possible in the periphery (i.e. the republics).

The Soviet administration system was based on a multi-level bureaucratic governing model, the top of which was the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). The Communist Party of the USSR had a unique position in the state authority system. It did not just carry out the functions of a political party; it governed and controlled the administration of all state, financial, and social organisations through its network of institutions (Bleiere 2022, 66).

During the period discussed in this study, the Soviet Union was led by two political figures, both the First and/or the General Secretaries of the Central Committee of the Communist Party: Nikita Khrushchev (1894–1971), from 14 September 1953 to 14 October 1964, and Leonid Brezhnev (1906–1982), from 14 October 1964 to 10 November 1982. Their leadership style influenced the politics of the whole country, including the directives for the development of science.

The Academy of Sciences of the USSR in Moscow was the highest scientific institution, governed by both the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the USSR Council of Ministers. A similar system, monitored by the USSR institutions, existed in the Soviet republics.

The Academy of Sciences had a strict hierarchical system, with a Presidium, departments, and institutes. Researchers in ethnography handed in drafts of their work plans and reports for review to the head of the Sector, who in turn reported to the Scientific Council of the Institute and the Director of the Institute. From there, the

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reports were transferred to the Social Sciences department of the AS of the Latvian SSR, which, in turn, was overseen by the Presidium of the AS of the Soviet Union. Each republic's President of the Academy of Sciences reported to the Presidium of the AS USSR and its Advisory Committee. The work plans could only be implemented after their approval in Moscow. Finally, employees of the Central Committee of the Communist Party oversaw the work of the AS USSR and its institutes and the same scientific institutions in the Republics.

The work of the scientific branches was also coordinated and supervised by leading research institutes in Moscow or Leningrad. For example, the Ethnography Sector of the Institute of History and Material Culture (later the Institute of History) of the AS of the Latvian SSR was overseen by the N.N. Miklouho-Maclay Institute of Ethnography of the AS USSR (the Institute of Ethnography) in Moscow. Several employees of this institute were curators, who coordinated research in the regions of the Soviet Union. For many years, P.I. Kushner, N.N. Cheboksarov, Lyudmila Nikolajevna Terent'eva, and others oversaw the work of the ethnographers of the Latvian SSR (LNA_LVA_F2371_A4_433_LP8). Terent'eva participated in the ethnographers' expeditions, prepared publications about material gathered in Latvia (e.g. Terent'eva 1952; 1973; 1979), and participated in viva exams of the young Latvian scientists as a representative of the Institute of Ethnography (LNA_LVA_F2371_A5_L12_LP59–60; L13_LP76-79; L15_LP72–73).

The participation of Russian scientists in the research activities of the Soviet republics was declared as help and support for the local scientists from professionally (as well as politically and ideologically) more advanced colleagues. This rhetoric was already used in 1947 (Zutis 1947, 69). The official pretext was that scientists from the republics could not achieve sufficient development and growth without help from the Centre. In reality, it was a part of the control system. The guardianship by Russian colleagues was an expression of colonialism, which created and gradually reinforced the discourse about the inferiority of researchers of the Soviet republics, including the Latvian SSR.

The Ethnography Sector's work plans were submitted for approval to the Scientific Council of the Institute, which evaluated them and suggested revisions (LNA_LVA_F2371_A1). Work reports were also evaluated during open meetings of the Communist Party of the Institute (E67, 30, Protocol No 12, 22.08.1961). Despite these formalities, as evidenced by the plans and minutes of the meetings (E67, LNA_LVA_F2371_A1), the approved versions of the work plans were often not implemented for different reasons. The planned publications were transferred from one annual plan to the next, with their titles adjusted following the politically relevant formulations of the topics. At the same time, other studies were rushed, and not enough time was allocated for them. For this reason, researchers abandoned some topics if it became clear that finishing them in time would be impossible. In 1961, for example, Saulvedis Cimermanis abandoned his monograph about freshwater fishing in Latvia (E67, 30, Protocol No 8).[1]

Researchers in ethnography had limited choices of topics, as they had to work within a multi-level system of control. Their work was dependent on approval from higher instances. The long-standing system that a researcher's qualifications and the

1. He would finish and publish his monograph about this subject only decades later. See Cimermanis 1998.

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value of their work directly or indirectly depended on the approval of Moscow and Moscow scientists created the ground for accepting the notion that the only valid assessment was Moscow's evaluation.

Discussion of papers in Sector meetings

During the period of interest of the current study (1956–1969), 43 papers from the Ethnography Sector were published in *LPSR ZA Vēstis* and *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*. The authors included Aina Alsupe[2] (1926–2015) (photo 1), Saulvedis Cimermanis[3] (1929–2022) (photo 2), Elga Čivkule[4] (1930–?) (photo 3), Linda Dumpe[5] (1930–2024) (photo 4), Lidija Jefremova[6] (1929–2000) (photo 5), Anna Krastiņa[7] (1919–2006) (photo 6), Ingrida Leinasare[8] (1929–2004) (photo 7), Mirdza Slava[9] (1924–2001) (photo 8), Heinrihs Strods[10] (1925–2012) (photo 9), and Antoņina Zavarina[11]

2. Aina Alsupe had obtained higher education during her studies at the Faculty of History of Latvian State University in 1947–1952 (LNA_LVA_F2371_A4_L429_LP6–7).
3. Saulvedis Cimermanis studied part-time in the Faculty of History of Latvian State University from 1949 until 1952 (LNA_LVA_F2371_A9_L13_LP4–5).
4. Elga Čivkule was Latvian, born in Bashkiria in the Soviet Union, and spoke Russian in everyday communication. She came to Latvia after the Second World War and studied in the Faculty of History of Latvian State University from 1948 until 1953 (LNA_LVA_F2371_A4_L424_LP50, LP52).
5. Linda Dumpe was Estonian, born in Riga, Latvia, and spoke Latvian in everyday communication. She had been going to an Estonian secondary school, but continued her education in a Russian school after the former was closed following the Soviet occupation. She started her studies in History at Moscow State University in 1949 but continued in Riga after the first year. She graduated from the Faculty of History of Latvian State University in 1952 (LNA_LVA_F2371_A9_L19_LP2, LP6–7).
6. Lidija Jefremova was Russian, born in Tartary in the Soviet Union, and came to Latvia in 1945 when her father, a functionary of the Communist Party and a lecturer in History, was transferred to Latvian State University. She finished her secondary education in Riga and studied in the Faculty of History of Latvian State University from 1947 until 1952 (LNA_LVA_F2371_A4_L436_LP6, LP10).
7. Anna Krastiņa started her studies at the Institute of Home Economics in 1938, before the Soviet occupation, but graduated in 1941, after it had begun. During the war in 1943–1944, she studied in the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Latvia, but left after the first year. From 1944 until 1946, she studied in the Latvian Academy of Agriculture, the Department of Home Economics and Technology, and graduated with a degree in Agriculture and Home Economics (LNA_LVA_F2371_A4_L250a_LP6–7, LP9).
8. Ingrīda Leinasare was Latvian, born in a workers' family in Riga, and graduated with distinction from the Faculty of History of Latvian State University in 1952, an exemplary of the Soviet education system (LNA_LVA_F2371_A4_L95_LP2, LP4).
9. Mirdza Slava was Latvian, born in Riga, studied in the Faculty of Philology, Department of the History of Arts at Latvian State University from 1947, and graduated in 1951 (LNA_LVA_F2371_A4_L433_LP7). Before that, from 1942 to 1947 she studied in the Riga Secondary School of Applied Arts (LNA_LVA_F2371_A4_L433_LP4).
10. Heinrihs Strods studied in the Faculty of History of Latvian State University from 1945 until 1950 (LNA_LVA_F2371_A4_L404_LP5, LP7).
11. Antoņina Zavarina was born and raised in the Soviet Union, in Leningrad, Russia. She came to Latvia in 1945 when her father, who was in the military, was transferred there. In Riga, she

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(1928–2015). Almost all of them were young people who had recently graduated from the university, and they represented the new generation of ethnographers whose academic education had been obtained in the Soviet education system. For most of them, however, their interest in history and ethnography likely began before the Soviet occupation.

As suggested by minutes of the Ethnography Sector meetings, writing a scientific paper in Soviet Latvia was a collective process. Each member of the Sector had to comment on the work of other colleagues. On the one hand, this process helped maintain the research quality. However, it also provided an opportunity to guide colleagues to follow desirable ideological trends. The discussion of papers at sector meetings was part of the internal and self-censorship system (Briedis 2010, 10, 30–31). After discussion in the sector, the report on the manuscript was submitted for evaluation by the Institute's Scientific Council. Collective responsibility for the contents of the publications extended to the members of each Sector and the whole Scientific Council of the Institute. If the Scientific Council of the Institute released ideologically questionable or politically inaccurate papers, it had to report to the leading institutions of the Communist Party. Each type of manuscript (research article, conference abstract, review article, etc.) was reviewed and, if necessary, revised before publishing, including by the editor and the proofreader of the intended medium. It also had to go through official censorship (Vladimirov 1972; Briedis 2010, 129–132).

The minutes of the meetings show that by exchanging comments, the researchers tried to reflect the improvement of life during the Soviet era. For example, it was necessary to 'show the innovative works of [craft] groups and how they compare with the pre-Soviet period' (E67, 30, Minutes No 1, Krastiņa to Alsupe): 'it should be pointed out that the state supports construction in collective farms, there is electrification and radio. Television should be mentioned more' (E67, 30, Minutes No 1, Krastiņa to Alsupe; see also Strods on colleagues' papers in general). Another set of minutes recorded: 'it should be talked about the flourishing of artistic self-expression and its importance in communist upbringing' (E 67, 30, Minutes No 13, Slava to Alsupe). The publications had to avoid any criticism that might cast a shadow over life in the Soviet Union. For example, Jefremova commented on Brēde's[12] paper: 'You have to change what you said about the backwardness of Latgale. You must redact the phrases which can be misinterpreted in the text' (E67, 30, Protocol No 13, Jefremova to Brēde).

It was clear that for any research topic, the resulting publication would have to include praise for the positive achievements of the Soviet period and criticism of the previous life in the bourgeois period, as seen in the following examples: 'The paper focuses too much on the agrarian reform of the bourgeois Latvia' (E 67, 30, Protocol No 9, Strods to Krastiņa), 'You have to characterise the bourgeois period and contrast it to the new achievements of the Soviet years' (E67, 30, Protocol No 13, Strods to Alsupe), and 'one could wish for a sharper criticism of the authors of bourgeois Latvia' (E 67, 30, Protocol No 15, Slava to Strods). When describing traditional culture, it was necessary not only to indicate that it reflected the social class of peasants, i.e. working people, but also to highlight it (E 67, 30, Protocols No 13, Čivkule about Slava's paper;

finished her last grade of secondary school and studied in the Faculty of History of Latvian State University from 1946 until 1951 (LNA_LVA_F2371_A4_L444_LP69, LP72).

12. Aina Brēde was the author of a paper about socialist festivities and traditions.

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E 67, 30, Protocols No 13, Jefremova about Slava's and Alsupe's papers). One had to be particularly careful about mentioning religion, as Strods, for example, demanded strong criticism of it (E67, 30, Protocol No 13, Strods about Brēde's paper; Protocol No 16, Strods about Juškevičs's[13] paper). At the same time, Slava remarked to Alsupe to 'avoid talking about altar covers' (E67, 30, Protocol No 13, Slava to Alsupe).

The control of scientific papers was carried out both in the Ethnography Sector and by the Board of Directors of the Institute when occasionally a special editor was appointed for monographs in order to help authors adjust their language according to the Soviet ideology and research tasks, as was the case with M. Slava's monograph on folk costumes (Slava 1966) (E67, 30, Protocol No 3, 1.3.1961). This suggests that Slava's active criticism of colleagues about their insufficient compliance with ideological demands did not help her avoid additional scrutiny about it herself.

Ethnographers' research topics in 1956–1969

The work of ethnographers was organised as a part of the planned development of Soviet science. This meant that scientists wrote five-year, annual, and three-month work plans in which the topics aligned with the directions issued by superior institutions. The selection of topics, the appointment of scientists for their research, and the preparation of publications, discussions, reviews, and publications were lengthy and slow processes. It was like a heavy wheel that is slow to start moving and equally slow to stop. As a result, publications about the relevant topic continued to be published a long time after the completion of research. Sometimes, this was due to the slow operation and lack of resources at the State Publishing House (LNA_LVA_F2371_A1_L243_LP25).

In the 1940s, the methodology of Marxism and Leninism was introduced into the historical studies of the Latvian SSR (Zutis 1947, 60). The methodology recognised four stages of socio-economic development: primitive community, feudalism, capitalism, and socialism, with the transition to communism. Accordingly, any research topic had to be viewed within this framework. Ethnographers focused more on events of the 19th century, which were a part of the capitalist period.

One long-term research topic for the Ethnography Sector was 'Latvian lifestyle and culture', which was part of the 'complex problem of the emergence and ethnic history of the Baltic nations' (E 67, 24, 5, Valeskalns 1956, 17; Jääts in this volume). Initially, the main subtopics were: 1) dwellings, 2) agricultural tools, and 3) clothing. Materials for these topics were also gathered in other parts of the Soviet Union by ethnographers from Lithuania, Estonia, and other Soviet republics (E 67, 28, Resolution 1959, 4). There were plans to publish several joint compilations of research papers by Baltic archaeologists and ethnographers in the beginning of the 1960s (E 67, 28, Resolution 1959, 7), but this did not happen until the 1980s, when two volumes of the ethnographic atlas were published in Russian: *Agriculture* (Terent'eva et al. 1985), and *Clothing* (Terent'eva et al. 1986).

According to the ethnographers' work plans from 1956 to 1960 (E67, 245), as well as publications, the research topics primarily focused on the material culture and

13. Broņislavs Juškevičs was the author of a paper about socialist festivities and traditions.

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occupation types in the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century: the rural way of life (Cimermanis, Čivkule), traditional buildings (Krastiņa), freshwater fishing (Cimermanis), fabrics and weavers in Vidzeme (Alsupe), traditional clothing (Slava), the Latgalian peasant family and family occasions (Jefremova), the way of life of Latgalian Russians (old believers) (Zavarina), and agricultural tools (Leinasare). Research of the material culture of the 19th century allowed authors to avoid, or at least reduce, the use of political ideology in publications.

Following the decisions of the XXI Party Congress and the July Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, from 1960 onward, social sciences had to focus on studying socialist society. Ethnographers also had to focus more on exploring the lifestyle and culture of collective farmers and workers under socialist conditions (LNA_LVA_F2371_A1_L266_LP1-3). After attending a scientific session in Moscow in 1961, Jefremova reported about the preferred interpretation of research topics: 'Ethnographers must prioritise themes that unite nations and scale back those that divide them. They must concentrate on what is common to all socialist nations' (E 67, 30, Protocol No 6, 5.5.1961, Jefremova).

Research in ethnography in individual republics, including Latvia, was closely tied to the discipline's development in the Soviet Union. The approaches and topics were decided during annual Union-wide meetings of ethnographers, archaeologists, and anthropologists (scientific sessions), and their implementation in research was compulsory for all scientists of each republic. From the 1960s onwards, there was growing pressure from Moscow to increase political ideology in ethnographic research. Orders were given to study the way of life, the material culture of collective farmers and factory workers, and the creation of new socialist traditions (Strods 1962, 133).

After the XXII Congress of the CPSU in October 1961, social sciences were again set to studying the socialist way of life, with orders to uncover processes that underlined the 'natural movement of humanity towards communism' (Plaude 1962, 7). In the beginning of 1962, the annual Union-wide ethnographers' scientific meeting, organised by the Institute of History of the AS USSR and the Institute of Ethnography, took place. Scientists from the Institute of History of the AS Latvian SSR also participated. During the meeting, a course was set towards broader research topics. Latvian ethnographers had to shift their research focus to studying elements of the Soviet period (E 67, 30, Protocol No 3).

The choice of research topics was also influenced by international scientific activities in which the Soviet Union participated. One was the VII International Congress of Anthropologists and Ethnographers, held in Moscow in 1964. Preparations for it began straight after the previous Congress in Paris in 1960. Leaders of Soviet ethnography saw this scientific forum as an opportunity for competition to show off Soviet scientific achievements.

> The congress will test the political preparedness and combat power of the Soviet field of ethnography, which is of great importance in the battle against bourgeois ethnography and the influence of bourgeois ideology, political partiality, falsifications, and attacks on the theoretical foundations of historical materialism. (Strods, 1964a, 119)

The Soviet Union applied as a single unit, representing all republics. In 1963, when the abstracts of the potential delegates from the Soviet Union were evaluated, the

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following presentations, which complied with the directions from Moscow, were selected from the Latvian SSR: 'Changes in the way of life of the current population' (Jefremova), and 'Studies of historical cultural connections between nations' (Slava). It was, however, pointed out that 'the scientists of our republic cannot represent our republic […] in the fields of traditional applied arts and traditional building […], and some others' (Strods 1963b, 147). By saying this, he meant that there were no studies of the required level about traditional housing and traditional applied arts in the Ethnography Sector of the Institute of History in Latvian SSR at the time. While there was indeed a lack of studies about traditional applied arts in the Academy of Sciences, papers about traditional buildings had been regularly published since 1957 (Krastiņa 1957; 1960; 1962). This could suggest that Anna Krastiņa's studies about traditional rural housing were not seen as sufficiently compatible with the demands of Soviet science, even though, formally, the topic was acceptable. So far, no evidence has been found as to why the decision was made to exclude the topic of traditional housing in Latvia from the Congress. One of the possible explanations could be Krastiņa's 'faulty' education – she had graduated from the Faculty of Home Economics and Technology at the Academy of Agriculture rather than the Faculty of History at Latvian State University (LVA_LVA_F2371_A4_L250a_LP9).

Organising an international congress increased the ideological pressure on the scientists whose presentations were included in the Congress. The results of their research also had to become an ideological weapon that would prove the superiority of Soviet science over bourgeois theories. Intensified political ideology was also present in the Introduction of Volume VI of the series of papers *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*, which was dedicated to this Congress (Strods 1964c, 3–5), as well as the general style of the Ethnography Sector researchers' papers included in that volume (Strods 1964d; Cimermanis 1964a; 1964b).

Another direction of research imposed by Moscow was the topic of the connections between the Baltic nations and their correlation with the Russian nation. It meant that scientific studies had to demonstrate the positive impact of the great Russian nation on the development of the Baltic nations (E 67, 21: Kushner 1952, 1). To carry out this task, joint work teams with the Institute of Ethnography of the AS USSR and the Institute of the Russian Language were formed (E 67, 28: *Rezoliucija* 1959, 4–5). The director of the AS of the Latvian SSR, Paulis Lejiņš, mentioned this topic in the list of the targets of scientific research as early as 1947 (Lejiņš 1947, 17–18). This topic remained in the Soviet Latvian ethnographers' task lists until 1968, when a compilation of papers on this topic was published in the series *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*: 'Historical cultural relations of the Latvian nation with Slavic nations (based on archaeological, ethnographic and anthropological sources' (*Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija* VIII, 1968).

Alongside the topics already being studied, directions were received from Moscow to begin research on new ones. In 1959, for example, it was pointed out that no ethnographic materials had been gathered in the Latvian SSR about food, crafts, and, of course, the life of workers. It was already being studied in the Estonian SSR and Lithuanian SSR at the time (E 67, 28: Rezoliucija 1959, 4). Researchers could either pick the topics themselves, or they were allocated compulsorily. An example of this is the paper by Krastiņa in 1963 (Krastiņa 1963b) on food research, although before she had studied dwellings. The ideologised topics that nobody wanted were usually allocated to the new researchers of the Ethnography Sector, as they could not make excuses

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about having other studies in progress. For example, Linda Dumpe, who joined the Ethnography Sector in 1964 and had already written a monograph about agricultural tools (Dumpe 1964), was required to write a paper about the interaction of Russian and Latvian intellectual culture during the period of building socialism and communism (Dumpe 1968).

Strategies used in the publication of papers

Analysis of ethnographers' publications suggests that they used different methods and strategies to make their articles acceptable for publication. This applied to the contents (the research object), the choice of sources, the structure of the paper, and the language used. The researchers of the Ethnography Sector were not ideologically homogenous. There were people among them who found it easy to comply with the politically ideological requirements and people who saw them as an obstacle to research.

One of the most popular strategies to make the study and the resulting paper acceptable for publication was to write a politically and ideologically appropriate introduction. It could, therefore, shed light on the compatibility of the author's views with the political trends. Most papers that fit into this strategy have introductions containing praise for the Soviet regime and socialist lifestyle (Cimermanis 1957b; 1964a; 1964b; Krastiņa 1957; 1962; Čivkule 1962a; Slava 1962; Alsupe 1963; Jefremova 1963; Strods 1963a; 1968; Dumpe 1968). Despite the praise for the Soviet regime in the introduction, the rest of the paper usually contained a politically neutral study of ethnographic material. These studies either focused on assigning different types of material culture or creating the typology of traditions (Jefremova) or ethnographic objects (buildings, tools, etc.) (Alsupe, Cimermanis, Krastiņa, Leinasare, Slava). This strategy was mostly used in papers published in 1962 and 1963. The defining important political trends in the introduction were also used in the monograph *Latviešu etnogrāfija* (1969).

Another means of demonstrating political loyalty in the introduction of the paper was general criticism of the wealthy social classes or 'the bourgeoisie' as opposed to the depiction of the oppressed workers' life (Cimermanis 1963; Krastiņa 1963b; 1968; Leinasare 1963). Stating that the paper was dedicated to studying the life of the oppressed social class – the poor peasantry (Jefremova 1959c; Krastiņa 1960) – was also a way to justify researching a particular topic politically. An example of justifying a research topic about the ethnography of earlier historical periods was to state that its purpose was to demonstrate the improvement of life in socialism (Cimermanis 1964a). The researcher's interest in the past was explained as an investigation of the roots of the socialist way of life and culture (Čivkule 1962b; Jefremova and Čivkule 1967). Dumpe's paper 'Traces of collective working traditions in Latgale livestock farming in the 19th–20th centuries' (1969) was formally compatible with the research direction issued from Moscow in 1962, which, as summarised by Strods, was 'the study of the seeds of communism in different spheres of production' (Strods 1962, 133). Despite this, the rest of the paper was a truthful description of ethnographic material without references to the trends of Soviet ideology.

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To demonstrate the topic's importance, the introduction could include information about working with the Institute of Ethnography and its scientists (referring to joint expeditions) (Slava 1959; 1960; Krastiņa 1957; 1968). This would prove that the study resulted from collaboration with colleagues from Moscow (who were overseen by them). However, this information was usually not mentioned in the rest of the paper.

In some cases, mandatory topics were interpreted as more advantageous to the author. One example is Alsupe's 1968 paper 'Historical cultural relations between the Latvian and Slavic nations' (Alsupe 1968). Alsupe interpreted the compulsory theme from a broader perspective and included the Belorussian and Polish nations under the definition of Slavic nations – rather than the Russian nation alone. Likewise, despite the encouraged one-directional, only positive influence of the Slavic nations (i.e. Russians), she also showed the opposite influences. As a result, the paper provides a substantial comparison of historical material.

The main research interest of Slava was the folk costume. To be able to study this subject, she justified its importance by stating that modern workers had expressed considerable interest in such material. The farmers of collective farms wished to create their wear for occasions based on traditional clothing, about which there had been insufficient information before (Slava 1962). In another paper, Slava referenced Lenin's thesis that any phenomenon must be studied from the beginning (Slava 1963). She began her paper about the collective farmers' clothes by analysing ethnographic material from the 18th century and then moving on to a detailed description of traditional clothing.

Another strategy was to mention the research direction issued from Moscow, which the study followed; this could be, for example, the study of ethnic history (Alsupe 1960; Krastiņa 1963a). This was a neutral and comparatively non-political way to demonstrate the importance of the research topic. In other cases, authors pointed out that the article described a specific socio-economic formation of society, such as developments in capitalism (Alsupe 1959a; 1959b; Jefremova 1959a; 1959b; 1959c; Čivkule 1963) or feudalism (Leinasare 1960). The collective monograph *Latviešu etnogrāfija* (1969) was also structured according to socio-economic formations: prehistoric groups (pp. 57–90), the period of feudalism (pp. 91–256) and the period of socialism and the building of communism (pp. 429–557). This was how the discourse of ethnography and the chronology of research was formed.

Another strategy for writing a scientific paper was to cite (usually either in the introduction or conclusion) politically significant figures, or to refer to them. The cited people included F. Engels (Jefremova 1959c), more often Lenin (Čivkule 1959; 1963; Jefremova 1957; 1959c; Krastiņa 1963a; Slava 1963; Strods 1963; 1964d), and Khrushchev (Alsupe 1963; Jefremova 1963; Krastiņa 1963), but references also included the programme documents of the Communist Party (Krastiņa 1963b; Dumpe 1968). Cimermanis and Leinasare did not use this strategy in their papers, contrary to Jefremova, who cited Lenin several times in a single paper (Jefremova 1959).

Apart from the subjective interpretation of the research topic, all the above-mentioned strategies were also present in the introduction of the collective monograph *Latviešu etnogrāfija* (Strods 1969, 5–17). It was a quintessence of the writing style in ethnographic research at the time, including the justification of its importance.

The list of strategies also includes another one: the stylistics of the paper, the use of epithets, and combinations of words to enhance the way of expression. This was

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most often employed in criticising the bourgeoisie: 'reactionary bourgeoisie' (Slava 1963, 210), or the 'antiscientific theses of the Latvian bourgeois science' (Strods 1964b, 18). The word 'bourgeoisie' also suggests employing a specific style of writing that was in line with the categorisation of Marxist-Leninist socio-economic formations. Cimermanis used this word in almost all his papers[14] except for one publication, his first scientific article about agricultural workers (1957a). Čivkule and Strods used it in all their papers published in the series *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*.[15] However, the fact that the word 'bourgeoisie/bourgeois' does not appear in all the authors' papers and is only used occasionally by some (Krastiņa, Jefremova, Alsupe) suggests that it was not compulsory. Accordingly, it can be viewed as adding political or ideological undertones to the language used.

The word 'exploitation' was also used in scientific papers with a political hue. For example, one finds 'ruthless exploitation' (Cimermanis 1957a, 51) and 'unbearable exploitation' (Strods 1963a, 8). The word 'exploitation' was used most often by Cimermanis, Strods, and Čivkule.[16] The word 'communism' (and its derivatives) had a similar function, being used by Cimermanis, Strods, Jefremova, Dumpe, Čivkule and Alsupe.[17]

This small-scale inventory of particular words used in publications, in combination with the years of publication, reveals an increase of political language in the ethnographers' publications in 1962, 1963, and 1964 (of course, a more detailed inventory would offer a broader and more detailed picture). Nevertheless, it is evidence that the stylistics of scientific papers could be used as a strategy for writing to make the text more compatible with the ideological requirements.

An evaluation of the ethnographers' publications between 1957 and 1969 reveals that a single author's writing style differed depending on the year of publication. Accordingly, a trend emerged whereby changes in the field of ethnography in general and particular directions issued for the researchers impacted the content and style of their papers. Publications from the late 1950s were comparatively free of ideological phrases, and their topics mainly covered ethnographic material from the 19th century, but this changed in the 1960s. The downfall of the national communists in the Communist Party of the Latvian SSR in 1959–1961 (Bleiere 2022, 89–111), as well as the decisions of the XXII Congress of the CPSU, increased the ideological pressure on the humanitarian and social sciences, including ethnography. As a result, the ethnographers had to change their scientific writing strategies. However, to summarise, there was only one way of writing a scientific paper about ethnographic themes

14. Cimermanis 1957b – 7 times; Cimermanis 1962 – 2 times; Cimermanis 1963 – 7 times; Cimermanis 1964a – 12 times; Cimermanis 1964b – 11 times.
15. Čivkule 1962a – 6 times; Čivkule 1963b – 16 times; Čivkule 1963 – 13 times; 1962 – 2 times; Strods 1963a – 58 times; Strods 1964a – 4 times; Strods 1964b – 68 times; Strods 1968 – 7 times.
16. Cimermanis 1957 – 11 times; Strods 1963a – 8 times; Čivkule 1959 – 5 times; Čivkule 1962b –5 times; Čivkule 1963 – 2 times.
17. Cimermanis 1963 – 8 times; Cimermanis 1964a – 4 times; Cimermanis 1964b – 193 times (!); Strods 1962b – 1 time; Strods 1963a – 12 times; Strods 1964c – 16 times; Strods 1964d – 2 times; Jefremova 1963 – 24 times; Dumpe 1968 – 17 times; Čivkule 1962a – 12 times; Alsupe 1962 – 2 times in the introduction; Alsupe 1963 – 3 times (2 in the introduction, 1 in the conclusion).

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– to accept Moscow's narrative and means of expression. Still, readers interested in ethnography quickly learned to read 'between the lines' and ignore individual parts of the text. For example, the article's introduction was usually unread and 'skimmed over'.

Conclusions: Research under Ideological Control

Ethnographic research in Latvia continued under the Soviet occupation. After the Second World War, a new generation of ethnographers gradually announced themselves and became more active in the second half of the 1950s. In the Soviet Union, science and ethnography, as social science, were part of a centralised planned development system. This meant that the Centre of the system was in Moscow. However, Soviet republics formed the periphery, where the republics had minimal and tightly controlled opportunities for independent actions. They were entirely dependent on the Centre. The public rhetoric maintained the idea that the republics could not exist without the guardianship of Moscow or cultivated the character of the 'big brother' at different levels. In reality, no independent actions were allowed. In ethnography, this was expressed as a joint system of management whereby the research directions were issued in Moscow. Researchers did not have the freedom to choose their research topics, as these had to comply with the political orders of the Centre. With their publications, the ethnographers not only had to develop the field and disseminate new knowledge in society but they also encouraged the propaganda of Soviet ideology. An example of this can be seen in the style differences between ethnographers' papers published in a medium for an academic audience (*LPSR ZA Vēstis*) and one for a wider audience (*Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija*). Praise for the Soviet regime was especially characteristic of the latter.

Publications written in the beginning of the 1960s reflected the ideological pressure on ethnographers, a consequence of domestic political processes in the Latvian SSR and the Soviet Union in general. During this period, the papers of all authors contained numerous political phrases, including praise for collective work in different fields. Often these phrases had nothing to do with the research topic, but they helped demonstrate the paper's compatibility with Moscow's requirements. If directions were received from Moscow to study particular ideologised topics, the researchers had two choices: to comply and attempt to create a text meeting such expectations or to interpret the topic in a way that would allow meaningful research (in other words, to find a rational foundation for seemingly politicised topics). The collective monograph *Latviešu etnogrāfija* (1969) was a diverse compilation of the research topics and methods of work of the Soviet ethnographers of the time, and it also reflects the strategies of writing.

The main guidelines for all Soviet ethnographers were based on the use of Marxist-Leninist doctrines and their inclusion in publications. This unites the papers published during the period of Soviet occupation, as it was not possible to ignore these guidelines, at least formally. However, the style of research and writing of each author was different. During the Soviet occupation, the presentation strategies in ethnographers' publications differed for subjective and objective reasons. The author's attitudes towards the regime could not be detected. However, changes in response to factors that impacted scientific research in general (decisions of the Party Congresses and plenary meetings, changes in the Central Committee of the CPSU, directions from the field leaders in Moscow,

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etc.) were more visible. However, each author chose the strategies of scientific writing themselves, and the chosen strategy did not always determine if the paper would be published. In summary, the ethnographers' papers reveal several strategies to justify the suitability of the chosen topic:

1) Writing a politically and ideologically suitable introduction;
2) The interpretation of the research topic;
3) Citing political authorities and the program documents of the Communist Party;
4) The style of writing, the use of epithets, and the use of specific word combinations to enhance the way of expression.

In summary, it can be suggested that the differential techniques of constructing the text and justifying the topic served a single purpose: to observe the discourse of Soviet science.

Evaluation of the ethnographers' achievements during the period in question shows that they gathered an immense volume of material about various topics concerning the nation's lifestyle and wrote publications that reflect the development of material culture and occupations over time. Even the paragraphs that reflect the life of Soviet collective farmers and factory workers can nowadays be used as historical evidence. Analysis of the materials used in publications has revealed that it was possible to carry out meaningful research in the field of ethnology/ethnography even under the Soviet occupation, but that in order to achieve it, one had to accept the Soviet regime's 'rules of the game', at least formally.

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A Scholar at Risk

Politics and Nationalism in Gustav Ränk's Life in Exile

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Introduction: Acting in different discourses

Gustav Ränk (1902–1998) is a grand old man in Estonian ethnology. He was the first professor of ethnology at the University of Tartu (UT) during World War II (1939–1944). At the end of the war, Ränk became a political refugee in Sweden with thousands of other compatriots. Despite initial difficulties, he pursued his scholarly career in Stockholm and achieved international recognition with his studies of North-Eurasian folk culture and religion. At the same time, he was considered an important figure in the refugee community, whose words had the power to bind Estonians together. However, becoming a scholar in forced exile involved a complex integration process into a completely changed political and social reality. The beloved nation-state had been lost in the turmoil of the war and a familiar academic environment at home was gone. One had to find a way to combine at least two identities, that of a displaced person and a scholar.

In the present chapter, I will concentrate on different aspects of Ränk's integration into life in exile while analysing his work as an ethnologist and nationally minded intellectual in Sweden.[1] By 'integration', I mean a form of acculturation in which a person adapts to the society of the new host country while retaining one's previous cultural identity (Berry 2001). Instead of investigating the theoretical and methodological foundations of his research, I will focus on Ränk's agency as an independent scholar operating in different discourses. Agency can be defined as a socio-culturally mediated capacity to act through discourse. It has been portrayed with a certain contradiction: on the one hand, the subject or actor is constrained by their position in the social world, by its structure; on the other hand, they have a certain freedom within it (Marignier 2020).

The first discourse is Swedish and international scholarship. Although the academic world can be seen as global, each national discipline operates in a local context. I am interested in how Ränk adapted to it and understood his role as a researcher in exile over the decades. The second discourse is the exile Estonian community, which developed into a strong group with its own rules and beliefs that sustained Estonianness through the decades until the 1990s. I will examine Ränk's activities, which were intended to strengthen national consciousness, and question his thoughts on his role in this discourse. The third discourse under study is Estonian ethnology as a regional form of scholarship, which after WWII was divided into two parts: the occupied homeland and

1. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the editors of this volume and two anonymous reviewers for their thoughtful proposals and comments on improving my text.

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forced exile. I will ask how Ränk perceived this division and how he felt about Soviet Estonian scholarship. By applying a biographical approach, it is possible to study how the individual scholar adapted to the social environment around him in the twists and turns of political history and to explore if he had the power to introduce changes in the discourses identified here.

The concept of nationalism cannot be overlooked when analysing Ränk's activities. By 'nationalism', I mean an ideology that began in the 19th century and divided people into distinct and unique nations, with the assumption that it must guide people's choices and actions. This ideology emphasises loyalty and devotion to a nation or nation-state (Gellner 1994). I have previously argued that for Ränk and other Estonian ethnologists of his time, nationalism was objectively granted (Metslaid 2016), and defined as primordial essentialism by later critics (Özkirimli 2010). Throughout his life, Ränk considered the ideology of nationalism to be essential in defining himself and society. He applied this ideology in writing articles to strengthen the national consciousness of his compatriots. He was an active social thinker who wrote about the importance of Estonianness, especially in exile. However, he was never politically active at home or in exile.

During the course of his life, Ränk experienced several political regimes. He had grown up in a farmer's family on the island of Saaremaa when Estonia was still part of the Russian Empire. Ränk started his studies at UT after Estonia gained independence in 1918 and was constructing its nation-state. He received an education that was national in essence, and it certainly influenced the shaping of his worldview. Already in 1926, he got a job at the *Eesti Rahva Muuseum* (ERM, 'Estonian National Museum'), the central folk culture museum in the country and a leading memory institution in the interwar period. Together with Ferdinand Linnus, the director of the ERM, Ränk led ethnological research in Estonia in the 1930s. He was elected adjunct professor shortly before the outbreak of war (1939) and continued to work at UT during the Soviet (1940–1941) and German (1941–1944) occupations, becoming extraordinary professor at the end of 1942.

Ränk had no choice but to flee with his family in the autumn of 1944. Decades later, he admitted that 'perhaps I would have stayed to see what the new occupation, with its ringing promises, would have brought if the previous [occupation] had not ended with me in prison in Kuressaare, where I barely escaped.[2] Now, inevitably, the only option remained was to go into exile' (Ränk 1988, 128). Ränk was among the 27,000 compatriots who crossed the Baltic Sea to Sweden (Tammaru, Kumer-Haukanõmm and Anniste 2010, 1167).[3]

Ränk's activities in exile have been written about in the past (Viires 1998), but this is more of an overview, focusing on his academic research. Obituaries for Ränk appeared not only in Estonia but also in Sweden, but these were written by non-Swedes (Viires

2. The Republic of Estonia had been occupied by the Soviet Union in June 1940. The war between the Soviet Union and Germany broke out a year later. At that time, Ränk was in Saaremaa, visiting his parents and trying to do fieldwork, but he was arrested by the Soviet militia in September. He spent eight days in Kuressaare prison; he was interrogated repeatedly and was threatened with the death penalty, but at the last moment he was released (Ränk 2023a, 73–83). The German army was already in Saaremaa and the Soviet troops had to retreat. This experience had a severe effect on Ränk and strengthened his disgust towards Soviet power.
3. More Estonian refugees (approx. 40,000) ended up in Germany.

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1999; Papp 2001). I have previously studied different aspects of his life as an ethnologist in the interwar period (e.g. Metslaid 2016) and have recently started to look at the Second World War period and exile, for which I have analysed a wide range of sources. Ränk's legacy is extensive, archived in the ERM and Saaremaa Museum. I have used his correspondence, which was mostly with Estonian colleagues and friends in exile and at home. Analyses of these letters led me to discover the very beginning of exile and, on the other hand, Ränk's interaction with Soviet Estonian scholars. His two diaries kept in the ERM from 1939–1948 are published (Metslaid and Jääts 2023). The first diary ends with a comprehensive description of his escape journey and his first impressions of life in Sweden. In the second diary, he wrote about his emotions and thoughts when something special happened in foreign policy, within the refugee community, or in his family and professional life. This diary mainly covers the years 1945 and 1946. This chapter also draws heavily on Ränk's ideological and popular-science newspaper and journal articles published over the decades in Sweden. A selection of these was published in the compendium *Müüt ja ajalugu* ('Myth and history') in 2000 (Ränk 2000).

Correspondence is a complex source for historical analysis. Letters cannot be seen as merely useful facts. The time, place, and recipient of their creation must be kept in mind, and these are dialogical and perspectival materials, as Liz Stanley has written (Stanley 2004, 202–203). The situation with using diaries and newspaper articles as sources is similar. The 'poetics and politics` (see Clifford [1986] 2010) of these kinds of texts should be taken into account. Ränk did not normally keep a diary, yet the difficult and turbulent years pushed him to do so.[4] He did not write the diaries with the intention of ever making his thoughts public, but rather for himself, to think through his thoughts and feelings. In front of the public and even his family, he did not want to talk much about these difficult times. Towards the end of his life, Ränk published memories of his childhood (Ränk 1979), a magnificent book that has been described as a 'broad-minded ethnologist's in-depth analysis of everyday life in village society' (Vunder 1998, 107). Student and working life in Estonia and the long decades of exile were included in the second memoir only thanks to public pressure. Ränk remains cautious in this book, especially when covering the exile period (Ränk 1988). Therefore, the diaries can be considered important sources of Ränk's more personal thoughts, being written down in a given context, not afterwards.

Adapting to Swedish and international academic discourse

By the Second World War, Swedish ethnology had become a discipline that studied the country's material folk culture from a historical perspective (Frykman 2012, 576), and this coincided with Estonia's definition of the discipline (Vunder 2000). A similar approach allowed refugee ethnologists to assimilate into the Swedish scholarly discourse, but it was hampered by the close nature of this community as well as local society in general. The war had hardly touched Sweden and Swedes welcomed the refugees warmly, but it was up to them to find a professional job and make

4. The other diaries kept in the archives are work diaries, which he wrote during fieldwork in Estonia and Sweden, and some short travel diaries from the Swedish period.

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ends meet. Estonians made up the largest group of refugees in Sweden (Tammaru, Kumer-Haukanõmm and Anniste 2010, 1162). This contributed to the emergence of a sense of community and the perceived need to maintain it. This in turn created alienation among the locals (Undusk 2015, 244). How did Ränk cope with entering the Swedish scholarly discourse? How did he describe his situation in the 1940s and how did he define his life as a researcher over the decades in exile? Ränk's memoirs and correspondence allow me to also analyse the differences in relationships forged with Swedish and Finnish colleagues.

The only academic option for refugee humanities researchers was to get so-called archival work (i.e. emergency aid work for intellectuals), but from there they often failed to move up the career ladder (Kangro 1976, 202). Ränk contacted several colleagues soon after landing off the Swedish coast on 8 October 1944 and inquired about the possibilities for further research (Metslaid 2023a). He was eager to continue as an ethnologist and wasted no time in looking for opportunities. Ränk was on friendly terms with Sigurd Erixon (1888–1968),[5] a leader of Swedish ethnology and the director of the *Institutet för Folklivsforskning* ('Institute for Folklife Research') in Stockholm, and he hoped to take advantage of this. As Ränk was among the last to escape in autumn 1944, he was able to call on the help of compatriots who had already fled. A friend of Ränk, art historian professor Armin Tuulse, replied to him that he would certainly be able to work with Erixon, and 'there has been talk about this before', but Ränk should get a work permit soon and contact Erixon directly (Tuulse letter to Ränk, 20 Oct 1944, SM 10380:122:1:1). Erixon's answer to Ränk already dates to 18 October: 'Dear brother. Thank you. You are welcome to come to me as soon as possible and I will do my best to arrange a job for you' (translated from Swedish, Erixon's letter to Ränk, 18 Oct 1944, SM 10380:82:1). The letter can be read as Erixon's patronising attitude towards a colleague in a difficult situation, but it can also be a sign of their friendly relations.

At that time, Erixon's goal was to compile an atlas of Swedish folk culture (Arnstberg 2008, 213–219) and he needed collaborators with the right professional background. He was familiar with his Estonian colleagues, having visited them several times in the 1930s (Ränk 1970). Erixon hired not only Estonian but also Latvian and Lithuanian researchers as low-paid archive workers for the Institute. Ränk started to work there already on 15 December 1944. He was joined by colleagues Eerik Laid, Helmut Hagar, and Ilmar Talve from Tartu, Kārlis Straubergs and Pauls Kundziņš from Latvia, and Jouzas Lingis from Lithuania (Viires 1998; Klein 2017). His first task was to translate ethnographic studies published in Estonian, Finnish, and Russian into German (Viires 1998, 80) to contribute to the work of Swedish ethnologists, in particular Erixon. Initially, Ränk lived with his family in the Stolp-Ekeby camp,[6] but in early 1945 they were able to rent a nearby house. It was impossible to find a place to live in Stockholm, and it would not have been financially feasible. It was only years later that they moved to the city.

Ränk had to start virtually from scratch, having only a few scientific manuscripts and materials with him. Although he was satisfied with the opportunity to continue

5. Ränk had met Erixon in 1937 when he was on a study trip to the countries around the Baltic Sea and had an extended stay in Stockholm (Viires 1998, 80).
6. This was located about 50 km north of Stockholm.

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scholarly work, he found it hard to work for others. On 10 June 1945, Ränk wrote in his diary:

> Life is identically monotonous. […] So here I am, shuttling like a manor worker (*moonamees*) between Stockholm and my garden, and feeling kind of good. Even the written regulations for archive workers which were circulated last month by the director of the institute didn't bother me much, although these forbid personal scientific work. As if someone could manage to do that! Narrow-minded, high and mighty are those Swedish science men: only this is valuable which they themselves do. We would have not treated Swedish colleagues in that way. I will react to that accordingly and submit my written letter of application for finishing my research on the system of room distribution in North Eurasian dwellings tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. We will see what they will answer to me. (Ränk 2023b, 135)

Ränk's opposition to Swedish ethnologists in this passage was due to official regulations, which offended him as a former professor. Add to this the sheer complexity of early refugee life and his negative feelings are understandable. Two days later, Ränk stated in his diary that Erixon had never personally forbidden him from doing his research, but initially it was necessary to work for Swedish colleagues as well (Ränk 2023b, 135).

However, it must be admitted that Ränk's professorial position, the list of his previous publications, and his acquaintance with Swedish colleagues soon allowed him to concentrate on his research and therefore adapt to Swedish academic discourse more quickly than his younger colleagues.[7] After two years, he worked most of the time at home and was engaged in his own research topics. In 1955, after acquiring Swedish citizenship, Ränk became an associate professor at Stockholm University, where he worked until his retirement in 1968. Erixon is said to have organised the post for him (Viires 1998, 81). Ränk managed to stay away from Erixon's Institute, which was ironically called the Baltic Institute due to the Baltic émigrés working there (Klein 2017, 93).

Ränk was united with Erixon by his interest in folk architecture, which probably contributed to the development of his career in Sweden (Klein 2017, 93). His doctoral dissertation, which he defended in Tartu in 1938, was about the folk architecture in Saaremaa. Ränk intended to continue work on this subject but it was impossible under wartime conditions. Already in Estonia, he had begun to expand his research topic geographically and thematically. By the spring of 1941, a manuscript on the spatial distribution of Eastern European farmhouses and the holy corner in them was ready. The study broadened the existing ethnographic paradigm in Estonia by focusing attention on functionalism – the traditional special division of dwellings was viewed from economic, social, and religious perspectives. Ränk tried to publish it several times during the German occupation, but the plan was never realised. He took the manuscript with him to Sweden, supplemented it with new materials, found translators to translate it into German, and was able to publish two notable studies on

7. For example, Ränk's former student Ilmar Talve had difficulties in proving himself in Sweden. When the opportunity arose, he moved to Finland, where he became a professor of ethnology in Turku (Metslaid 2023b).

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the theme in 1949 and 1951: two volumes of *Das System der Raumeinteilung in den Behausungen der nordeurasischen Völker* and *Die heilige Hinterecke im Hauskult der Völker Nordosteuropas und Nordasiens*.[8] Paul Johansen (1901–1965), an Estonian and German historian with a Danish background, congratulated Ränk on the publication of *Das System der Raumeinteilung* in 1951, noting that he had grown out of the 'provinziellen Rahmen der estnischen Volkskunde' (Johansen's letter to Ränk, 6 Apr 1951, ERM A 5-2-1; 'provincial framework of Estonian ethnology').

Ränk defined himself as a professor, and that is what he was called in the refugee community. The opportunity to concentrate on archival, library, and fieldwork – in other words, on the scientific study of folk culture – appealed to him so much that he accepted a lower position in Sweden (Ränk 1988, 143).[9] Towards the end of his life, he repeatedly said he escaped peripheral research done in his homeland. For example, in an interview at the end of his life, Ränk confessed:

> I am very grateful to fate that I got out because I immediately found myself in very favourable working conditions. […] I was able to extend my research internationally far beyond Estonia. […] My work has been a great pleasure to me. It has been the meaning of my life. And the best opportunity for me to work came in Sweden. Here I reached the world. (Jõgi 1995)

Ränk spent most of his working life in Sweden. This commemorative passage told at the end of his life illustrates how post-war disappointments and lost hopes fade and the inevitable can be accepted, and even appreciated. He presented himself as an actor in an international academic discourse, not just belonging to Swedish scholarship.

In 1950, Ränk's friend Kustaa Vilkuna (1902–1980) became a professor at the University of Helsinki and Ränk wished him good luck, regretfully admitting:

> Of course, I would have been a thousand times happier if I could have sent my greeting from old and venerable Tartu. Then we would indeed have been two same-aged plough ox (*künnihärga*) pulling the same Finno-Ugric wagon smoothly forward. But now one of these bulls has to plough a foreign field instead. (Ränk to Vilkuna, 20 April 1950, SKS KIA 1231:30:20)

This sentimental statement illustrates the internal contradiction of being a refugee scholar. Better libraries and archives in Sweden supported unobstructed research. At the same time, it is unknown where Estonian ethnology would have developed if the war had not come. It has been stated that during Ränk's professorship in Tartu, ethnology was a modern discipline and closely linked to the corresponding disciplines

8. *Das System der Raumeinteilung in den Behausungen der nordeurasischen Völker* (The system of spatial division in the dwellings of the North Eurasian peoples) was published under Erixon's institute and *Die heilige Hinterecke im Hauskult der Völker Nordosteuropas und Nordasiens* (The Sacred Rear Corner in the Domestic Cults of the Peoples of Northeastern Europe and Northern Asia) as part of the Folklore Fellows Communication series in Helsinki.
9. Ränk expressed the same sentiment in his memoirs when he recalled becoming a professor in Tartu; he shared that he was pleased to be able to concentrate on research because there were so few students (Ränk 1988, 68).

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in northern Europe (Vunder 2000).[10] Ränk closely followed the developments in ethnology in Soviet Estonia over the decades and saw its inevitable limitations in the international sphere.[11] This probably also influenced Ränk's attitude towards his situation in Sweden.

Job satisfaction and adjusting to the new life are also revealed in a letter to Vilkuna in February 1959, in which Ränk responds to Vilkuna's invitation to apply for a professorship in Helsinki:

> Unfortunately, this joy [of the proposal] must, I suppose, remain for my satisfaction, because so many things speak against its realisation. First and foremost, it would require special vitality and great willpower to 'work in' somewhere else once again, even though it would happen in such a friendly country and familiar environment as Finland. A thorough mastering of the language alone would require a lot of stressful work. Secondly, I can imagine hiring lifelong enemies who would not make my life rosy when I started working there. After all, a university teacher does not work in a desert, but in institutions and among individuals, without the help of whom one cannot progress in his work. If I had encountered obstacles with my associate professorship here, I might have offered myself as a visiting professor for one year. But now, I have just been re-nominated for a three-year term, which gives me great benefits in research. I have also not lacked research material so far that could motivate me to move to the other side of the Gulf of Bothnia. I believe that my motives are understandable to you and that you can excuse my actions. (Ränk's letter to Vilkuna, 25 February 1959, SKS KIA 1231:30:30)

Ränk was part of Erixon's research network. Baltic refugee ethnologists made a significant publishing contribution to post-war Swedish ethnology and took an active part in Erixon's atlas project,[12] but they are not mentioned in the introductory textbooks or historiographical collection. Exile scholars did not make innovations to (Swedish) ethnology with their publications, but contributed rather to the 'classical Erixonian' folklife research (Klein 2017, 99). In doing so, they were consigned to oblivion for new generations of researchers. Being a refugee further contributed to being forgotten. Nevertheless, Ränk's bibliography consists of almost 200 publications and 12 monographs. Ränk did not only study folk architecture, although he later published several notable works in this field, too (e.g. Ränk 1971a). His research scope was broad, including the religious history of northern Eurasia (e.g. Ränk 1981), milk-handling and cheese-making in Sweden (Ränk 1966), and Estonian folk culture (e.g. Ränk 1955b). In his research, Ränk adhered to the cultural-historical approach, incorporating functionalist methods. Ränk was a member of the Royal Gustavus Adolphus Academy and an editorial member of *Ethnologia Europaea* from 1967, when

10. See also Metslaid 2023b on Ilmar Talve's activities in expanding Estonian ethnological paradigm during WWII. Writing a study on spatial division and the holy corner during the war years meant that Ränk himself was extending the boundaries of local ethnology. A purely cultural-historical view on culture began to be blended with a functionalist approach to studied phenomena. He also gave lectures at the university on social aspects in folk culture.
11. See the last part of this chapter.
12. Ränk contributed little to the atlas project; younger exile researchers were involved.

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the journal was established. He was also a visiting professor in Helsinki, Turku, and Oslo over the years (Vunder 1998, 109).

While refugee Estonian ethnologists sometimes experienced difficulties due to the attitudes of their Swedish colleagues, they were well regarded in Finland. Close links had already been established in the interwar period and were underpinned by the ideology of the kindred peoples movement (*hõimuliikumine*).[13] For example, Ränk befriended Kustaa Vilkuna and ethnologist Toivo Vuorela (1909–1982) (Ränk 1988, 63). Re-establishing contacts with his Finnish friends and colleagues was paramount to him after the war. Their friendly relations are evident in the Finnish researchers' greeting to Ränk, sent on 24 January 1945:

> Dear brother! Those who met on the Estonian-Finnish Cultural Days 1939 will always remember you, Gustav Ränk. Because you reminded us of such a perfect man from Häme region (*hämelase tüüp*) that even at the meeting of Suomalaisuuden Liiton ('Association of Finnish Culture and Identity') your honourable name was mentioned in the official speech. In the middle of the writer Yrjö Kivimies' speech, there was an interjection: "Great, is Ränk still alive?" The speaker knew you had been forcibly transported to Russia. Dr Hakulinen announced that you are in Sweden. The news was a general delight. Good luck! (K. Vilkuna, T. Vuorela, Lauri Posti, Esko Aaltonen to Ränk, 24 January 1945, ERM Ak 5:2/24)

Visiting Finland to meet friends and work at the libraries and archives was not initially an option. In the exile community, it was seen as dangerous because of Finland's friendly relations with the Soviet Union. Letters were exchanged, and the Finns sent Estonians scientific literature and allowed them to publish in Finnish journals. In 1949, Ränk was asked to review Vilkuna's and Itkonen's candidacy for a professorship at the University of Helsinki. In a letter to Vilkuna from 1949, Ränk says that Erixon considered asking him to be a reviewer an honour for the Institute (Ränk's letter to Vilkuna, 21 June 1949, SKS KIA 1231:30:18).

In 1955 Ränk wrote to Vilkuna that the Estonian Student Society planned to send him to welcome the Student Society of South Ostrobothia (fi. *Eteläpohjalaiset*) in Helsinki. Ränk wondered if he could come:

> I don't know what your political situation is today and whether somebody like me is welcome in Helsinki at all. I assume for a moment that I am not *persona non grata* and therefore trust my sense to already make some plans for the trip. (Ränk's letter to Vilkuna, 5 March 1955, SKS KIA 1231:30:25)

Ränk was especially interested in working at Helsinki's 'Russian library':[14] 'I am particularly happy to work in the libraries there, as I have to order books all the time, and that is a cumbersome and time-consuming thing.' Ränk adds at the end of his

13. The cultural contacts that emerged during the national awakening in the 19th century grew into a broad movement after the independence of Estonia and Finland, and it soon spread to Hungary. Estonia and Finland were bound together by common ethnicity, linguistic affinity, and proximity (Karjahärm and Sirk 2001, 357–363.
14. Ränk probably had in mind the Slavonic library at the National Library of Finland (until 2006 the Helsinki University Library).

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letter: 'By the way, for your peace of mind, I am a citizen of this kingdom, so there can be no formal confusion with me' (Ränk's letter to Vilkuna, 5 March 1955, SKS KIA 1231:30:25).

The political situation in Europe during the Cold War period – in this case the relationship between Finland and the Soviet Union – affected the life of an exile researcher to such an extent that he was cautious about making travel plans, even though he was already a Swedish citizen. It is not known whether Ränk visited Helsinki. But he was elected a corresponding member of the Finnish Literature Society the same year. Ränk wrote a thank you letter, in which he said:

> In the normal situation at home, this invitation has not moved me so deeply as it did here in exile, where I have sometimes been able to experience how little a person has weight when he doesn't have his homeland and country behind his back. Because of this, you can already guess what a great encouragement and moral support this honourable remembrance is for me. […] But I am particularly pleased with the idea that the respectful invitation is also intended to share respect and encouragement with Estonian science that wants to live on amid all evil powers. It is gratifying to know that we have not been forgotten. (G. Ränk to Martti Rapola, the chairman of SKS, 16 May 1955, SM 10380: 11 Ard)

Ränk defined himself as a representative of Estonian scholarship, and one can speculate that Finns invited him to become a member of the Society for this very reason. The long decades of exile and satisfaction with his working life in Sweden were still to come. On the other hand, science in Estonia had only just begun to recover from the Stalinist repressions and refugees felt it their duty to carry on the Estonian disciplines.[15] The difficult situation of the Finnish scholarly community is illustrated by President Urho Kekkonen's academic address, ten years later, in 1964, in which he advised Finns against maintaining contacts with exiled Estonians to pursue neutrality in relations with the Soviet Union (Stark 2021, 64). Official policy clashed with reality when relations continued and Ränk was able to publish in Finnish academic journals (e.g. Ränk 1965a), and he reviewed different candidacies for professorships in Finnish universities (Helsinki in 1949, Turku in 1960, Jyväskylä in 1966, Helsinki in 1972 (Ränk's letter to Ants Viires, 17 May 1972, ERM A 36-2-17)).

Strengthening national consciousness in exile for political and cultural reasons

The postwar refugee problem was worldwide and something countries had not seen before (Cohen 2017). Political refugees from Eastern Europe refused to return home because it was occupied by the Soviet Union. The Allies did not succeed in their original repatriation plan. In Sweden, thousands of Baltic people who arrived at one time were treated with a certain mistrust, and their situation and political views were not understood: 'The Swedes were unable to understand why somebody would escape after having been freed from the slavery of Nazism, and come to depend on somebody else. […] Among the Swedes an understanding ruled that the Baltic refugees were

15. See more on this in the last subchapter of the chapter.

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armchair dreamers and political extremists and it would do them no good to hold on to their own culture and language' (Johanson and Tõrv 2013, 50; see also Klein 2017; Kõll 2015). Different discourses clashed and Estonians (frequently together with Latvians and Lithuanians) had to come together to explain, formulate, and disseminate their views, not only for Swedish society and politicians but internationally.[16]

The political activity of exiles was blocked by a certain clause in the refugee passport, but it was allowed to organise and meet together on ideological grounds (Johanson and Tõrv 2013, 50). Various refugee organisations were established – some more political, some more humanitarian, and some more professional. Journals and newspapers started to be published. On the one hand, these organisations aimed to preserve Estonian culture and language and to unite Estonians. On the other hand, the aim was to explain Estonia's right to independence to the international community. This was more of a political activity called a 'foreign war/campaign' (*välisvõitlus*). Most refugees hoped for the outbreak of a new war. Many lived out of a suitcase for years, for no refugee believed that their return would take so much time. Only after ten years did they realise that exile was here to stay (Raag 2018).

Ränk found himself in the middle of all this organising work at the beginning of his exile and did not distance himself from the Estonians over the decades. How did he position himself in the emerging refugee community discourse? How did he communicate his thoughts to his fellow compatriots? I will analyse his attitude towards the 'foreign war/campaign' and then examine in more detail his actions in strengthening the Estonian national consciousness by applying the ideology of nationalism. It was a common phenomenon that nationalism provided shelter and support for refugees and was a way to surmount the loneliness of exile (see Said 2000).

Ränk was a respected figure whose word carried weight and who was invited to be on the board of many organisations. He was known as an active social thinker and an advocate of national culture and nationalism already in the 1930s. Being a member of various organisations in Tartu, he had been in direct contact with many intellectuals. In politics, he had remained impartial. He did not speak out against President Konstantin Päts' regime in the authoritarian Estonia in the 1930s, nor did he express his support for it. During the German occupation, Ränk published several nationally minded articles in newspapers (Ränk 1942; 1943a; 1943b). In 1943–1944, he was in charge of rescuing cultural heritage (museum and archive collections) from the war in South Estonia (Metslaid 2023a), demonstrating the ability to keep a cool head and organise even in the most difficult circumstances.

By 1945, Ränk was distancing himself from more political ventures. He did not tolerate intra-community tensions[17] but emphasised their debilitating effect. He wanted to be a negotiator who tried to lead different parties to cooperate for the sake

16. Sweden recognised Soviet occupation in Estonia in 1944 and surrendered 146 Baltic soldiers to the Soviet Union in 1945 (known as *Balt utlämningen* in Swedish history). In the refugee community, it created a lot of uncertainty and pushed many to emigrate further afield (mainly to Canada and the USA). Ränk's family stayed put. Among other things, recognition of the occupation meant that during the Cold War period, Swedish textbooks did not mention in a single line even that independent Baltic states had ever existed (Reinfeldt 2011). The USA and Great Britain never recognised the occupation of the Baltic states (Raag 2018, 136–137).
17. The reasons for the tensions in Estonian exile community could be found in the war years or even in Estonian domestic politics in the interwar period.

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of a common idea (Ränk 1945). As he notes sadly in his diary on 25 August 1945: 'one hopes for another, another envies and suspects the third, that is our action and our politics. Pity!' (Ränk 2023b, 138). By publishing articles in the main exile Estonian newspapers with calls to unite and overcome contradictions (e.g. Ränk 1951a), Ränk assumed the role of a scholar who looks at the situation as if from the eyes of a bystander. Without directly interfering in politics, he maintained sovereignty. Ränk certainly had leadership qualities but it seems that politics did not suit him.

Decades later, he would confess feelings of guilt for not having been active in various organisations because of his abundance of scholarly work. In a letter to Felix Oinas (1911–2004), an Estonian folklorist in the USA, Ränk writes: 'I and others like me may once be accused of lukewarmness towards Estonian problems, but even you know that it is extremely difficult for a scientist to serve other gods if he does not want to fall into the gang of bunglers (*ei taha langeda soperdajate jõuku*)' (Ränk's letter to Felix Oinas, 26 Sept 1976, ERM Ak 5:2/3). Oinas was also not politically active in the exile community but focused on research. Thus, Ränk found in him a kindred spirit with whom to share his doubts.

Despite his regrets, Ränk played an important role as a binding force for the refugee Estonian community. He reinforced its cultural and national identity through his popular-scientific writings that were mostly written in the 1950s and published in special ideologically oriented collections as well as in various exile journals (e.g. Ränk 1949a; 1959a). This list also includes his only book in Estonian published in exile (besides his memoirs): *Vana-Eesti rahvas ja kultuur* ('Old Estonia: The people and culture'), released already in 1949 by the Baltic Humanitarian Association's[18] publishing house Eesti Raamat ('Estonian Book') (Ränk 1949b). It was a revised and updated book based on the first Estonian popular-scientific overview of Estonian folk culture that Ränk had written already in 1935, and the idea to publish had come from the publishing house.[19] By addressing a wide range of topics on folk culture,[20] Ränk stressed the primordiality and independence of Estonian culture and region: 'This area [Estonia] is the cradle of Estonianness, where Estonian culture and the Estonian people have evolved as a result of centuries and thousands of years struggle' (Ränk 1949, 207). Although Ränk called this book later 'a romantical piece written in exile (*pagulasromantikas kokkuklopsitud teos*)' (Ränk's letter to Mihkel Toomse, 28 December 1955, RA, EAA.5299.1.93) and was therefore not satisfied with the result, its ideological

18. *The Baltiska Humanistiska Förbundet/Balti Humanistlik Ühing* ('Baltic Humanitarian Association') was established in 1943 in Sweden to help Baltic refugees in Germany and Austria. It also helped to organise refugees' voyage over the Baltic Sea in 1943 and 1944. After the war, it prepared several appeals to the Western world, asking for assistance for the Baltic refugees. The association issued a rather political journal, *The Baltic Review*. For a short period (1944–1945), Ränk belonged to its editorial board.
19. The 1935 book was part of the 'Living Science' series, in which also appeared Oskar Loorits' *Eesti rahvausundi maailmavaade* (1932, 'Worldview of Estonian folk religion') and Richard Indreko's *Eesti ürgaeg* (1937, 'Ancient times of Estonia'). Loorits and Indreko were also asked to republish their works in exile, but only the former succeeded (Loorits 1948). Historians had published overviews in the 1930s in two other series and continued to work on that matter separately from ethnologists-folklorists in exile.
20. The topics included vernacular economy, settlement patterns, folk architecture, handicrafts, folk costumes, traditional jewellery, folk calendars, traditional musical instruments, etc.

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bias is understandable given its time. The book became a classic and the only Estonian overview of Estonian folk culture until 1998.[21]

Ränk supported the ideology of nationalism in his popular-scientific articles, which were intended to raise and strengthen the national consciousness of the refugee community. In doing this he usually stuck to the scientific approach, analysing the subject as an ethnologist and cultural historian. This gave strength to his arguments. Nationalism was a familiar concept for ethnology from its beginning, and the discipline had 'contributed to the nationalistic project, the making of nations and national cultures' (Anttonen 1994, 27–28; see also Löfgren 1996). This was especially the case for small nations, such as Estonia, whose studies of their folk culture supported not only the production of academic knowledge but also national self-awareness (Metslaid 2016). During the interwar period, ethnology was called one of the national sciences (*rahvusteadused*) in Estonia,[22] but at that time ethnologists did not define, analyse, or critically argue about nationalism. It was taken for granted (Metslaid 2016). Everything changed when they fled their homeland and the republic, which until then had provided a solid framework for scholarly activities, ceased to exist. At the same time, the Estonian refugee community in Sweden was large, and researchers felt an early obligation to ensure that the Estonian language and culture would not be lost in the new situation. While ethnological scholarship was critical about the ideology of nationalism after WWII (especially in German-speaking countries; see, e.g., Bendix 2012), in a refugee discourse it allowed Ränk to apply it as a way to unite the community. In this context, it served for more political purposes than in the 1930s.

The starting points of Ränk's argument have been repeated over the decades, so I dare to give a general picture of what he thought about nation, nationalism, and national culture. For him, culture and nation were closely intertwined concepts. He said that a nation is a group of people united by a common language and a more or less homogeneous 'cultural complex', and it believes in common ancestry (Ränk [1945] 2000, 38–39). His understanding corresponds with the discourse of cultural nationalism that had prevailed among small North and Eastern European nations since the 19th century (Leersen 2006), and Herder's ideas of a national spirit also echo it (see Bendix 1997, 36–44). Ränk's notion of culture was broad; he understood it as a body of knowledge, experiences, and traditions that manifested themselves in a people's social life, material creations, and world of thought and feeling (Ränk [1945] 2000, 39).

Ränk's discussions were based on the theory of (structural) functionalism developed by B. Malinowski and A.R. Radcliffe-Brown. He took over from them the idea of culture as a meaningful whole, whose ultimate function is the preservation of human existence (Ränk 1961, 168). The theory of evolutionism and the cultural-historical approach were too universal for him to speak of national culture. He said that these theories diminish the role of the individual in cultural development (Ränk 1965b, 380). Ränk agreed with Malinowski that culture has an indispensable place in the human struggle for survival (Ränk [1968] 2000, 105). On the idea that man has created an environment of his own

21. The collective monograph *Eesti rahvakultuur* ('Estonian folk culture') was published in 1998 in Estonia (Viires and Vunder 1998). Ränk's book was also translated into Finnish (Ränk 1955a) and English (Ränk 1976).
22. The term *rahvusteadused* was formed on the model of the Finnish language (*kansalliset tieteet*) (Viires 2000, 5).

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adapted to his species, Ränk used the term 'milieu': 'a traditional milieu which can be divided into cultural and social milieus'; in this milieu, which is multidimensional and composite, 'alongside natural factors, also traditional factors play an important role' (Ränk 1965c, 378; see also Ränk [1945] 2000, 41–43).[23]

Although Ränk followed the ideas of functionalism, the historical dimension remained important to him. He called traditions 'cultural ties' (*kultuurisidemed*) that bind the nation together. Culture is inherited by imitation and learning through tradition (Ränk [1968] 2000, 106). Ränk recognised that nation and culture do not exist in a vacuum but in constant interaction with other cultures. He wrote that cultural loans should be viewed positively because it is in fact

> a process of adapting individual cultural elements to a given cultural structure, and adaptation is already a creative activity. If lending were only a mechanical process, the cultures of the nations of the world have long since flattened out into a homogenous one. One nation adopts the example of another only insofar as it needs it and insofar as it is adaptable to the structure of its culture, and then only through a narrow sieve. (Ränk [1945] 2000, 45)

Building on structural functionalism helped Ränk to overcome the issue of cultural loans and adaptation.

In his articles, drawing on ethnographic and archaeological research, Ränk repeatedly stressed the cultural continuity of Estonians over the centuries (and even millennia). He underlined the credo that 'every nation that is culturally capable is also entitled to life because it serves humanity' (Ränk [1945] 2000, 44). As a representative of a small nation, he once again drew on Herder's ideas on the nation's right to self-determination. By demonstrating the historical continuity of Estonian culture and its ability to assimilate and further develop cultural loans, Ränk underlined that Estonianness could not disappear, despite the loss of the republic. Moreover, Ränk wrote in 1958, working for the survival of the nation should be the task of every Estonian (Ränk 1958). In articles targeting Estonian refugees, Ränk saw it as his mission to knock on the conscience of his fellows. Although he did not actively participate in political exile organisations, he supported their activities and encouraged others to do so (e.g. Ränk 1958).

Despite the occupation, Ränk believed that the core of Estonian culture was to be found in his homeland: 'There is only one Estonia in the world, to which we too have a duty and which each of us should serve according to our skills and abilities' (Ränk [1973] 2000, 118). For him, 'the roots of the nation are in the homeland' (Ränk [1968] 2000, 112). Ränk remained a 'discerning émigré' for whom there were no doubts about returning to Estonia, and thus he deliberately maintained continuity and called others to do the same (see Undusk 2008, 2260–2265). He used cultural nationalism to help build the exile community and give it hope for a unified future (see Hilton 2009).

23. In this, Ränk contrasts himself with race theory (Ränk 1960, 302).

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Continuity of Estonian studies in exile and attitudes towards Soviet Estonian scholarship and scholars

Research on Estonian culture and history – studied by ethnologists and folklorists previously at home – was seen as a peripheral subject for Scandinavian academia. It seemed impossible for exile scholars to resign from their responsibilities as they saw them (see Plakans 2015, 72). They could not rely on research in the occupied homeland, where the results were questionable (if any results could be expected even, because all the active scholars had fled and Soviet ideological pressures were strong). Besides Estonian education, literature, and journalism, Estonian scholarship had to find a way to continue in exile, too.[24] What was Ränk's role here? What did he think about the division of research on Estonian culture, namely, that being done in the homeland and in exile? How did he view Soviet Estonian research and scholars working in his homeland?

Already in the beginning of 1945, the *Eesti Teaduslik Selts Rootsis/Estniska Lärdomssällskapet i Sverige* ('Estonian Learned Society in Sweden') was established. As a permanent member of its board, Ränk became one of its most active scientific presenters (giving 24 presentations between 1945 and 1987; Viires 1998, 82). The Society played an important role in the diaspora, significantly contributing to the survival of academic thought. It was seen as a substitute for the University of Tartu (Ränk 1988, 150). In 1951, the Society's yearbooks began to be published, offering one of the few places where research on Estonian matters could be published. Eight articles by Ränk appeared in them over the years (Viires 1998, 82).

In 1951, together with his friends archaeologist Richard Indreko (1900–1961) and historian Arnold Soom (1900–1977), Ränk established the *Eesti Rahvuslike ja Kodumaiste Teaduste Instituut* ('Institute of Estonian National and Domestic Sciences') under the *Eesti Teaduslik Selts Rootsis*. Three years later, the institute parted from the Society under a new name, the *Eesti Teaduslik Instituut* ('Estonian Scientific Institute') (Johanson and Tõrv 2013, 56). From 1952 onwards, university-level courses were taught there in the Estonian language on topics related to Estonia (Viires 1998, 82). The Institute never became a real university with an officially acknowledged diploma, but it nevertheless offered the youth a chance 'to study Estonian national sciences, thus creating an interest in Estonian matters' (Johanson and Tõrv 2013, 62). Lectures at the Institute languished in the 1960s after Indreko's death and a constant reduction in the number of students.

Between 1961–1985, the institute was headed by Ränk, who mainly organised collecting biographical data on foreign Estonian researchers and publishing bibliographies of their works. This action had a wider (and national) aim of creating as comprehensive a picture as possible for the future. Ränk and his fellow thinkers did not lose hope for Estonia's liberation during all the decades of exile. So even in 1971, Ränk wrote an article calling Estonian exile scholars to send their publications to the Institute to develop the bibliography. He explained the need as follows:

24. There was even a suggestion that Estonian literature had not split in two but had 'just temporarily moved across the sea' (Kangro 1955, 45).

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> The current party-Estonia tries to ignore us and our work, it does not let all our work cross the border, but after decades there will be a keen interest in everything that Estonian refugees have given to Estonian culture. Of course, this presupposes that we also feel like Estonian scholars or cultural carriers. (Ränk 1971b, 92)

Ränk's public concern for the perpetuation of the output of refugee scholars and the survival of research on Estonia was a general one, never focused solely on ethnology. It was rather his former students (Helmut Hagar and Ilmar Talve) who wrote about the state of Estonian ethnology and its prospects in exile (Metslaid 2023b).[25] As an established scholar, Ränk seems to have had no doubts about the state of his discipline as long as he and his students were able to continue their scientific careers, including, as far as possible, the study of Estonian cultural phenomena. Interestingly, he looked beyond the Iron Curtain and repeatedly wrote reviews on ethnographic studies published in Soviet Estonia. While initially pessimistic about the research being carried out there (e.g. Ränk 1951b), he later took a positive view of it (e.g. Ränk 1959b; 1965c) and had faith in the ability of the younger generation of researchers in particular.[26]

Two reviews written outside the Estonian readership can also be mentioned here (Ränk 1956; 1978), the first of which is the only one from the Cold War period dealing with Estonian ethnology published both in exile and at home.[27] Published in the journal *Zeitschrift für Ostforschung*, in this thorough overview (in German) of Estonian ethnological work in 1945–1955, Ränk brought together the work done in exile and his homeland. He noted the inevitable situation of knowledge production in the discipline being geographically divided (Ränk 1956, 246), with the work in one place (Soviet Estonia) being hindered by the political power/state and a lack of competent scholars, and in the other place the published works being connected with the wider academic world (Ränk 1956, 252). As an example of the inequality of opportunity, he points out that while 70 papers had been published in exile over ten years, only 10 had been published in Soviet Estonia. He explained the need to keep up to date with what was published at home:

> It is natural that the work currently going on at home should also be of great interest to Estonians abroad, because, in the long run, the homeland will ultimately remain the leader in the field. After all, the primary sources and the main collections are there, however, they are used. […] Perhaps the criticism of the free world also has a part to play in the fact that scientific work on the other side of the border, and thus also in our homeland, has become somewhat freer in recent years. (Ränk 1959b, 124)

25. That only lasted until the late 1950s, until the young researchers had established themselves and settled in the new host countries. At the same time, it could be seen that ethnological research in Soviet Estonia was reviving and continuing.
26. In 1973, Ränk wrote to Rudolf Paris, an art historian who had fled to Germany, that it was the younger generation of scholars who were passing on Estonianness in Estonia and that they therefore needed to be supported (Ränk`s letter to Paris, 26 November 1973, ERM Ak 5:2/4). Ränk believed that 'a high proportion of people who communicate with their home country […] has quite creditably helped the people of his country to keep their heads up and their hearts "hard"' (Ränk's letter to Felix Oinas, 4 July 1983, Ak 5-2-11).
27. The other article deals only with research conducted in Soviet Estonia.

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It is unlikely that the criticism of the small exile scientific community had an impact on the research done in Estonia (it was too regulated by the Soviet authorities for that), although it is known that it was eagerly awaited. For example, an ethnologist from a younger generation of Soviet Estonian scholars, Jüri Linnus (1926–1995), wrote to Ränk in 1965 that they 'had not had the opportunity to draw directly on the experience of the previous generation [of researchers]. We have often had to learn step by step through mistakes.' Because of that, he asked for Ränk to criticise their works (Linnus' letter to Ränk, 20 December 1965, ERM Ak 5-2-3).

Ränk remained pragmatic in the sense that he did not deny the research being done behind the Iron Curtain. On the contrary, he believed in its ability to transcend an imposed Soviet ideology and carry on in a traditional way. In this respect, Estonian scholars in exile differed from exile Estonian writers, many of whom from the older generation denied the literature published in Soviet Estonia (Olesk 2014).

Over the decades, Ränk tried to keep his research on Estonian matters alive, and to do this he needed contact with researchers in Soviet Estonia. Generally speaking, correspondence across the sea began to resume in the 1950s. Gradually (in the 1960s) it became clear that no one was being repressed for exchanging letters, and the circle of correspondents expanded (Saluvere 2016, 226). However, letters continued to be checked and both sides were aware of this. Ränk visited his homeland only in 1990, so the correspondence with colleagues from Soviet Estonia (and their infrequent visits to Sweden) was his main arena of scientific and personal communication with his homeland. An examination of this correspondence reveals that Ränk contacted several scholars himself, precisely to further his ongoing research. He steadily expanded his network to increase his access to books and knowledge. The support was reciprocal – when he asked for a book or an article, Ränk was asked for his publications in return. Ränk contacted people he already knew or strangers whose names were given by acquaintances or friends. In other words, it was a 'controlled network of trust' (Laak 2014). But even that could not always be certain.

Getting works to Estonia was complicated during the Soviet era. In the correspondence, it is repeatedly revealed that sometimes literature sent by Ränk did not reach its recipients. However, a great number of his works did reach them, spread from hand to hand, and were highly appreciated. He was 'almost banned as an author' (Vunder 1998, 109) in the Soviet Union, especially in the first decades of the Cold War. Ränk was officially invited to the third Fenno-Ugric congress held in Tallinn in August 1970 but withdrew at the last minute. His main wish was to visit Saaremaa during the event, but he would not have been allowed to do so (Jõgi 2008, 89). Thus, his decision not to participate was politically motivated. Nevertheless, the congress exhibited his studies, which were later transferred to the Ethnographic Museum (the successor of the ERM; J. Linnus letter to Ränk, 3 November 1970, Ak 5-2-3). In 1972, Gustav Ränk's 70th birthday was celebrated at the museum, but the text of Ants Viires' presentation there never reached publication,[28] presumably for political reasons.

As a result of correspondence, knowledge moved from the homeland into exile, with copies of sources, publications, and modern, up-to-date professional knowledge being passed on in letters to Ränk. His publications and moral/spiritual support moved from

28. Viires asked Ränk for data and a photo to use in a future article (A. Viires' letter to G. Ränk, 4 May 1972, Ak 5-2-5).

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Sweden to Estonia, and correspondence with him gave Soviet Estonian researchers strength to stay on their path. Ränk was encouraging and supportive of them, willingly assisting them whenever possible, sharing his knowledge and generously giving his opinion on how to take the research topics forward without being asked every time. Exchanging letters was important for Ränk. In Sweden, he was quite isolated when dealing with Estonian issues and could often discuss these matters in depth only with colleagues living in Estonia. Ränk believed in the knowledge being produced in Estonia, but he was also critical of it. He believed that the culture created in exile (literature, art, science, etc.) ultimately belonged to Estonia, and it did not constitute a separate entity. The occupying power hindered free communication across the sea. It was very difficult for Soviet Estonian researchers to get permission to travel abroad, and even a trip to Finland was not allowed for everyone all the time. For refugee researchers, the possibility of travelling to their home country existed in theory, but here they were hindered by various ideological and ethical issues.

Conclusion: Finding his place in exile

Gustav Ränk was one of the Estonian intellectuals who found himself in exile after the Second World War. The Republic of Estonia, which had previously given them an arena for action, had ceased to exist and they were forced to go through a complex integration process in a new host country. I analysed how Ränk operated in three discourses, trying to find his way to cope with exile.

Having lost his position as a professor, he was initially dissatisfied with his Swedish colleagues' official and restrictive attitude. At the same time, research was the content and passion of his life, and good opportunities opened up for him in Sweden. He never called himself a Swedish ethnologist but maintained the identity of being an Estonian researcher who was active in the international academic discourse. Relationships with Finnish colleagues were supportive, albeit somewhat politically influenced by the friendly relations between Finland and the Soviet Union. As an ethnologist, Ränk's research interests developed considerably, both geographically and thematically, but this would probably have happened even if he had stayed in Estonia. Ränk stuck to the cultural-historical approach, which is why, as the decades passed, he did not go along with the modernisation of ethnology and therefore remained in the background in academic terms (like Erixon and other great figures of ethnology of the first half of the 20th century). It is likely that being a refugee scholar contributed to this even more.

After the war there developed in Sweden an active Estonian exile community, which attached importance to preserving and passing on cultural identity and fighting for Estonian freedom. The latter entailed the activities of more political refugee organisations in influencing the foreign policy and public opinion of the Western countries, leading them not to recognise the Soviet occupation in Estonia. Ränk withdrew from such activities after only a year, because he was not comfortable with the internal intrigues of the refugee community. As a scholar and respected intellectual, he tried to invite Estonians to cooperate, and he supported the activities of politically active refugees as a bystander. Ränk participated actively in the national refugee discourse with his ideological as well as popular science articles. By applying the ideology of nationalism and transmitting scholarly (cultural-historical but also functional) views

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on culture, he strengthened the national self-awareness of the community through these writings. In so doing, he returned again and again to Herder's ideas of the nation's right to self-determination. Ränk remained a 'discerning émigré', who considered it important not to forget cultural identity in exile and to maintain contact with the occupied homeland where Estonian culture was still being created.

His activities in the sphere of Estonian ethnology as a scholarly discourse were also connected with this understanding. In the first decade of exile, refugee scholars considered themselves to be the bearers of the continuity of Estonian science. The Sovietisation of society and academic life in Estonia gave them little hope for the possibility of serious studies being published in the homeland. Ränk and his colleagues established the Eesti Teaduslik Selts Rootsis and the Eesti Teaduslik Instituut to keep Estonian scholarship alive in Sweden. From the second half of the 1950s, he followed with interest what was published in the field of ethnology in Soviet Estonia and believed early on that as the years passed, the role of refugee scholarship would inevitably decrease and the leading role would pass to the homeland. Correspondence with Soviet Estonian colleagues was mutually beneficial, as publications and knowledge flowed both ways. If communication with Ränk gave moral strength to the scholars in Soviet Estonia, for Ränk himself it often offered the only opportunity for him to discuss the topics of Estonian culture that were so interesting to him.

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Harri Moora

A 'Bourgeois Nationalist' Directing Soviet Estonian Ethnography

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Introduction

Harri Moora (1900–1968) was first and foremost a well-known Estonian archaeologist. It is much less known that he also played an important role in Soviet Estonian ethnography[1] from the late 1940s to the 1960s. After World War II, when all the leading Estonian ethnographers had fled to the West or died in Soviet prison camps, Harri Moora led the adaptation of Estonian ethnography to the Soviet system. I argue that under his guidance the continuity and national character of the discipline was kept alive. In the context of the Soviet regime, this can be considered an achievement. How did a man who was hit by serious accusations of 'bourgeois nationalism' in 1949–1950 manage to do this? Did his coerced cooperation with the KGB support his academic career? What were the choices and opportunities for a nationally minded scholar with international connections and reach under Soviet rule? Was it possible to outsmart the authoritarian regime?

To better understand Harri Moora's role in Estonian ethnography in the decades after World War II, his life and activities in the 1920s–1930s and during the war should also be briefly reviewed. Since Harri Moora's activities as an archaeologist and ethnographer were closely intertwined, especially in the context of ethnogenesis studies, archaeology cannot be overlooked entirely. Harri Moora's role in Soviet Estonian ethnography has been written about before (Linnus 1968; 1982a; 1982b; Viires 1970a; 1982), but all these articles were published during the Soviet era when Moora as a keeper of the national traditions of Estonian ethnography could not be written about freely.

Becoming an archaeologist with international reach

Harri Moora was born on 18 February 1900 in Ehavere, Palamuse parish, Tartu County. His father was a miller there. His parents were of peasant origin but had risen to a slightly wealthier position than their countrymen. They were oriented towards the Baltic Germans, who were culturally dominant in the region at the time.

1. In Estonia, the discipline concerned mainly with the material aspect of traditional peasant culture was called 'ethnography' until the 1990s. I use the term of that era instead of the present-day 'ethnology'.

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As a pupil at Tartu Secondary School (1908–1916), Harri was, in his own words, a little embarrassed at first to call himself an Estonian. At the time, he wrote his name in German style – Harry Mora. His personal national awakening occurred as a teenager, first under the influence and example of a fellow student and friend, and then of Johannes Aavik, a linguist and active language innovator who taught Estonian to schoolboys in secret courses. In the years of World War I, Moora became a staunch opponent of the Russification policy of the time and a conscious Estonian nationalist. This was a cultural nationalism of a non-dominant ethnic group seeking emancipation. In the autumn of 1917, he began studying medicine at the University of Tartu (UT) but transferred to the faculty of history and linguistics at the beginning of the following year. From the end of 1918 until March 1920, Harri Moora volunteered in the Estonian War of Independence and briefly took part in combat (Moora [1922] 2002, 47–50; Selirand 1989, XVII).

Returning to UT after the war, Moora devoted himself to archaeology. The Finnish archaeologist Aarne Michaël Tallgren,[2] who was a great authority and role model for Moora, played an important role in his choice of field. Talented and diligent, he quickly became Tallgren's junior colleague in the archaeology cabinet (Selirand 1989, XVIII; Moora 1990, 78). Alongside archaeology, Moora also studied ethnography as a major, thus becoming acquainted with his future wife Aliise Karu (later Moora). In 1923–1924, Moora listened to Finnish ethnographer Ilmari Manninen's[3] lectures on general and Finno-Ugric ethnography, Estonian ethnography, and Estonian folk costumes. In 1924, he passed the ethnography exam with the lower grade (*approbatur*) (Linnus 1968, 351–352; Viires 1970a, 23).

Archaeology and ethnography were quite close at the time, both in terms of content and through personal contacts. Under Manninen's guidance, Estonian ethnographers focused mainly on the material culture of the peasantry, and artefacts were the central source for them. The methods of both disciplines were similar. They tried to piece together typological lines of development from the objects they found or collected, to trace the evolution of things and to draw up distribution maps.

In 1925, Moora obtained a Master of Philosophy degree in the field of archaeology and remained on a scholarship at UT to continue his studies (Selirand 1989, XIX). In 1930, Moora was elected acting professor of archaeology at UT and director of the Archaeological Cabinet. In this role, he was also an active member of the board of the Estonian National Museum (ERM),[4] which played a central role in Estonian ethnography (Linnus 1968, 352; Viires 1970a, 24). In 1938, Moora successfully defended his doctoral thesis *Die Eisenzeit in Lettland bis etwa 500 a. Chr.* and subsequently was elected full professor at UT. By that time, Moora was already an internationally recognised scholar. Research trips to the countries of Northern and Central Europe (Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Sweden, and Norway) to study museum collections, attend conferences, and network with colleagues became a natural part of his academic career from the late 1920s (Selirand 1989, XVIII–XX).

2. Professor of Archaeology Aarne Michaël Tallgren (1885–1945) taught at the newly founded Estonian University of Tartu in 1920–1923.
3. Ilmari Manninen (1894–1935) was Director of the ERM in 1922–1928 and Docent of Ethnography at UT in 1924–1928.
4. Eesti Rahva Muuseum (ERM, 'Estonian National Museum'), founded in 1909 in Tartu.

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It is worth noting that from August to September 1935, Moora (together with Tallgren) was on a study trip to the Soviet Union. They visited museums and studied the work of archaeologists in Leningrad, Moscow, Minsk, Kyiv, and Crimea. Moora's first personal contacts with Soviet archaeologists date back to this time (Schmiedehelm et al. 1970, 6; Salminen 2008, 131–132). The archaeological picture and the early ethnic history of the areas east of Estonia were of great interest to both Tallgren and Moora, as the common Finno-Ugric ancestors of Estonians and Finns were believed to have come from the east.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Moora was also quite active in public. He published several writings in which he addressed the pain points of Estonian society at the time (see Moora 2002, 52–149). He was one of the founding members of the student association *Veljesto*, which brought together liberal and democratically minded students of the humanities. He was also a member of the Eesti Rahvuslaste Klubi ('Estonian Nationalists Club'), critical of all kinds of totalitarian ideologies. The authoritarian regime of Konstantin Päts, established in Estonia in 1934, saw Moora and his fellows in opposition. Moora's sociopolitical convictions at the time were summarised in his article with a telling title *Demokraatia rahvusliku kandejõuna* ('Democracy as a national carrying force'), published in 1940 in the *Veljesto* album (Moora 2002, 138–149).

Soviet collaborator

At the end of September 1939, the Soviet Union imposed a mutual aid pact on Estonia, under the threat of force, which established Soviet military bases in Estonia. In June 1940, the Soviet Union presented Estonia with an ultimatum demanding the admission of additional troops and a change of government. Estonia surrendered, and on 21 June, President Konstantin Päts appointed the government of Johannes Vares, following Soviet demands. Harri Moora became the Deputy Minister of Education of this puppet government, and Director of the Department of Science and Art at the Ministry of Education.

Why did Moora accept the invitation to join this illegal 'people's government'? According to his daughters Reet Ligi and Ann Marksoo, he was advised to accept the post by the prominent Estonian politician Jaan Tõnisson, the leader of the former anti-Päts opposition, whom Moora held in high esteem. Tõnisson thought that the more patriotic Estonians there were in the new government, the better for Estonia. Perhaps at least culture and education could be saved. (Ligi 1990, 109–110; Marksoo 1999, 125–126.) The background was likely Moora's dissatisfaction with Päts' authoritarian regime, as he probably believed that a more left-wing but still democratic Republic of Estonia would be possible under the supremacy of the Soviet Union. Moora also seems to have hoped at first to restore the autonomy of universities, which had been curtailed under Päts. (Põhjalikke ümberkorraldusi 1940; Ülikoolid saawad 1940.)

The shattering of illusions was swift and severe, but there was no way to step back immediately – it could have been dangerous. Thus, Moora had to participate in the transformation of UT's teaching according to the Soviet model, including the liquidation of the Faculty of Theology and the student associations (Marksoo 1999, 126). This went against his previous principles and aspirations. He was a religious man after all, as evident in his letters to Tallgren (see Moora 2002, 453–470).

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The Vares government, under the tactics of the Soviet emissaries, rushed through illegal and non-free elections to the Parliament (Riigivolikogu). On 21 July, the new Parliament declared the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) and asked to be admitted to the Soviet Union. On 6 August 1940, this was done. With this, the tasks of the Vares transitional government were fulfilled, and on 25 August a new government – the Council of People's Commissars of the Estonian SSR – took office. Moora was not part of the new government.

In the autumn of 1940, Moora continued his work as head of the Department of Archaeology at UT. He was also the Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy, and hence *nolens volens* involved in the Sovietisation of the university (Schmiedehelm et al. 1970, 8). In the course of Soviet reforms, the professorship of ethnography, founded only in 1939, was downgraded to a senior lectureship (docent) in the Department of Archaeology headed by Harri Moora. It was not Moora's initiative. Gustav Ränk, who had been elected Adjunct Professor of Ethnography at UT was not happy about it. He would have preferred ethnography as part of the Department of Estonian Language. This could have been due to Ränk's antipathy towards Moora as a collaborator with a foreign power. Or perhaps Ränk thought that ethnography was closer to linguistics than to archaeology. (Metslaid 2023, 18–19; Ränk 2023, 63–64, 67.) In any case, Ränk's wishes were not respected. In the Soviet academic system, both archaeology and ethnography were regarded as special branches of historical science, tasked with studying the material culture of the past.

In the autumn of 1940, while talking about the Sovietisation of UT, Moora said to Gustav Ränk in a private conversation: 'Yes, it is much easier for us lecturers, who have studied in Russian schools, to reorient ourselves than for students who have received purely Estonian education' (Ränk 2023, 64). Moora was thus ready to adapt, apparently considering it inevitable.

It is noteworthy that when Nazi German troops approached Estonia in the summer of 1941 and soon captured Tartu, Harri Moora, unlike many other Estonian intellectuals who cooperated with the Soviet authorities, did not flee to the Soviet rear but decided to stay in Estonia. Moora was disillusioned with the Soviet regime. On 10 November 1941, he wrote to his teacher and friend Tallgren in Finland: 'Physically, we are still standing, but mentally, this year full of violence and, first of all, of terrible lies that no one could avoid, has made us invalids' (Moora 2002, 454).

The Nazis did not allow Moora to continue as a professor, or even as a lecturer at the university, because he had been 'in the service of the Bolsheviks'. In the beginning of 1942, he was sent to Tallinn as acting director of the History Museum. In a letter to Tallgren (19 March 1942), he suggested that the real reason may have been the anti-German views published at the end of his book *Die Vorzeit Estlands* (The Prehistory of Estonia)(1932) (Moora 2002, 455–456). The punishment was not exactly severe, but Moora was bored in Tallinn and could not continue his archaeological activities there. Besides, his family had stayed in Tartu. In March 1944, Moora became a member of the underground National Committee of the Republic of Estonia. His actual participation in this organisation remained very modest but became known to the Nazis. From 20 April to 19 August 1944, Moora was held in prison for a preliminary investigation. During this time, he continued to receive wages to support his family and was eventually released due to a lack of evidence (Moora 1990, 92).

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The Moora family were initially hesitant about fleeing to the West from the second Soviet occupation. However, in the second half of September 1944, just before Tallinn fell to the Soviets, they decided to go. It was too late. They only reached Western Estonia and were caught by the fast-moving Soviet troops. They had to stay in Estonia.

Adaptation

After the Second World War, ethnography in Soviet Estonia was in a rather sorry state, as the leading figures (Gustav Ränk, Eerik Laid, and Helmi Kurrik) and also better part of their younger colleagues (Ilmar Talve, Helmut Hagar, and Ivar Paulson) had fled to the West, while the pre-war director of the ERM, Ferdinand Linnus, had died in a Soviet prison camp. The task of assembling the remaining ethnographers and training the new cadres fell to Harri Moora, for whom ethnography was a neighbouring discipline. He started to guide the adaptation of the hitherto 'bourgeois' ethnography to meet the demands of Soviet ideology, and to lead the fusion of Estonian ethnography with the Soviet ethnography.

From the autumn of 1944, Harri Moora was again Head of the Department of Archaeology at UT (Tartu State University from now on). The Department was also responsible for teaching ethnography. There was a position of docent of ethnography in the department, but it remained unfilled. In the spring of 1945, Moora proposed to the Dean of the Faculty of History and Philology to create a separate Department of Estonian and General Ethnography, but this was not done. So, the training of ethnographers continued in the Department of Archaeology and was organised by Moora himself. The curriculum was quite comprehensive and also provided a basic knowledge of neighbouring disciplines. Moora gave an introductory course of lectures titled 'Ethnography of Estonians and other peoples of the USSR', chaired some special seminars, and supervised coursework and theses. In addition, ERM staff and researchers from neighbouring disciplines were involved as lecturers. Teaching ethnography was carried out at ERM. Soviet-style retraining was also provided to the museum's staff. (Viires 1970a, 24; Linnus 1982a, 129–132; Luts 1985, 177–182).

Moora was also directly involved with the museum. He was a member of the ERM's Scientific Council from 1945 to 1950 and a half-time senior researcher from 1 September 1945 to 31 December 1946. In the second half of the 1940s, he was one of the main ideologists of the museum's work, including its exhibitions. In the words of Arved Luts, 'The Scientific Council of the time tried to guide the museum's exhibitions, in a relatively mild manner, along the ideological paths of the incipient occupation period, to save it from possible attacks' (Luts 2001, 52).

In addition, Moora was involved with the museum through his wife Aliise, who worked at the ERM in those years as a deputy director and research secretary.[5]

Soviet ethnography, of which Estonian ethnography was now to become a part, had been quite a vivid and influential discipline in the 1920s. In the early 1930s, however, it was devastated by severe repressions, and from then on ethnography was regarded in the Soviet Union as one of the special branches (auxiliary sciences) of history. It was a firmly centralised discipline, culminating in the Institute of Ethnography of

5. For more on Aliise Moora's role in the ERM after the war, see Kannike et al. 2023, 66–68.

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the USSR Academy of Sciences (AS) in Moscow. The theoretical foundation for the Soviet humanities (including ethnography and archaeology) was historical materialism, which drew upon Lewis H. Morgan and Friedrich Engels' evolutionary ideas, according to which the impetus behind the development of human society is progress in the production of material goods.

A key work in this area was Friedrich Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884). Moora studied it thoroughly. Already in the first Soviet year, he gave a lecture on Engels' book at the *Õpetatud Eesti Selts* (Learned Estonian Society) (of which he was chairman from 1936 to 1950) (Taal 2018, 237). Engels' ideas were probably not completely alien to Moora. Economic history had always been of great interest to him, and he based his explanations of prehistory primarily on economic and natural conditions (Salminen 2012, 97–98). Even before the war, Moora's approach to history was materialistic rather than idealistic. In 1946, a new translation of Engels' book into Estonian was published. Moora had worked through the text and edited it terminologically. On 24 December 1946, he presented the book in detail in the newspaper *Rahva Hääl* (Moora 1946b). Moora had mastered the material well and could now explain it to others.

In the second half of the 1940s, the academic achievements of Soviet Estonian ethnography were understandably scarce. There were hardly any experienced researchers. One of the biggest undertakings was the publication of the ERM Yearbook in 1947. The previous yearbook (XIV) had been published in 1939. The first Soviet-era yearbook was numbered I (XV), thus marking both a new beginning and continuity. The editor of the Yearbook was Harri Moora, with young ethnographer Ants Viires as his closest assistant (Viires 2011, 57).

On Moora's initiative, a translation of an article by Sergei Tolstov, the director of the Institute of Ethnography of the USSR AS, entitled *Etnograafia ja nüüdisaeg* ('Ethnography and the Present Day')[6] was included (Tolstov 1947). According to Viires, it was intended as a 'diplomatic bow to the central institutions in Moscow' (Viires 1993, 9).

The most important article in the volume was Moora's own *Eesti etnograafia nõukogulikul ülesehitamisel* ('Estonian Ethnography in the Soviet Reconstruction') (1947b), in which he summarised and developed the programmatic and methodological ideas already expressed by word of mouth.

In the article, Moora was supposed to praise the new, Marxist Estonian Soviet ethnography and rhetorically oppose the old, 'bourgeois' Estonian ethnography. In criticising the latter, he refrained from naming names. At the same time, however, he praised the well-organised collections of the pre-war ERM and its skilled staff. He considered the collections an irreplaceable asset 'for our people and culture' (Moora 1947b, 24), from which a reconstruction could begin.

According to Moora, the task of ethnography as a branch of history was the study of pre-capitalist popular culture. The innovations that accompanied the spread of capitalism were of interest to ethnography only insofar as they displaced the old folk culture.

Moora reproached the earlier bourgeois Estonian ethnography for not taking sufficient account of the prevailing socio-economic conditions and for almost completely bypassing the relationship between village and manor and the sharp

6. Tolstov's article had recently appeared in the first issue of the most prominent Soviet ethnographic journal *Sovetskaya etnografiya* (1946).

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class conflict that characterised it. The social stratification of the peasantry was also overlooked, according to him. The impression was left as if the old Estonian folk culture originated from a kind of patriarchal peace of the 'good old days'.

According to Moora, the study of folk culture had to take into account all the factors that had influenced it and cooperate with neighbouring disciplines (history, folklore, geography, and linguistics). In making this point, Moora made an apt reference to Stalin. In particular, he stressed the role of natural conditions, especially soil, but also precipitation, in explaining the phenomena of popular culture and their regional differences. In Moora's view, the bourgeois Estonian ethnography was overly based on linguistics. This, in turn, led to an overemphasis on the Finno-Ugric links in Estonian folk culture and an underestimation of the Baltic and especially East Slavic relations.

Finally, Moora stressed that Estonian ethnographers must deeply master 'the truths of the dialectical materialist method and progressive Marxist-Leninist doctrine' (Moora 1947b).

Most of the other articles in the Yearbook were largely based on the results of earlier research, and they continued the traditions of pre-war Estonian ethnography (see Ants Viires, Richard Viidalepp, Ida Kaldmaa, and Helmi Üprus) or were relatively short and unambitious (see Gustav Vilbaste and Paul Ariste). The report on the activities of the ERM in 1940–1945, appended at the end, was written by Moora.

The first Soviet-era ERM yearbook was also read by Ilmar Talve,[7] a young Estonian ethnologist and writer who had emigrated to Sweden. He agreed with Moora on some points, such as the need to study the reflection of social stratification in material folk culture, as this was done in Sweden, too. Talve found that some of the tasks presented in the Yearbook as 'new inventions' had been taken up in Estonia already a decade ago. In his opinion, Soviet Estonian ethnography relied greatly on the work done before the war (Talve 1948, 178–182).

Thus, Moora seemingly opposed the earlier 'bourgeois ethnography' rhetorically but in fact relied on its achievements and presented its earlier initiatives as new ones to continue with them in Soviet circumstances. At the same time, his critique of pre-war Estonian ethnography was probably partly justified.

In January–February 1949, Nikolai Cheboksarov,[8] one of the leading Soviet ethnographers, made a trip to the Baltic republics. He was a representative of the centre, a sort of auditor. As a result of the trip, Cheboksarov published an article entitled *Etnograficheskaya rabota v sovetskoi Pribaltike* ('Ethnographic work in Soviet Baltics') (1949). Among other things, it mentions the need to organise fieldwork, 'the main aim of which has become in our days the study of new forms of culture and life of the collective farmers' (p 182). In the course of the discussions held between 1948 and 1949, the view emerged in Moscow that Soviet ethnography must also study the contemporary socialist village. Cheboksarov complained that in Estonia, as in other Baltic republics, the influence of 'bourgeois theories' was still evident in some ethnographic works. There were attempts 'to tear ethnography away from the present day, to present it as a science of the old times, which should be concerned only with

7. Ilmar Talve (1919–2007) became Professor of Ethnology at the University of Turku in 1962.
8. Nikolai Cheboksarov (1907–1980) was then the head of the European Department of the Institute of Ethnography of the USSR AS and an associate professor in the Department of History at Moscow State University.

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the study of archaisms and survivals' (p 187). As examples of such 'purely descriptive' and 'backwards-looking' works, he cited articles by Helmi Üprus and Ants Viires in the recently published ERM Yearbook. Cheboksarov could also have criticised Moora's article in the same volume, which defined pre-capitalist popular culture as the main subject of ethnography, but he refrained from doing so.

Moora was quick to draw his conclusions from Cheboksarov's indirect criticism. As early as June 1949, he organised a joint meeting of the ERM staff and the ethnography students of UT, where he presented the newest trends in Soviet ethnography and set new tasks: phenomena must be traced in their historical development up to the immediate present. In the case of collective farms, the development of settlement and living conditions should be studied, and the conditions of collective farms in different regions and with different ethnic backgrounds should be compared to clarify their specific characteristics (Viires 1970a, 26). A certain creativity can be observed in Moora's approach. He tried to guide the study of collective farms, which was generally distasteful to Estonian ethnographers, in a rational rather than purely ideological way.

As background, it may be recalled that on 25 March 1949, the mass deportation of peasants took place in Estonia, with more than 20,000 people being sent to Siberia and Kazakhstan. It was precisely the fear created by this action that forced Estonian peasants into collective farms.

In the second half of the 1940s, Moora continued to speak out on public issues in the press, but now it was probably forced by his position, rather than being voluntary as before the war (see Moora 1945; 1946a). The Communist Party (CP) expected some public Soviet activism from scholars in leading positions.

On 14 February 1947, Moora published a lengthy paper *Hävitav süüdistusakt fašistlike okupantide ja eesti kodanlike natsionalistide vastu* ('A damning indictment against the fascist occupiers and Estonian bourgeois nationalists') (1947a). It was a review of the recently published book *Saksa fašistlik okupatsioon Eestis aastail 1941–1944* ('German Fascist Occupation in Estonia 1941–1944'). In a quotation taken from the book, Moora himself was portrayed as a victim of fascism. His four-month imprisonment was sufficient ground for this, and it was worth emphasising. Incidentally, in 1946 Moora was awarded the medal for 'Excellent Work during the Great Patriotic War 1941–1945'.

'Bourgeois nationalist'

In 1949, the power struggle in the Soviet Communist Party intensified, and the leadership of the Estonian CP was drawn into it. In this context, the struggle against bourgeois nationalism gained ground in the Estonian SSR. From September 1949, Harri Moora was also accused. He began to be portrayed as the ideological leader of the bourgeois nationalists who had established themselves at UT. Moora had been Dean of the Faculty of History and Philology since the previous year, and he was in charge. He was required to reassess his earlier works, to perform self-criticism. On 20 October 1949, Moora was dismissed from his post as dean 'according to his wishes' (Raid 1995, 74, 77, 82, 115). But this was only the beginning.

On 28 October 1949, Moora published a rather long self-critical article in the newspaper *Rahva Hääl* entitled *Eesti kodanlik ajalookäsitlus valitseva ekspluataatorliku*

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kildkonna teenistuses ('The Estonian bourgeois concept of History in the Service of the ruling exploitative camarilla') (Moora 1949). Moora explicitly admits here that his pre-war works were 'anti-people' and served the nationalist interests of the bourgeoisie, that he underestimated the positive influence of the Russians and Russia in Estonian history and the importance of the class struggle, and so forth. It was a public repentance typical of those years, not sincere, of course.

On 21–26 March 1950, the infamous Eighth Plenum of the Estonian CP was held. Among others, Harri Moora was accused of bourgeois nationalism. He and others like him were accused of too little social activity (quietness) and poor scientific output (Raid 1995, 141, 156–157).

Moora was not a member of the CP; he tried to continue his academic life. From 27 March to 1 April 1950, right after the plenum mentioned above, Moora took part in a meeting in Moscow devoted to the ethnography of the Baltic Republics. He even sat on the praesidium as head of the delegation of the Estonian SSR. In that context, he felt it necessary to thank his Moscow colleagues for the expedition to Estonia the previous summer.[9] According to him, the young Estonian ethnographers who took part in the expedition were given serious help in developing field research methodology. He called for the continuation of joint expeditions. According to Viires, this was a well-thought-out tactical move by Moora. He needed the support of the central research institutions in Moscow to find ways for normal work conditions. At the conference, studying the socialist transformation in the life of the workers and peasants, as well as the ethnogenesis of the Baltic peoples, was defined among the main tasks of the Baltic ethnographers (Viires 1993, 10–11).

The conference also discussed the contributions commissioned from researchers in the Baltic Republics for the ambitious collection *Narody mira* ('Peoples of the world'), which the Institute of Ethnography had begun to compile. The authors were expected to be self-critical. Leading Soviet ethnographers (Sergei Tolstov, Nikolai Cheboksarov, Pavel Kushner, and Vera Belitser) were the teaching staff. Moora, as the first author of the chapter *Estontsy* ('Estonians'), behaved as expected, taking on the role of apprentice, and thanking the critics. He had not sent the text of the article in advance, but brought it with him, perhaps out of cunning – in this way, his Moscow colleagues could not critique it so thoroughly. As expected, the critics found that too little attention had been paid to contemporary workers and collective farmers.[10]

In Estonia, the power struggle and the campaign against the bourgeois nationalists continued. On 15–17 April 1950, a meeting of the Tartu city organisation of the Estonian CP was held. Among others, the deputy secretary of the party organisation of the UT spoke: 'Already in the early 1940s, bourgeois nationalists had developed a long-term strategy. Its author was Professor Moora. The basic principle was the preservation of bourgeois-nationalist cadres for the long term, in the hope of restoring capitalism. […] this plan was successfully put into practice in 1940–1941' (Raid 1995, 249), On 27 April 1950, the party meeting of UT declared Moora (and several others)

9. In the summer of 1949, an expedition of the Institute of Ethnography of the USSR AS, led by Vera Belitser (the general manager being N. Cheboksarov), worked in Estonia to study the newly born collective farms. A couple of young people from Estonia also took part. The results were mixed. (Viires 1993, 10.)
10. Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 142.1.287, lists 1–54.

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a bourgeois nationalist. The next day, *Rahva Hääl* published the article *Eesti kodanike natsionalistide vaenulikust tegevusest ajalooteaduse alal* ('On the hostile activities of Estonian bourgeois nationalists in the field of history'), which attacked Moora, among others (Vassar and Maamägi 1950). It was all a kind of theatre in which people who wanted to maintain or improve their social position were forced to participate. Moora understood this perfectly well and did not condemn his colleagues in the family circle, but these public attacks still caused him stress and damaged his health (Ligi 1990, 126–127).

First, already in May 1950, Moora lost his post as the head of the Department of Archaeology (Raid 1995, 196). Accusations of bourgeois nationalism also hit the ERM's staff. In the spring and summer of 1950, the Presidium of the Estonian SSR AS set about 'cleansing' the museum.[11] The director Ida Kaldmaa and three other experienced staff members were dismissed. Aliise Moora was demoted to the post of junior researcher. Harri Moora lost his seat on the ERM's Scientific Council (Viires 1993, 9; Luts 2001, 55–56).

On 5 September 1950, Harri Moora was dismissed from UT by the decision of the Minister of Education (Raid 1995, 202). The entire Department of Archaeology at UT was shut down. However, Moora somehow retained his position as head of the Archaeology section of the Institute of History of the Estonian SSR AS, which he had held since the institute was founded in 1947. According to Marksoo, a meeting had been prepared for early 1951, at which Moora would have been further criticised and then dismissed from the post of head of the section, and eventually probably arrested. In March 1951, however, a second Baltic archaeology session was held in Tartu, and the main local organiser was Harri Moora. He had actively participated in the first archaeology session dedicated to the Soviet Baltics (May 1949 in Leningrad), setting new tasks for the archaeological study of the region and leaving a very competent and professional impression on his Soviet colleagues. When those now preparing to settle accounts with Moora informed the Institute of Archaeology of the USSR AS of their plans, his colleagues there spoke up for Moora. Further criticism and possible arrests were postponed and eventually cancelled. (Schmiedehelm et al. 1970, 8; Marksoo 1999, 131–132; see also Viires 2011, 90).

Recovery

In the beginning of the 1950s, ethnography in Soviet Estonia was at a complete standstill. An important part of the ERM's staff had been devastated by the accusations of bourgeois nationalism. The teaching of ethnography at UT was discontinued due to the abolition of the Department of Archaeology in the autumn of 1950.

Things gradually started to improve in 1952 when the Institute of History of the Estonian AS and its Archaeology Section were transferred to Tallinn. The Mooras had to move as well. As the head of the section, Harri Moora managed to set up a small

11. From 1946 to 1963, the ERM was one of the sub-units of the Estonian SSR AS. It was named the Museum of Ethnography of the Estonian SSR AS from 1952 until 1963 and the State Museum of Ethnography of the Estonian SSR from 1963 until 1988. The initial name was restored then. For the sake of simplicity, the abbreviation ERM is used throughout the chapter.

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group of ethnographers there (initially two people, including Aliise Moora). In 1958, the institute's subdivision was renamed the Archaeology and Ethnography Section, and Harri Moora was its head until he died in 1968. In this position, Moora sought close cooperation with the ERM and consistently tried to raise its scientific profile. (Viires 1970a, 23.) All in all, Harri Moora maintained his role as coordinator and a leading figure of Soviet Estonian ethnography.

Beginning in 1952, the Moscow Institute of Ethnography organised a regular Baltic ethnographic-anthropological expedition, which was led by Nikolai Cheboksarov and Lyudmila Terenteva. The Estonian partners were the ERM and the Institute of History of the Estonian AS. Harri Moora acted as the main coordinator from the Estonian side. The expedition made it possible to mobilise and put to work dispersed Estonian ethnographers. Their main task was to collect material to solve questions related to the ethnogenesis of Estonians. This subject, unlike the study of contemporary workers and collective farm peasants, allowed for relatively apolitical and objective, past-oriented research. In 1955, the expedition was expanded into the Baltic Integrated Complex Expedition (with the participation of archaeologists), which operated until 1960 and to a large extent determined the direction of ethnographic work in the Baltic Republics (Viires 1970b, 243; Viires 1993, 11).

In connection with the Baltic expedition, the teaching of ethnography was resumed at UT in the autumn of 1953. It was now done in the Department of History of the Soviet Union. Already in the summer, Harri Moora advised the head of the department, Hilda Moosberg, on how to organise the teaching, relying on the authority of Professor Cheboksarov.[12] Cheboksarov was ready to teach the general course in ethnography himself (in about one month). Moora thought that someone from the Ethnography Department of Moscow State University could also read the ethnography of the peoples of the USSR and the historiography of the discipline. Estonian ethnography, on the other hand, should be read by a local lecturer. Moora did not rule out his own candidature. In addition, a couple of special courses and seminars should be organised by local forces. Moora also considered it necessary to send an aspirant from Estonia to study at the Moscow Institute of Ethnography.[13] In the autumn of 1953, Cheboksarov and Moora indeed gave lectures at UT. Cheboksarov taught in Russian, of course. Members of the ERM staff also participated in teaching. (Linnus 1982a, 132; Luts 1985, 178, 182–183.)

On 7 and 8 January 1957, a meeting of ethnographers of the Estonian AS was held in Tartu. The main speaker was Harri Moora, who was accompanied by Ants Viires.[14] The need to collect 'rapidly disappearing ethnographic materials' was discussed again after many years, and the organisation of this work was planned. The decisions of the

12. Cheboksarov went on to work at the Institute of Ethnography in Moscow and was promoted to head of the Department of Ethnography in Faculty of History at Moscow State University.
13. Harri Moora. Letter to Hilda Moosberg regarding the organisation of teaching ethnography for UT history students 8. VI 1953. UT KHO f. 85, p. 167, p. 1-1p.
14. Ants Viires (1918–2015) worked in the Archaeological Section of the Institute of History of Estonian AS from 1956 as a junior researcher, although he had already defended his candidate degree. His academic career was hampered by a short service in the German army in 1944 (Viires 2011, 102).

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Tartu meeting were approved by the Presidium of the Estonian AS in December 1957.[15] For the ERM, these decisions signified a new beginning and set the direction of work for the coming years. In the summer of 1958, the young and energetic Aleksei Peterson, a recent graduate in ethnography from UT, was appointed director of the museum. All this was done under the initiative and guidance of Moora (Linnus 1968, 353; Viires 1970a, 24).

In April 1959, the 50th birthday of the ERM was celebrated in Tartu. This marked the recognition of the museum's continuity by the Soviet authorities. At the jubilee celebrations in the assembly hall of UT, Harri Moora spoke about the development of the historical-cultural areas of the Baltic countries. In addition to guests from the Soviet Union, Niilo Valonen, the head of the Ethnography Department of the National Museum of Finland, also attended the anniversary celebrations. To mark the anniversary, the museum's Yearbook was published again after a long absence, with the number XVI indicating continuity. The new series, launched in 1947, had been discontinued. From then on, the Yearbook began to appear regularly. It can be said that the anniversary meant the re-establishment of the ERM's reputation as a genuine academic institution (Luts 1999, 32–34, 37).

Ethnogenesis studies

In the 1950s, Moora was mainly engaged in research on the origin and early ethnic history of Estonians. He was the initiator and editor of the quite influential collection of articles *Eesti rahva etnilisest ajaloost* (*EREA*, 'On the Ethnic History of the Estonian People'), published in 1956. This volume also included his article *Eesti rahva ja naaberrahvaste kujunemisest arheoloogia andmeil* ('On the Formation of the Estonian People and Neighbouring Peoples based on Archaeological Data') (Moora 1956). On the one hand, these texts have to be seen in the context of Estonian disciplinary history and Moora's own earlier work; on the other hand, they need to be understood in the context of the Soviet humanities of the time. I will start with the latter.

Ethnogenesis, or the emergence of peoples and their early ethnic history, was declared a priority field of research in Soviet ethnography in the early 1930s. Peoples (in the plural) had been the main object of study in Russian ethnography since its birth in the 18th century. (Golovnev 2022, 16–19, 33–35.) The communists in power in the Soviet Union also saw populations and history through an ethnic prism. In Stalin's view, peoples or ethnic groups were the primary subjects of history. Thus, the history of the Soviet Union was the total of the histories of the Soviet peoples and began, consequently, with the origins of those peoples (Abashin 2014, 152–153).

For Soviet ethnographers, therefore, ethnogenesis was a very natural choice of topic. Still, its study required the help of neighbouring disciplines, as ethnographic sources do not, as a rule, extend beyond the 18th and 19th centuries. Hence, the study of ethnogenesis was an interdisciplinary effort ('complex' in the usage of the time).

15. Presidium of the Estonian SSR Academy of Sciences. Department of Social Sciences. Correspondence on the organisation of scientific work 1.10.65, lists 4–6; Minutes of the sessions of the Presidium of the Estonian SSR Academy of Sciences 1.1.376, lists 186, 190–192.

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Archaeologists played a leading role. They were joined by physical anthropologists,[16] linguists, folklorists, and historians. The role of ethnographers was to study the material side of traditional folk culture in detail to learn about the ethnic roots of peoples and their cultural interactions with neighbours.

After Stalin withdrew his support for the so-called Japhetic theory of Nikolai Marr[17] in the summer of 1950, some academic freedom emerged in Soviet ethnography. Marxism's classics were silent on ethnogenesis, and hence scholars could afford a certain amount of hypothesis and discussion in this field (Golovnev 2022, 36).

This all fit in quite well with Moora's interests and past activities. Moora had been working on the ethnic history of Estonians as early as the 1920s and had striven for an interdisciplinary approach. This was already apparent in his book *Eestlaste kultuur muistsel iseseisvus-ajal* ('The Culture of Estonians in the Ancient Age of Independence') (Moora 1926), in which he included, in addition to archaeological material, written historical sources, data from linguistics, folklore, and especially ethnography. The same tendency was repeated in a more mature form in the book *Eesti ajalugu I. Esiajalugu ja muistne vabadusvõitlus* ('Estonian History I: Prehistory and the Ancient Freedom Struggle') (Moora et al. 1935), in which Moora's co-authors were the archaeologist and ethnographer Eerik Laid, the linguist Julius Mägiste, and the historian Hans Kruus. In his treatment of ancient agriculture and settlement, Moora already at that time placed great emphasis on natural conditions and collaborated with naturalists (Viires 1970a, 24; Tõnisson 2000, 69–70).

In the 1920s, it was topical to overturn the previously dominant Baltic-German conception of history, which saw the Baltic Germans as importers of culture to the backward Baltic countries, which knew only primitive farming before the 13th century. Moora showed that the German and Danish conquerors added nothing new to Estonian agriculture. The claim that the Estonians' ancestors, who made comb ceramics and spoke some version of Finno-Ugric, arrived in Estonia 5000 years ago is already present in Moora's book *Die Vorzeit Estlands* (The Prehistory of Estonia, 1932), as well as in 'Estonian History I' (Moora et al. 1935). Already then, Moora stressed the continuity of the development of the Estonian population and culture from the Neolithic period (Lang 2002, 531–532; 2018, 34–36).

Moora developed the theory of comb ceramics more fully in *EREA* (1956). By this time, much more archaeological material had been collected, including from eastern areas, and Moora was able to substantiate his views in greater detail. The comb ceramics theory persisted until the 1990s. For a long time, it was not accepted abroad because it did not fit well with the linguistic data, but in the Soviet Union, it was practically the prevailing dogma. Moora's basic thesis remained the same as in the 1930s: the Finno-Ugric ancestors of Estonians arrived in Estonia in the 3rd millennium BCE (Lang 2002, 531–532; 2018, 34–39).

16. Archaeology, ethnography, and physical anthropology were considered close neighbours in the Soviet Union. The Institute of Ethnography, established in 1933, was called the Institute of Anthropology, Archaeology, and Ethnography of the USSR AS until 1937.
17. Nikolai Marr's pseudo-scientific Japhetic theory ('new teaching of language') denied the concept of linguistic families and language trees developed in the traditional comparative-historical linguistics. Stalin supported it from the 1930s on. This theory also affected the related disciplines of archaeology and ethnography (see Alymov 2014, 124–125).

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A parallel edition of the *EREA* in Russian was published in the same year. It opened the way to a wider academic audience – there were far more Russian speakers in Central and Eastern Europe than Estonian speakers. Reviews appeared in Hungary, East and West Germany, and Sweden (see Harri Moora 1989, 28). Cheboksarov wrote about the volume in the journal *Sovetskaya etnografiya*. His review was friendly and praising, and the experience of Estonian researchers was held up as a model for other Soviet republics (1960, 181–182). In Finland, Moora presented his ideas through an article in German (1958).

The publication of *EREA* gave Moora's academic career a good boost. In 1957, he was elected as an academician of the Estonian SSR AS. In the same year, he was awarded the title of Scientist of Merit of the Estonian SSR. In 1959, the *EREA* collection was awarded the Soviet Estonia Prize in Science.

Moora's claim that the Finno-Ugric-speaking ancestors of Estonians arrived in Estonia in the 3rd millennium BC proved to be influential in Estonia. In the 1970s and 1980s, Lennart Meri, later President of the Estonian Republic, popularised the theory in his documentaries. According to the Estonian archaeologist Priit Ligi,[18] the scientific hypothesis put forward by Moora and his colleagues 'became an effective instrument of legal ideological resistance in Soviet Estonia, and its importance for our national self-consciousness was undoubtedly immense' (Ligi 1994, 114). Another Estonian archaeologist, Valter Lang, writes about the theory of the comb ceramics: 'With this approach to ethnic history, Moora gave his people the most that a scholar could ever give – he gave them a creation myth based on the cutting-edge science of the time' (Lang 2002, 532).

The assertion that Estonians have lived in their land for 5,000 years and are thus one of the oldest peoples in Europe was widely rooted in popular consciousness and played an important role in the rhetoric of Estonia's restoration of independence.[19] This idea is still repeated today, even though the theory of comb ceramics has been questioned at the academic level (see Lang 2018).

Grand old man

By the 1960s, Harri Moora had re-established himself academically, achieved a certain position, and become well known and respected among his colleagues in Estonia, the Soviet Union, and even abroad. His scope encompassed the whole of the Baltic region and its eastern neighbours. He often worked hand in hand with his wife Aliise. (Moora and Moora 1960; 1964.)

In 1964, two texts of great importance for Estonian ethnography were published, one in Russian and the other in German, both edited by Harri Moora.

18. Priit Ligi was the son of Harri Moora's daughter Reet Ligi.
19. The Declaration on the Sovereignty of the Estonian SSR, adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR on 16 November 1988, begins with the sentence 'The Estonian people have cultivated their land and developed their culture on the shores of the Baltic Sea for more than five thousand years.' See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Estonian_Sovereignty_Declaration, last accessed 20 February 2024).

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The order to write a chapter on Estonians for the 'Peoples of the World' series had come from the Moscow Institute of Ethnography already in the late 1940s. One draft version had been discussed at a meeting in Moscow in March 1950, but then the matter was delayed. (Viires 1993, 32.) In 1964, the text was finally published (Estontsy 1964, 209–309). Harri Moora was the editor of the chapter and co-author of the historical overview.

A longer and more comprehensive version of this text was published by the same collective of scholars in German as *Abriss der estnischen Volkskunde* ('Outline of Estonian ethnology')(1964). It was issued in the context of the VII International Congress of Anthropology and Ethnography held in Moscow in August 1964. There were two editors: Harri Moora and Ants Viires. Harri Moora was also a co-author of the history review and, together with his wife Aliise, wrote an article on the vernacular chronology and calendar. (Viires 1970a, 27.)

The folk culture of the Estonians was, of course, treated in both cases from the perspective of Soviet ideology. For some reason, however, it did not appear in Estonian. The German version was reviewed by G. Ränk, who had emigrated to Sweden. He found that 'there is no sign of any ground-breaking change in the treatment of the subject and the points of view, as regards the basic study and not the theories that have been tacked on', and that 'the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint is more visible in the introductory phrases and the comparisons that hang at the end than in the treatment of the subject itself' (Ränk 1965, 58). This is perhaps what it was meant to be – a Marxist outfit and old, traditional content. Soviet Estonian ethnography directed by Harri Moora remained rather conservative.

Harri Moora died on 2 May 1968. Among many other publications, *Sovetskaya etnografiya*, the most prominent journal of Soviet ethnography, published a necrology (and select bibliography) (Harri Moora 1968). So, Moora died a respected man. In the words of Ants Viires, he was 'an educator of researchers, a goal-setter of Estonian Soviet ethnography, a developer of methods, always a kind and helpful adviser' (Viires 1970a, 27). In his memory, for many years the ERM continued to hold the so-called 'Moora Days', small domestic conferences where not only ethnographers but also representatives of neighbouring disciplines could speak. The fact that Harri Moora had been a KGB agent for many years was probably not known to his colleagues.

KGB agent

Harri Moora's contradictory relationship with the Soviet security services began at the end of World War II. It formed the background to his entire post-war academic career but remained obscure to contemporaries.

In September 1944, Moora was arrested by the Soviet security services in Western Estonia for a few days and taken to Tallinn for interrogation. On his return, he was not allowed to talk about what had happened. (Ligi 1990, 117–118; Marksoo 1999, 128–130.)

According to his daughter Ann Marksoo, Harri Moora was again interrogated by the KGB in Tallinn on 16–22 October 1944 (Marksoo 1999, 130). The head of a large family who had stayed in Estonia against his will and who wished to pursue an academic career was probably easy prey for the Soviet security services. Refusal to

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cooperate threatened imprisonment not only for Moora himself but also for members of his family.[20] The date of Moora's recruitment as an agent in a KGB document is 30 November 1944. The document refers to him as a 'known nationalist'. His agent's name was Istorik[21] (Jürjo 2000, 156–157; see also Marksoo 1999, 133).

The family recalls that in the second half of the 1940s, as a professor at the University of Tartu again, Moora repeatedly attended hours-long interrogations, which usually took place late at night. Moora had to pledge not to tell anyone about these conversations, but he did say a few things to his wife Aliise. (Marksoo 1999, 135.) Perhaps it was the agent's reporting? Perhaps indeed Moora only told the KGB about his colleagues and acquaintances, which was known to the security services anyway and could not do them any significant harm (see Marksoo 1999, 136). In 1950, for example, Istorik informed the KGB that historian and linguist Richard Kleis was very closely associated with the well-known historian and politician Hans Kruus, then ostracised, and therefore feared repression (Tannberg 2004, 124). Harri Moora is reported to have said about it: 'I have to reckon with five children having to live in this society. As long as I am not arrested, I will be able to do something useful besides the required stupidities' (Marksoo 1999, 136). Some KGB documents from these years characterise him negatively as an agent. According to a KGB officer who interrogated Moora in Tartu in the late 1940s, he was 'an intelligent man who was difficult to intercept'. It is possible that in 1950–1951, Moora was not arrested under the tutelage of the KGB, because they hoped to use him in their interests (see Marksoo 1999, 133, 136).

After World War II, the Soviet and Western (Swedish and British) intelligence services played games with each other in which Estonian refugees were involved. The KGB set up a fictitious underground national organisation, the Committee for the Liberation of Estonia, to plant its agents among Estonian refugees in Sweden. Harri Moora was presented as one of the leading figures of this organisation. He was a suitable candidate for the role, as he had indeed been involved in the Estonian resistance movement during the German occupation. His eldest son, Rein Moora, was living in exile in Sweden. In the second half of 1953, at the request of the KGB,[22] Moora wrote letters to his acquaintances in Sweden – Eerik Laid, Richard Indreko, and Aleksander Warma – recommending a man as a reliable participant in the underground nationalist organisation. The man Moora wrote about in his letters was Valdur Loor. He had served in the Finnish army but remained in Estonia after the war, and the KGB recruited him as the agent Jokela in 1945.[23] Moora probably did not know all this. It is quite possible that the two agents never met. Laid and Indreko had been close colleagues of Moora in the past, but in 1944 ties had broken.[24] (Jürjo 2014, 93–94; 2000, 157; Marksoo 1999, 133–137.)

20. The eldest son, Rein Moora, had served in the Finnish army and emigrated to Sweden. Another son, Henn Moora, had been a volunteer in the German army. The KGB was aware of all this and was able to use it to put pressure on Harri Moora (Marksoo 1999, 128–131).
21. 'Historian' (in Russian).
22. In the KGB, Moora was told 'You are a great patriot, but you have a big family […]. Now you sit down and write, we dictate!' (Marksoo 1999, 136–137).
23. Valdur Loor (1923–1994) later worked as a volleyball referee. For more on the agent Jokela and his activities, see Pihlau 2009, 105–108.
24. Eerik Laid was not naive. On 11 November 1944, when both Laid and Harri's son Rein Moora were already in Sweden, the former wrote to the latter: 'What will be said and written in

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Moora's letter to Indreko and the draft of Indreko's reply have survived, but I do not go into details here. What is important is that Estonians in Sweden doubted the authenticity of both Moora's letter of recommendation and his entire underground organisation.

Taking advantage of the political thaw in the Soviet Union, Kustaa Vilkuna, a well-known Finnish ethnographer, politician, and friend of Estonia, rushed to Estonia in February 1956 to re-establish cultural and academic ties. In Tallinn, at the Institute of History, he also met Harri Moora. Moora had known Vilkuna since before the war and tried to contact his son Rein in Stockholm through him. On his way back to Finland, however, Vilkuna was thoroughly searched by the Soviet border guards in Vyborg and all the letters he had with him were confiscated. However, Rein got his parents' address from Vilkuna and wrote to them soon thereafter. (Marksoo 1999, 137.)

Eerik Laid and Kustaa Vilkuna were old acquaintances and exchanged letters. Laid knew that Vilkuna was planning to return to Estonia soon. He asked Vilkuna to meet Moora again and ask a couple of questions, taking into account all the rules of conspiracy, of course.[25] In the beginning of June 1957, Vilkuna was back in Estonia. Quite possibly he met Moora, but the questions about the authenticity of Jokela and the Committee for the Liberation of Estonia remained obscure to Vilkuna and his Estonian emigrant friends.

It was probably thanks to cooperation with the KGB that Harri Moora made his first post-war trip abroad. His visit to Sweden, a capitalist country, took place in November 1957. This was unusually early, considering the circumstances of Soviet Estonia and Moora's background. By then, Moora was an Academician of the Estonian SSR AS, and the official invitation came from the Royal Swedish Academy of Literature, History, and Antiquities (*Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien*).

Marksoo claims that Eerik Laid was the real initiator of the invitation, who made the proposal to the Swedish Security Service. The aim was to find out what was really behind the letters of recommendation sent by Moora. (Marksoo 1999, 138.) According to Estonian historian Indrek Jürjo, the Swedish colleagues may also have invited Moora to visit them on their initiative, for purely academic reasons (see Jürjo 2000, 158). In any case, the KGB had to authorise the trip and probably did so in the belief that it served their interests.

During his two-week stay in Stockholm, Moora gave presentations on the work of Baltic archaeologists (Selirand 1989, XXV), but he also met many people of interest to the KGB, including his former colleagues Erik Laid and Richard Indreko, refugee politicians August Rei and Heinrich Laretei, and others. In private conversations, the Estonian exiles checked the credibility of the agent Jokela, who was recommended by Moora. According to Jürjo, it is difficult to tell from the terse report how zealously Istorik carried out his mission. In the view of the Estonian KGB leadership, he succeeded in confirming Jokela's credibility and thus it was possible to use Jokela in further foreign operations. In any case, Moora was allowed to go abroad again. In the second half of the 1950s, Istorik is referred to in KGB documents as an 'experienced agent' (Jürjo 2014, 127, 173).

the name of him [Harri] and others in the future there [in Soviet Estonia] cannot be taken seriously, we have lived through and seen it all ourselves' (RA EAA 5401.1.66, l. 10).

25. Eerik Laid to Kustaa Vilkuna, 9 May 1956. RA EAA 5401.1.72, l. 23–23p.

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One of the central events of Harri Moora's visit to Stockholm in 1957 was a meeting with Eerik Laid in Kungsträndgården Park at dusk, arranged through Rein Moora. According to Marksoo, what Moora could write in his report about Laid, Indreko, and others without harming them was agreed upon there. Moora also spoke about his role in the Jokela case. The refugees and the Swedish Security Service had their suspicions about Jokela confirmed, but this was not revealed so as not to expose Moora. (Marksoo 1999, 139.)

Soviet propaganda and security organs tried to use Moora's visit to Sweden to influence Estonians abroad. At the same time, it was also used for propaganda in Soviet Estonia. The Estonian-language Soviet press published several articles about the visit. It is not known to what extent Moora really said what was reported in the newspapers. Moora's trip also provoked reactions in the Estonian press abroad.

Communication with Western colleagues and the exchange of new ideas and academic literature was undoubtedly very important for Moora.[26] In August 1958, he was able to attend the Fifth International Congress of Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences in Hamburg.[27] Moora gave a presentation on ancient Baltic castles and was elected as member of the Permanent Council of the International Union for Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences. (Selirand 1989, XXV.) Hille Jaanusson, a Swedish archaeologist of Estonian origin, remembers that Moora's attitude towards Estonian emigrants was somewhat cautious in public – he knew that the KGB was keeping an eye on him (Salminen 2012, 107). In August 1960, Moora represented Baltic historians at the 11th International Congress of Historians in Stockholm (Selirand 1989, XXV).

According to Jürjo, cooperation with the KGB was not a prerequisite for academic trips abroad at the time. He cites the example of the renowned linguist and academic Paul Ariste, who refused a KGB recruitment proposal in 1958. Ariste had said that if the security services wanted to take advantage of his foreign travel, he would not travel at all. The KGB did not cause any further significant obstacles to his research trips. (Jürjo 2000, 158.)

When the Society for the Development of Cultural Ties with Estonians Abroad (VEKSA) was created in April 1960, Harri Moora was one of its founding members and also a member of its committee (Jürjo 2014, 193; 2000, 157). The VEKSA was subordinate to the Propaganda and Agitation Department of the Estonian CP and it aimed to ideologically influence the Estonian refugee community. It was used by the KGB as a shadow organisation for intelligence work. At the same time, over the decades, the VEKSA allowed many intellectuals and scholars of the Estonian SSR to interact with the Western world. The question remains open whether the Soviet ideological watchdogs who had set up the VEKSA did more harm or good for their cause in the long run.

In 1967, Harri Moora spent a holiday in Sweden, but he also gave a lecture at Uppsala University and did some work in museums (Selirand 1989, XXVI). This time

26. It is said that Moora, while visiting Sweden in the autumn of 1957, agreed with the 'pink scholars and professors' there to exchange materials for scientific work (Kures 2009, 384). By no means did all Estonian emigrants approve of such a 'co-existence' with Soviet Estonia, but the exchange of academic literature and information across the Iron Curtain started and continued successfully for decades.
27. In 1936, Moora had attended the Second Congress in Oslo.

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he was allowed to travel with his wife Aliise, and they also met their eldest son Rein (Ligi 1990, 128). Such a holiday trip to a capitalist country combined with academic work was exceptional back then, and it demonstrates Harri Moora's privileged status. Apparently, he was trusted. Soviet authorities did not fear that Moora would emigrate. Why would he?

Conclusion

Harri Moora was an Estonian archaeologist, who by the end of the 1930s had become an internationally renowned scholar but then ran into difficulties for historical reasons. Unable to leave the country before the Soviets returned to Estonia in the autumn of 1944, Moora remained in Estonia with his large family and was forced to cooperate with the KGB. He himself acted as a KGB agent for many years, but due to a lack of sources, it is unknown how active he was. In the second half of the 1940s, Moora was able to continue his academic career as a professor of archaeology at the University of Tartu. As the leading figures of Estonian ethnography had all either emigrated to the West or perished in Soviet prison camps, the teaching of ethnography at the university fell on Harri Moora's shoulders. At the same time, he also guided the adaptation of the Estonian National Museum (ERM), the central institution of Estonian ethnography back then, to the ideological demands of the Soviet authorities. On the one hand, as a skilled diplomat, he helped to build up the Soviet façade of Estonian ethnography; on the other, he tried to preserve its national traditions. He learned the theory of Marxism-Leninism and manipulated the quotations of its classics to his advantage. Good working relationships with influential colleagues from Moscow and Leningrad helped to support his academic position. The years 1949–1951 were the most difficult for Moora, when he, like many other Estonian intellectuals, was accused of bourgeois nationalism and dismissed from the university.

From 1952, Moora was able to continue his academic career in Tallinn as head of the Archaeology (and Ethnography) Section of the Institute of History at the Estonian SSR Academy of Sciences. Moora did not join the Communist Party, although it would probably have strengthened his position. In the 1950s, he worked mainly on the ethnogenesis of Estonians. While this was one of the main topics of Soviet ethnography at the time, it was also a long-standing interest of Moora himself. His interdisciplinary approach proved to be successful, being recognised both in Moscow and in the Soviet Baltic Republics. His main thesis, according to which the Finno-Ugric ancestors of Estonians arrived in Estonia 5000 years ago, emphasised the continuity of language and culture and carried a clear national message in the context of the Soviet regime.

In 1957, Harri Moora became an academician of the Estonian SSR AS and received the corresponding social benefits. This position greatly increased his scope and opportunities. One of the first things Moora did was to take the lead in helping the ERM, which had been ravaged by the Stalinist repressions, back on its feet in academic terms.

The Academy position also allowed Moora to engage in foreign travel and maintain contacts with Western colleagues (including Estonian refugees), which he had been sorely missing. At the same time, Moora's role as a KGB agent presumably contributed to his trips abroad, which were unusually frequent for that time. It was a burden that he

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probably reluctantly shouldered but also used to his advantage. The content of Moora's research was not influenced by his cooperation with the KGB. All in all, it could be argued that Moora pulled the wool over the eyes of the Soviet security services and ideological watchdogs, especially in the long run.

Moora's role in Soviet Estonian ethnography was greatest in the second half of the 1940s and in the 1950s. First, it was fostered by the closeness of archaeology and ethnography in the Soviet system at the time. Secondly, it took time for a new generation of ethnographers to fill the field. In the 1960s, as the next generation began to show itself, Moora's importance as a leading figure in Estonian ethnography gradually declined. His authority, however, remained.

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Constructed Nationalisms

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Epistemic Rules and Competing Nationalisms in Folklore in Türkiye

The Case of Pertev Naili Boratav Revisited

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Introduction: Nationalist Pretexts and Academic Contexts

In 1948, the Turkish Folk Literature and Folklore Department at Ankara University, the only one in Türkiye, was shut down amid nationalist agitation against academics. Its founder, Pertev Naili Boratav, was among three accused lecturers of spreading communist propaganda. Although acquitted after a lengthy trial (1948–1950), a special decree by the Turkish Grand National Assembly cut the department's funding. Unable to teach, Boratav left Türkiye in 1952 and continued his scholarship in France (Çetik 1998; 2019; Öztürkmen 2005; Birkalan 1995; 2001; Başgöz 1972), working at the *École Pratique des Hautes Études and Centre Nationale Recherche Scientifique*. His departure marked a decline in the autonomy[1] of academic folklore studies in Türkiye as a stand-alone department, with folklore being confined to literature and theatre departments (Gedik et al. 2020). As a result, systematic theory-building and critical analysis, which Boratav sought to establish for the discipline, came to a halt. When the Department of Ethnology took over folklore courses in 1961 (Erdentuğ 1982), disciplinary uncertainty deepened, as folklore remained caught between literature, ethnology, and social anthropology.

This chapter takes 1948 as a pivotal point in folklore studies in Türkiye and revisits the case of Boratav within the framework of 'competing nationalisms', demonstrating how folklore studies in Türkiye oscillated between academic autonomy and political instrumentalisation. Starting in the 1950s, the field of folklore in Türkiye increasingly received state support, mostly outside academia, which blurred academic/non-academic divisions and complicated folklore terminologies and usages. These developments led to the formation of new institutional milieus, such as state archives and other state-funded agencies, reshaping the discipline's epistemological foundations. Folklore journals communicated folklore knowledge in new formats about novel genres; activities of folklore associations, student organisations, folk-dance groups, and festival and tourism organisations blurred the folklore venues (Birkalan-Gedik 2021a)

1. The lecturers Behice Boran (1910–1987) and Niyazi Berkes (1908–1988) were sentenced to a three-month period of imprisonment, but the judiciary overturned the decision. Muzaffer Şerif Başoğlu (1906–1988) had already left Türkiye in 1947 after receiving a scholarship from the USA. Although not among the accused academics, İlhan Başgöz (1921–2021), a scientific assistant to Boratav, left Türkiye for the USA in 1950 (see Birkalan-Gedik 2021b).

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by *performing* folklore (Öztürkmen 2012, my emphasis)–referring to folk dances–and preserving or 'keeping' folklore 'alive'.

Furthermore, the political targeting of Boratav and folklore studies reflected the dominance of nationalist and anti-communist sentiments in 1940s Türkiye, where folklore – central to national identity – became a contested field shaped by ideological struggles.[2] The closure of the folklore department in 1948 has been remembered as a turning point for Turkish folklore studies in the country.[3] Thus, the second attempt to academicise folklore was very short-lived .[4] Presenting his understanding of folklore research and teaching with humanistic undertones, unlike the hegemonic nationalist ones prevailing at the time (Birkalan 1995), Pertev Naili Boratav understood folklore collecting as a scientific endeavour (Boratav [1939] 1991).

Unlike certain intellectuals who viewed folklore only as a tool for promoting national identity, Boratav advocated for a methodological approach rooted in comparative ethnology and Marxist social analysis and considered local variation over the essentialist notions of 'national culture'. Boratav's approach emphasised 'folklore' as a dynamic and evolving cultural process, countering nationalist perspectives that treated folklore as a static repository of national identity from the past. His emphasis on class consciousness and social dynamics marked a clear departure from the nationalist folklorists, who sought to define a singular, homogenous Turkish identity. Teaming up with students, villagers, and storytellers at *Halk Evleri* (People's Houses),[5] Boratav documented folklore materials (Boratav [1939] 1991), the cultural-political organs of the *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*/CHP (thereafter, Republican People's Party/RPP). Besides, he employed performance-based approaches long before terms like 'performance', 'individuality', and 'context' became buzzwords, particularly in US folkloristics. In that aspect, not only did he show the relevance of historical contexts in the creation of folklore materials, but he also highlighted the living aspects of folklore more broadly—such as the role of the biographies of *âşıks* ('minstrels'), who composed and performed folklore texts and songs. For Boratav, folklore materials were not something from the past to be revived; folklore elements were living entities among the peoples. In this regard, he also challenged the notions of sole anonymity in folklore materials ([1931]

2. By 'autonomy', I intend to emphasise folklore's status as a separate academic discipline. After folklore studies at Ankara University was abolished, there was no longer an institute or department by that name, no professorship with a folklore denomination, and no possibility to attain a degree in folklore studies.
3. The Department of Turkish Folklore and Folk Literature under Ethnology was closed due to its chair's sudden death in 1980. Its academic programs alternated between Turkish literature and anthropology, only becoming fully independent in 1993. In the late 1940s, 'ethnology' in Türkiye had emerged from physical anthropology, and it originally meant the comparative study of human beings (Birkalan-Gedik 2018). By the 1950s in Türkiye, ethnology was understood as a part of national and regional ethnography, and its curricula were closer to those of social and cultural anthropology.
4. The closure of the Turkish Folk Literature and Folklore Department at Ankara University in 1948 created a great rupture in the history of academic folklore, although Folklore Studies at Ankara University was revived in 1980. A department of Turkish Folklore Studies was established at Hacettepe University in 1982 and another one at Atatürk University in 1989.
5. Folklore Studies in Türkiye became institutionalised in 1914 at Darülfünûn, where national ideologues founded the Department of Folklore and Ethnography in 1914, which was dissolved in 1918 (Birkalan-Gedik 2018).

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1984; [1946] 1988). In folklore texts, he showed that the 'oral' and 'written' were in flux: their narrators culled certain elements from each realm and used them creatively in their artistic performances. Last but not least, Boratav aimed at establishing a folklore archive for collected folklore materials to both be stored and be made available for future folklorists to work on them.

Boratav's case became emblematic in the history of folklore in Türkiye regarding the racist persecution of academics. A comprehensive look reveals that in post-war Europe, folklore studies became less nationally focused (particularly in the German-speaking tradition) and sought novel epistemologies and distinct disciplinary identities.[6] On the other hand, folklore in Türkiye, both as a field of activity and as an academic field of study within interdisciplinary constellations, became more nationalistic: it increasingly developed into a state-supported activity among folklorists, semi-professionals, and the cultural elite, who rediscovered national folk culture and presented it with emerging political-economic undertones. The absence of any critical debate about and the lack of retrospection on *völkisch* effects in the post-Boratav period suggests a lingering influence of nationalist epistemologies that were never fully deconstructed. This silence reflects an implicit continuation of the nationalist thought patterns embedded within the field of folklore in Türkiye. To put it bluntly, the case of folklore in Türkiye proved an ineffective way of coming to terms with the past. In that respect, few studies have sought to understand Pertev Naili Boratav, his political thinking, and his folklore scholarship amid the tumultuous 1940s.

By tracing Boratav's scholarly trajectory, I argue that folklore in Türkiye was not merely an academic field but a contested space shaped by shifting ideological pressures. To this end, I analyse archival material, personal interviews, and secondary literature to clarify how Boratav positioned folklore as a scientific discipline that was distinct from nationalist appropriations. My aim is twofold: first, to examine the political dynamics as part of 'competing nationalisms' and delve into Boratav's ideological trajectories and his understanding of folklore as a research field; and second, to raise some challenging questions about folklore's changing 'epistemic rules', starting at the turn of the twentieth century with an emphasis on the 1940s and 1950s in Türkiye. The framework of 'competing nationalisms' endeavours to demonstrate that nationalism, while deeply connected across contrasting times to folklore contexts – both as a research field and an academic discipline – can follow distinct and complex epistemic rules. Moreover, it highlights that within a single national tradition, the field of folklore can also become a contested space where different nationalist ideologies, each with its own nuances, compete and shape folklore's meanings and functions.

The 1930s and 1940s were particularly problematic years in Türkiye. On one hand, there was an increase in extreme nationalist tendencies, which at times benefitted from support from German nationalist thought. On the other hand, Türkiye's alignment with the US in 1947 further intensified anti-communist sentiments (Örnek 2015) and enabled Türkiye to secure the military and economic assistance promised by the Truman Doctrine. Finally but importantly, during this period marked by the dominance of racial anthropology narratives, a significant clash emerged. I argue that this clash not only reinforced anthropology's alignment with right-wing ideals but

6. Being likened to the People's Palaces in Britain in the nineteenth century, the Halk Evleri offered a widespread, practical adult education, where villagers and intellectuals collaborated.

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also laid the ground for establishing anthropology's 'superiority' over folklore studies through state backing.

Racial anthropology, which gained prominence in 1930s Türkiye, sought to construct a biological foundation for national identity. This approach, inspired in part by European racial theories, positioned anthropology as a discipline that could define 'Turkishness' in a 'scientific' way (Birkalan-Gedik, 2025a, b). In reality, this marginalised Boratav's practice of folklore studies, which went beyond pure nationalist claims. Leveraging its role in creating the racial-nationalist narrative of the Turkish state, anthropology positioned itself as the supreme discipline, aiming to exert control over folklore, rooted in romantic nationalism. Nevertheless, in this field, Boratav was capable of identifying alternative epistemological practices in his research. Investigating the rich and diverse trajectories of Turkish folklore in the 1930s and well into the 1950s can shed light on forms of knowledge production within a peripheral European disciplinary tradition during a period of competing nationalisms that affected both the understanding and the practice of folklore within and outside academia.

Pertev Naili Boratav's life story

Pertev Naili was born on 2 September 1907 in Zlatograd, (Darıdere), a town which today is a part of Bulgaria. Boratav's father was a *kaymakam*, or district governor, who served in several cities in Anatolia, the Asian portion of Türkiye (Birkalan 1995; Çetik 2019.) The family moved to Mudurnu, a small town in Western Anatolia, and found themselves in the middle of the First World War. Boratav received his education mainly from his mother. Their close relationship led Boratav to develop an interest in the story-telling tradition (Birkalan 1995, 36). Leaving his family in Mudurnu, Boratav moved to Istanbul, where he stayed with his grandmother's family. During this period, Istanbul was under the occupation of the Allied forces. Boratav attended Kumkapı Fransız Lisesi, the French Highschool (Collège de l'Assomption) in Kumkapı, between 1921 and 1924, and later joined Istanbul Lisesi, a government school, where instruction was in German (Birkalan 1995, 37). While mastering two foreign languages, Boratav was also able to meet Hilmi Ziya [Ülken] (1901–1974), a major figure in Turkish sociology, who introduced him to the contemporary theories of folklore, literature, and sociology. Boratav's solid background in analysing folklore materials probably owes to Hilmi Ziya's expertise in sociological analysis and his knowledge of cultural movements, specifically romantic nationalism, in Europe in the nineteenth century. Spending several summers visiting his family in Mudurnu, Boratav started collecting folktales, first from his mother.

Because of his increasing interest in folklore materials, Boratav joined the Department of Turkish Literature at Darülfünûn (Istanbul University after 1933). In 1931, he became an assistant at the newly founded *Türkiyât Enstitüsü* (Institute of Turkish Studies), where two professors shaped Boratav's studies. French comparative mythologist Georges Dumézil (1898–1986) gave lectures on mythologies of Turkish peoples, and Boratav became a translator for him. Boratav also studied with Turkish literary critic Mehmed Fuad [Köprülü] (1890–1966), who impacted Boratav's scholarly formation. In addition, works of the French ethnologist Arnold van Gennep (1873–1957) inspired Boratav's understanding of folklore. At the time, France was a leading

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centre for ethnography and folklore studies, and Boratav, being well versed in foreign languages, closely followed the relevant literature. In 1931, he published Turkish translations of two chapters from van Gennep's *Le Folklore* (1924) in the journal *Ülkü*, addressing general methodological issues in folklore and ethnography (Birkalan 1995, 41). The complete translation of *Le Folklore* was later published as a book in 1939.

During his studies at Istanbul University, Boratav applied for a scholarship to study in Europe. He visited Paris for a month in 1928, where he not only learned the customs of a different culture but also started to master the international scholarship on folklore research (Birkalan 1995, 42). When he came back from France, a case related to a petition letter had passed at the university and Boratav could no longer work with Köprülü (I will come back to this issue later in the chapter). After this event, Boratav was appointed to Konya as a high school teacher. He married Hayrünnisa Boratav and had two children: Korkut and Murat Boratav. He also taught in Konya until 1936, gaining a good deal of experience in the collection and analysis of folklore materials locally (Birkalan 1995, 43). He later started teaching folklore and folk literature classes at Ankara University's Faculty of Language and History-Geography, where he established the Department of Turkish Folk Literature and Folklore.

The case of Boratav

The early 1940s saw the inception of what would manifest as aggressive campaigns against academics. The right-wing extremists targeted Ankara University professors, who were accused of spreading and indoctrinating their students with foreign ideologies through their lectures and publications, promoting anti-nationalist sentiments and corrupting the minds of Turkish youth. Behice Boran, who was among the lecturers accused, analyses the events as follows:

> We can consider the starting point of the disturbances that have been called 'the history geography events' as January 1941, when *Yurt ve Dünya* was first published. *Yurt ve Dünya*, which was under my editorship, was published with the contributions of two faculty members, Pertev Naili Boratav and Niyazi Berkes, and the non-faculty Adnan Cemgil. Cemgil soon drew the attention of certain people, namely, those who supported the Republican Party ideology used as the state ideology, as well as those who were known fundamentalists and racists, and those were divided into *Turancı* and *Anadolucu* [Turanist and Anatolianist], fans of Hitler's ideology. It was clear that *Yurt ve Dünya* did not reflect that ideology. The journal itself and those who published in the journal were marked as leftist. (Mumcu 1990, 105, my translation)

Authors who did not publish in 'right-wing' journals such as *Ergenekon* (1938–1939), *Kopuz* (1939–1940), *Bozkurt* (1939–1942), *Gökbörü* (1942–1943), and *Çınaraltı* (1942–1944), which propagated German fascism, were labelled as 'leftist'. During these political tensions, several demonstrations took place outside publishing houses because they voiced the need to revise the RPP's policy and called for 'a new orientation on internal and external (pro-Soviet) politics' (Karpat 1959, 150). The Faculty of Language and History-Geography was a rallying point for the opposition, and student uprisings took place in the classrooms. According to right-wing claims,

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some progressive scholars used their classrooms and writings to influence students' ideas.[7]

What led to the allegations against Boratav? Why his work was seen 'communist', and why was his folklore department defunded? His case, which began in 1948, centred on his interpretation of nationalism. His opponents accused him of rejecting nationalist ideas and inventing cases to discredit them. In his 1950 defence, Boratav not only refuted these claims but also used the trial as an opportunity to clarify his scholarly approach to folklore and nationalism. While he firmly rejected the accusations, his work did not entirely detach folklore studies from national concerns. Rather than opposing nationalism outright, he sought to redefine its epistemological basis, emphasising class and cultural exchanges over racial essentialism. This nuance is key to understanding his trial as part of a broader ideological struggle in Turkish folklore studies. His defence was later published in Mete Çetik's work, where he underlined:

> I am neither a political writer nor a lecturer who taught social doctrines, so naturally I expressed no views or got involved in any discussion about theories of nationality. But for years, I taught Turkish literature in high schools and Turkish folklore and folk literature at university. I published books and wrote articles [on the subject matter] in journals and dailies. Even though I did not mention nationalism as a political subject and did not declare myself a nationalist in political terms, could it be possible that I do not understand what 'nation' is and do not emphasise the values of the social entity that are national? The argument is that I denied and destroyed those values. What does it mean to say that this is not so? Those who cast this slander were unable to show a single line of mine to support their argument, without altering, inventing, and cheating. (Çetik 1998, 175, my translation)

Boratav's defence highlighted how his statements were selectively misquoted to fit a political agenda. To be more specific, one important accusation was that Boratav cited examples in class from Turkish folk poems collected from the 'Kızılbaş' (Redheads) poets, who held beliefs contrary to Turkish nationalism. Here the term 'Kızılbaş' refers to Alevi poets, an Anatolian-bound religious order, which remained for the most part outside Orthodox Islam.[8] Boratav emphasised that the Kızılbaş people had provided the most beautiful examples of folk poetry, and that scholars before him had pointed out the artistic value of their poems as well (Öztürkmen 1993, 206). In that respect, in an article titled 'The Poets of the South' – on Dadaloğlu, an Alevi poet, Boratav noted the following:

> Of course, Karacaoğlan and Dadaloğlu are not the only poets of the South; there are other poets in each and every corner of this country. While others were able to add just a few new colours and sketches of our southern landscapes, these two poets created the landscapes themselves. This is why particular knowledge of them means knowing the poetry of

7. At times, besides these epistemic orientations, others also underlined the economic aspects of 'post-folklore', a point that can be considered as a point of comparison for folklore studies in German-speaking countries and in Türkiye (see, for example, Rhyner 2024).
8. A great deal of Alevi poetry intertwines poetic expression with political sentiment. Beginning in the sixteenth century, Kızılbaş-Alevi identity developed in opposition to Ottoman Sunni orthodoxy, particularly as many Kızılbaş became adherents of the Safavid order in Iran.

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Mahkeme, Behice Boran ve Niyazi Berkesin mahkûmiyetlerine, Naili Boratavın da beraetine karar verdi

Hürriyet, 10 February 1950. 'The court decided on the sentencing of Behice Boran and Niyazi Berkes and Naili Boratav's acquittal.'

> Southern Türkiye, which is woven by human feelings that carry the different landscapes of the country. (Boratav 1982, 19, my translation)

Boratav noted that the the poems of the nineteenth-century poet Dadaloğlu reveals the sincerity of a bold, upright, and sensitive tribesman during the political turmoil of the Ottomans, as well as his responses to the oppressive policy towards the Alevis and the nomads in Anatolia. Weaving his sentiments into his poetry, Dadaloğlu is one of the last representatives of a centuries-long tradition of Alevi folk poetry that functioned as a means of protest. By selecting from his analysis, Boratav's antagonists made false accusations against him, claiming that Boratav's works were tools to indoctrinate 'foreign ideology'.

In another instance, it was alleged that Boratav deliberately eliminated folk stories reflecting nationalist ideas from his collection of folktales in Kars, a city close to Russia, but included stories that reflected Marxist ideology (Çetik 1998). In response, Boratav questioned how the term 'foreign ideology' could be defined accurately, since even in the press and universities, the concepts of humanism and communism were mixed with one another. He asserted that 'foreign ideology' was used interchangeably in an utterly confused political period without differentiating between a Russian spy and a communist agent. For example, by 'leftism' one can understand a range of social

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and political views, from communism and anarchism to the Republican Party's statism (Çetik 1998).

Likewise, Boratav's analysis of the Köroğlu epic was distorted, while he was simply documenting existing variations in folk narratives (Boratav 1982, 132–133) and providing an alternative view on the folk hero. Boratav clearly did not view himself as a political writer; instead, he presented his ideas on the concepts of nation and nationalism from his viewpoint as a lecturer in folklore studies. His remarks show both his scientific attitude towards nationalism and his intellectualism towards the oppression of academic freedom and civil liberties in 1940s Türkiye. Similarly, the right-wing extremists argued that in his analysis of the medieval Turkish epic, Boratav made several statements presenting Köroğlu, a social bandit, as a victorious hero (Boratav interview 1994). Boratav did not present the hero as an agent who rebelled against the oppressing bourgeois class. In his writings, however, Boratav *did* underline the popular imagination that perceived the hero as such (Boratav [1931] 1984, 100–106). Boratav further argued that people might ascribe completely new characters to be heroes, depending on social change. Although in reality Köroğlu was a rebel and a bandit, in the people's imagination he reflected a different attitude (Boratav 1982, 132–133).[9] In fact, Boratav's scrutiny of this epic challenged nationalist principles, and he was accused of 'poisoning' the youth at the university. Boratav replied that as a literature teacher, it was his right and duty to analyse literary works in reference to a social perspective within a critical framework (Boratav 1994, interview).

His discussions of folk poetry traditions – including those of Alevi poets – were framed in such way as to undermine Turkish nationalism, despite being well within the scholarly norms of folklore research (Öztürkmen 1993, 206). This misrepresentation was the main grounds for the accusations against him: rather than engaging in political propaganda, Boratav was documenting the diversity of Turkish folklore traditions. However, in an environment where folklore was expected to reinforce a unified national identity, his acknowledgment of marginalised traditions was portrayed as politically subversive.

Another accusation levelled against Boratav was that he made unjustified corrections (according to the right-wing understanding of nationalism) to a paper by one of his students on Ziya Gökalp, the father of Turkish sociology. Boratav allegedly attempted to use his corrections to eliminate nationalist ideas, although he insisted that it was his student, not he, who misinterpreted Ziya Gökalp:

> As a literature teacher, I examined the paper that S.E[rtürk] wrote about Ziya Gökalp's nationalism. I thought it was inappropriate for him to read [Gökalp] in this way. My corrections were misinterpreted. I completely appreciate Ziya Gökalp's ideas as a person who created a mainstream [thought] in Turkish philosophy. I also understand nationalism in the framework described in our constitution. But racism is something that our constitution is against. I also see racism as a threatening factor for citizens in Türkiye. That

9. Boratav's predating analysis can be identified as similar to that of Eric Hobsbawm, which he introduced in *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (1959) and *Bandits* (1969). It is clear that the folk hero as rebel or protester stood in stark contrast to the commonly held and celebrated notions of a folk hero in a nationalist framework.

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> is why I am not in favour of fascism nor am I against nationalism. (Çetik 1998, 83, my translation)

Boratav also noted that Ziya Gökalp himself modified his ideas of nationalism and presented alternative viewpoints on Turkish nationalism (Çetik 1998, 83–87). Boratav taught that concepts needed to be defined and then discussed within a scientific framework. His approach to any cultural phenomenon was based on his dynamic understanding of political, philosophical, and cultural concepts.

Boratav faced allegations of discontinuing commemorative days for national poets, including Namık Kemal (1840–1888), a prominent figure in Turkish nationalism. According to the allegations, Boratav wished to hold a celebration day for folk poets. Boratav contended that his suggestion was misinterpreted, since he sought only to raise the quality of the celebration by including folk poets within its framework. Boratav recognised Namık Kemal as an important figure in Turkish literature. However, as a folklorist, Boratav believed that in a folk literature department, folk poets should be celebrated in the first place, and the value of their work should not be underestimated.

A further allegation stipulated: 'Boratav has a relationship with Ruhi Su, a folk music and opera artist, and a *bağlama* virtuoso, who is said to be a communist.' Here, it was implied that Boratav was personally close to Ruhi Su, a renowned Turkish folk musician known for his leftist views. Other assertions included: 'Boratav said something like Karacaoğlan has nothing to do with Turkishness' and 'Boratav used the ideas of Hüseyin Rahmi [Gürpınar] for leftist propaganda' (Mumcu 1990). The first accusation referred to the seventeenth-century folk poet Karacaoğlan, while the second suggested that Boratav used the works of Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar, a prolific Turkish novelist and journalist, to promote leftist ideologies. In reality, these allegations were aimed at undermining Boratav's interpretations of folklore texts and their historical contexts, and they operated under the assumption that he discouraged nationalist sentiments in his teachings.

As Mete Çetik presented in his book, besides these 'tragicomic allegations', there were others, such as 'having a relation with the journals *Yurt ve Dünya* and *Adımlar* at a time when the journal was not even in publication (Çetik 1998, 58). Moreover, the accusations presented 'non-facts' about Boratav's career, aiming to make him look like he held his academic position as though he was not qualified for (Çetik 1998, 54–55). Boratav concluded that the accusations against him were weak and lacked a sound scientific basis, emphasizing in his defense that his statements had been selectively misquoted. For instance, his discussions of folk poetry traditions – including those of Alevi poets – were framed as attempts to undermine Turkish nationalism, despite being well aligned within the scholarly norms of folklore research. Likewise, his analysis of Köroğlu was distorted to suggest a Marxist interpretation, whereas in reality he was simply documenting existing variations in folk narratives.

The accusations levied against Boratav, such as his alleged communist activities in Germany, lacked substantiating evidence. Records indicate that Boratav was recalled from Germany in 1936 due to his vocal criticism of Nazi ideology, rather than for promoting communism (Mumcu 1990, 66). [10] Other arguments posited against Boratav

10. According to Mumcu (1990), Nihal Atsız, one of the key figures of the Turkist-Turanist trial, claimed that Boratav, who had supposedly adopted communist views while in Türkiye,

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included 'accusing England and the US of fascism' as well as 'being recalled to Türkiye because of spreading communist propaganda in Germany' [when he was in Berlin]. Similarly, the alleged statements about England and the US were based on second-hand reports rather than being verifiable instances, revealing a pattern of politically motivated misrepresentations. However, due to the right-wing gaining power, his folklore classes were suspended in 1948.

After a lengthy process, Boratav was eventually able to counter the fallacious assertions. Although the court acquitted Boratav, his return to academia was blocked by political manoeuvres rather than legal justification. The trial set a troubling precedent for folklore studies in Türkiye, demonstrating that academic legitimacy could be undermined by political accusations. The Minister of Education Reşat Şemsettin Sirer circumvented the ruling by using bureaucratic means to defund Boratav's department, effectively ensuring his dismissal (Çetik 1998). This move was part of a broader political strategy to suppress certain scholars in folklore studies who challenged the nationalist narrative. In our interview, Boratav stated:

> They could not manage to fire me. I never resigned. They said that they had no funds to run the department. [On paper] I am still a lecturer. I have another case in Türkiye. For years and years, I have been waiting for an answer from the Turkish court for those I sued. And I still have no answer. (Boratav, interview, 1994, my translation)

As he noted, he never received a response about his case. This was despite clearly being entitled to retirement in Türkiye, evidenced from his ability to receive a reduced salary (*açık maaşı*), as shown in his correspondence with his wife.

To understand the attacks against Boratav and contextualise his thinking, I illuminate two important episodes from the 1930s, which I briefly alluded to earlier. When Boratav returned to Türkiye from Germany, he became an assistant to Köprülü at Darülfünûn in 1931–1932. Boratav noted, however, that their close relationship ended because of ideological differences:

> Then, in the university there was another event. There was Zeki Velidi [Togan] […] a professor of history. He declared ideas that were contradictory to Atatürk's History Thesis, and he was dismissed from the university. Even though we were not his students, we attended his classes. We protested his dismissal from the university, and, in a telegram to the university administration, we said that we were proud of being his students. Köprülü could not defend me, and he recommended that I leave the university. After that I was appointed to Konya Lisesi as a Turkish literature teacher between 1932 and 1936. (Boratav 1994, interview, my translation)

This incident involves Zeki Velidi [Togan], who contested a viewpoint presented by Reşit Galip [Baydur] at the 1932 Turkish History Congress, rejecting Galip's idea that Central Asia was once a prehistoric lake. Finding this assertion implausible, Togan

> continued to hold them during his time in Germany in 1936. He further stated that Boratav had been warned by several prominent Turanists of the period, whom he apparently ignored, leading to a formal complaint being lodged and then to his recall to Türkiye by Reşat Şemsettin (Sirer), who was at the time was the student inspector at the Ministry of Education.

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criticised the Turkish History Thesis and offered ideas from Wilhelm Barthold (1869–1930), an important Turkologist of the time. It should also be noted that Mehmed Fuad [Köprülü] was an active member of a group of scholars who formulated the Turkish History Thesis and was among the directors of the Anthropology Institute established in 1925 (Birkalan-Gedik 2018, 57), whose members supported the thesis. Targeted as the 'enemy' of the thesis, Togan resigned from his post on July 14, 1932, leaving Türkiye for Germany and returning in 1939.

In 1936, Boratav received a state scholarship for Germany, planning to develop a solid foundation in the German language and then turn to the study of folklore and ethnography. Pertev Boratav registered on 25 October 1936 with *Matrikelnummer* (matriculation number) 1051/125 at the *Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität* (later the *Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin*). He is also listed as *Beamter* (civil servant) from Istanbul University on the *Ausländerliste* ('foreign student list') from 1 June 1937 (in file RZ 507/64037) in the records of the *Auswärtiges Amt* (German Federal Foreign Office).

Accompanying him, Boratav's wife Hayrünnisa attended language courses in German, which later enabled her to teach it to high school students upon her return to Türkiye. Boratav's stay in Germany was interrupted following a discussion with other Turkish students, in which he expressed no interest in Hitler's racist philosophy. This angered extreme nationalists, who then sought favour from the nationalists in Türkiye who supported such racism. According to Boratav, it was a few Turkish students, who worked with Turkish nationalists in Türkiye, twisting Boratav's words, reporting him to the unsympathetic student inspector Reşat Şemsettin Sirer and leading to an interruption in Boratav's stay (see Çetik 1998, 50–59). Boratav recalled this episode:

> In a conversation among friends, I criticised Nazism and declared my liberal ideas. After this incident, they recalled me without any notice, without informing me beforehand, without telling me anything. What did I do? Had they told me, I would have written a letter of defence and submitted it. Besides, there were Germans who really did not like the ideology of Hitler, either. (Boratav, interview 1994, my translation)

With no other investigation, a report was issued calling for Boratav's recall, arguing that his stay in Germany could provide no further benefit for Türkiye and, if extended, could damage relations between the Turkish and German governments. Understanding that this report would also feed the suspicions of Turkish intellectuals who clung to the nationalist philosophy of Germany regarding communism, Boratav returned to Türkiye in 1937.

Reşat Şemsettin Sirer, the source of the accusations, also maintained that Boratav espoused ideologies which were antithetical to the understanding of Turkish nationalism. In fact, Sirer took an active role in the process and accused Boratav and his friends of creating polarisation among students. In a conversation with Hayrünnisa Boratav, Sirer even suggested that they acknowledge the accusations and 'guaranteed' that Boratav would be 'acquitted' after this confession (Boratav, interview 1994). Boratav's answer was an unequivocal 'No.' Unable to convince them to accept his proposal, Sirer turned to rumour-mongering, claiming that Boratav and his wife were communists, as could clearly be seen from the fact that she wore a red coat! Upon hearing such rumours, Hayrünnisa Boratav, who had remained in Germany after her

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husband had left, immediately returned to Türkiye as well (for a detailed account, see Birkalan-Gedik 2025c).

When Boratav returned Türkiye, he could find no job. Experiencing some anxiety, he submitted an appeal to the Ministry of Education regarding the episode with Sirer. While waiting for a response, he worked as a librarian at the Mülkiye Mektebi ('School of Political Studies'). During that period, Boratav published several articles that countered racist nationalism. The journals where they appeared – *Yurt ve Dünya* ('Home and the World'), *Adımlar* ('Steps'), *Görüşler* ('Views') and *Ülkü* – were published by a small academic circle in Ankara that sought to advance universal values and defended peace, equality, and science. But the group was targeted by Turkist-Turanist groups (Çetik 2019; Ağdur-Gevrek 1998), who labelled Boratav and his colleagues 'communist'.

Folklore and competing nationalisms

Throughout the late Ottoman and early Republican periods, folklore was not merely a subject of cultural interest but a key ideological battleground. The search for an 'authentic' national identity often relied on folklore as evidence of a shared past, leading to its instrumentalisation by various nationalist movements. Competing nationalist ideologies – ranging from Turkic pan-nationalism to Anatolian humanism – shaped the ways in which folklore was collected, studied, and interpreted.

As the Boratav case illustrates, folklore discourse has immense potential for political instrumentalisation to legitimise nationalism (Birkalan-Gedik 2024a). Several common features can be identified between the two, as the search for 'the people' and their authentic voice has been at the centre of political, social, and cultural settings since the nineteenth century (Anderson 1985; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Hobsbawm 1990; Smith 1971). Timothy Baycroft, notes that "folklore often constituted one of the key elements of national identities, a distinguishing feature of a group of people which could be identified as a nation through their folkloric cultural practices, stories, traditions, dwellings, songs, music, costume, dialect, cuisine, etc (Baycroft 2012, 1). Based on these perceptions, certain scholars of romantic nationalism (Abrahams 1992; Bendix 1998) were interested in identifying, classifying, and presenting folklore in diverse institutional settings. Folklore activities developed in learned societies and patriotic or scholarly organisations dealing with national culture long before academic professionalisation took effect, as intellectual, social, and political processes defined the constituents and confines of the discipline (Rogan 2012, 588).

When the development of folklore in Europe – and elsewhere – is discussed, there is a tendency to make generalisations about nationalism, as though a single narrative of nationalist thought can connect all folklore traditions. On the contrary, there have been competing nationalisms in Türkiye since the 1910s, ranging from Turkishness to Turkic-ness (which peaked in the 1930s), from Kemalist Turkism (which attempted to turn to Western institutions, painting them with 'Turkish values'), and Anatolian nationalism (which claimed the continuity of Anatolian cultures), which Atatürk himself pursued and promoted (Birkalan-Gedik, 2025).

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Turkish nationalism: From the 1910s to the 1950s

From the earlier days, the development of folklore in Türkiye paralleled its European counterparts. As in Europe, folklore in Türkiye developed out of romantic nationalism, which later made its way into the Turkish context. Folklorists (Öztürkmen 2005; Birkalan 1995; 2001; Başgöz 1972) showed that Turkish nationalism during the fall of the Ottoman Empire profoundly influenced the conception, practice, and institutionalization of folklore in Türkiye. The intersection between nationalism and the institutionalization of folklore outside academia, however, remains somewhat under-researched. Turkish nationalism was not a monolithic movement, and it revealed ideological divisions, personal tensions, and factionalisms (Öztürkmen 2020, 141). Different factions shaped folklore studies in distinct ways. Kemalist nationalism sought to modernize and westernize Turkish identity through state institutions, while Turkist-Turanist nationalism promoted a racialized, pan-Turkic vision. Meanwhile, Anatolian nationalism (advocated by some Kemalist intellectuals) emphasized the cultural continuity of Anatolian civilizations, and Kadrocu Kemalism framed nationalism in economic-statist terms. These competing nationalist ideologies directly impacted how folklore was defined, collected, and institutionalized.

At the twilight of the Ottoman Empire, roughly in the 1910s, the Young Turks vehemently spread the Turkish nationalist thinking promulgated by the intelligentsia, helping form folklore scholarship. The Ottoman understanding of 'folk' can best be understood as it pertains to the German understanding of the relationship between language and the *Volk*; this was epitomized in the thinking of Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), who proclaimed that the spirit of nation was the spirit of language – the *Sprachgeist* – which is best expressed in the national language.[11] In a similar vein, several Ottoman poets and novelists underlined that the real values of the nation could be found only among folk, and started collecting oral genres, such as proverbs, to delineate the true character of the people. In this context, the idea of 'folk' was synonymous with the term 'Turkish' and the nation. *Halk* can be translated as 'folk', and *millet* could be translated as 'nation', both of which were imagined as homogeneously forming the backbone of folklore-collecting efforts in the Ottoman Empire (Birkalan 2000; Birkalan-Gedik 2025a).

These interests and ideological stances need to be contextualized vis-à-vis nineteenth-century concerns with 'national identity', which started to crystallize in the Ottoman Empire as differentiating ideologies which could save it from decline. The political developments of Western Europe, such as nationalism, had already impacted ethnic groups. With the outbreak of World War I, Ottoman subjects soon started to emigrate from the Empire. Pan-Turkism, aiming for cultural unification of the Oghuz peoples (i.e. Turks of modern Türkiye, Turkmens, and Azeris), emerged in the late nineteenth century and gained popularity at the beginning of the twentieth among Turkic intellectuals. Pan-Turanism promoted the unity of Central Asian populations, including Turks but also Hungarians and Finns.

11. Herder underscored that lay language, or the *Sprache des Volkes* ('the language of the people') could lay strong foundations for the German nation. He furthermore articulated that in the primitive stage of the *Volk*, art, history, and language were dissolved into fine particles, all manifesting crucial characteristics of the nation.

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In the 1920s, the Turkish state introduced a research programme to revive the Central Asian roots of Anatolian folklore through associations and learned societies (Öztürkmen 1993; Birkalan-Gedik 1995). The Halk Bilgisi Derneği (Folklore Association), which was active between 1927 and 1932, functioned as the leading institution and collected folklore material (Öztürkmen 1993, 89). 'Kemalism', an amalgam of nationalism, secularism, positivist political theory, and nineteenth-century scientism for a united Türkiye, dominated the early republican period and was used in opposition to Ottoman pluralism. The cultural and political elite of the new republic regarded the idea of a pluralist society as incompatible with the nationalist ideals of the Turkish nation-state and emphasized a pragmatic, territory-based ideology. Even so, support for the Republic of Türkiye in the 1920s was neither presumptuous nor unquestionable. The republican elite negotiated its ideology and took harsh measures against non-Turkish, non-Muslim populations, leading to discontent and uprisings (Lamprou 2015, 29).

The 1930s were quite different from earlier decades when romantic nationalism triggered interest and paved the way for folklore studies. In fact, in the 1930s, not only did racist nationalism compete with romantic nationalism, but these different visions of nationalism served to justify two different disciplines: folklore was coloured with humanism and the anthropological narrative followed a trajectory that highlighted a biological assumption of the nation. Anthropologists contributed to this by institutionalizing anthropology in 1925 as a part of nation-building in the country (Birkalan-Gedik 2018; 2025). In the 1930s, the Turkish history thesis promulgated by historians, anthropologists, and medical doctors sought a biological basis for the nation (Birkalan-Gedik 2018; 2021; 2025; Çağaptay 2004). This was strengthened by the Sun Language Theory, which argued that world languages stem from proto-Turkish, reinforcing Turkish ethno-nationalism (Birkalan-Gedik 2018, 58; Ergin 2016; Kieser 2006, 110; Eissenstat 2005).

The *Türk Ocakları* (Turkish Hearths), which closed in 1931, were replaced by People's Houses in 1932 as the semi-official cultural organs of the single-rule Republican People's Party (RPP), which offered widespread, practical adult education as well as services such as libraries and publishing. Aiming to modernize and westernize the new Turkish state, the People's Houses brought together villagers and the republican elite and produced collaborative knowledge. Pertev Naili Boratav and his students documented local folklore and collaborated with villagers. His understanding of folklore was influenced by humanism, as he was opposed to the ruling nationalism that saw 'race' as the basis for Turkishness (Birkalan 1995; 2001).

The 1930s depression destabilized the Turkish economy and made implementation of private industry impossible (Karpat 1959, 80–86). In the same decade, the RPP tried to adopt an economic policy with statism envisioned as a means of implementation. From the 1930s onwards, the state's participation in the economy gradually expanded. However, the creation of state monopolies – especially in sugar, tobacco, salt, and shipping – created discontent. A new bourgeoisie emerged due to fast accumulation of money from the peasants, while personal advantages secured by party members also created resentment among the people (Karpat 1959, 64). Meanwhile, to address growing economic discontent, a new political party – *Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası* (Liberal Party) – was formed in 1930 as a response to the dissatisfaction with the ruling party. Some scholars argued that the creation of this party was intended as a strategic

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move to manage the flaws and dissatisfaction within the existing political structure. However, tensions between the two parties soon escalated, leading to the resignation of the party leader at the request of Atatürk (Karpat 1959, 65).

The turbulent 1930s–1940s were the most authoritarian phase of the Republic of Türkiye. Türkiye's democratization underwent painful development: the nationalist basis for the founding of the state in the 1920s gave way to other stances, which were in conflict and had to be negotiated. Both right-wing and leftist folklorists drew on vernacular culture to bolster their claims; the same folklore material could be called *milli kültür* ('national culture') when used symbolically by right-wing intellectuals and *halk kültürü* ('people's culture/folk culture') when invoked by leftists (Öztürkmen 2020).

Ertan Aydın differentiates between the nationalist groups in this period as the 'Kadrocu Kemalists' ('Conservative Modernist' Kemalists) and the Kemalists following the *Ülkü* version of nationalism. He also emphasizes that 'their competition over the definition of the ideology of the revolution had much to do with the semiotic struggle over who would represent the "will" of the people and the struggle over who would control the revolutionary language and the political game' (Aydın 2004, 61). The Kadrocu Kemalists, who regarded economic development as their ideological core and believed that they were the vanguards of the Turkish revolution, published between January 1932 and December 1934 a journal called *Kadro* ('Cadre') (Aydın 2004, 61). Those aligned with the People's Houses were identified as leftist and belonging to a faction in competition with conservative modernist Kemalism, which brought together modernist and secular aspects. The *Ülkü* version of nationalism also describes the story of the Kemalism of the 1930s, which became the official form of nationalism (Aydın 2004, 76). As this brief sketch of different nationalist stances illustrates, there were often negotiations over the term 'nationalism' and whom it better represented. Boratav contributed to a series of journals with articles on folklore and on peasants, and the role of the republican revolution in general, in the journal *Ülkü*, which was active between 1933 and 1950 and published by the People's Houses' Ankara branch. Another journal, *Yurt ve Dünya* ('Home and the world'), was published under the conditions of World War II, between 1941 and 1944, and also intellectuals from the Ankara circle contributed to it.

Nationalisms in Türkiye and World War II: Shifting dynamics

In addition to the internal fractions outlined above, Atatürk's death in 1938 should be noted as a critical event that created political instability in the country, compounded by the outbreak of World War II in 1939, which brought important challenges to Turkish politics. For the most part, Türkiye remained neutral during World War II. While it actually declared war on Nazi Germany and the Empire of Japan early in 1945 (Zürcher 2017, 207), this remained mostly at a symbolic level. In the 1930s and 1940s, Germany backed the Turkist expansion in Türkiye, aiming to counter the Soviet Union due to Turkic populations there, and even providing funds for the revival of pan-Turkism (Mumcu 1990, 10). While racialised nationalist thought had been in circulation in the Ottoman Empire since the 1870s, Nazism gained supporters after the foundation of the republic, among Turkist-Turanists in the 1930s (Birkalan-Gedik

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2018; 2021a). The two countries signed a pact of friendship in June 1941, and the alliance was strengthened by deteriorating Turkish-Soviet relations.

Between 1939 and 1944, although the RPP (the ruling party then) tried to avoid taking sides in the war, the rising right wing within the party lent support to Turkish nationalism. In particular, the Turkist movement, which had been criticised by the party since the 1930s, re-emerged in this domestically and internationally chaotic environment. Condemned by the RPP government as risky, the Turkist movement had kept a low profile between 1931 and 1938, but in the late 1930s and early 1940s it had its apogee. Events were used antagonistically against certain politicians in the RPP government who allegedly supported communism (Çetik 1998).

After World War II, Türkiye's access to the Black Sea via the Turkish Straits made it central to Cold War geopolitics. Türkiye became an important ally of the US and also probed multiparty politics. As a beneficiary of Truman Doctrine aid (1947) from the United States in return for democratisation and a liberal economy, the regime that had ruled Türkiye since World War II voluntarily accommodated bourgeois democracy and introduced multiparty elections (Williams 2019). During the Cold War, Türkiye's strategic alliance with the US against communism-influenced cultural policies aligned folklore studies with nationalist ideologies to counter perceived leftist threats. Türkiye also tried to prove that it was anti-communist. As communism in this era was used to create great fear, it was seen as 'justifiable' grounds for a witch hunt against a certain group of scholars. By way of triangulation, the lecturers at Ankara University were scapegoated to prove Türkiye's so-called 'anti-communist' claims. Evoked in Boratav's trial was his clear anti-Nazi stance, which had become an issue during his stay in Germany.

In 1945, the RPP underwent a fundamental political change. On 7 June 1945, the *Dörtlü Takrir* ('Proposal of the Four') was submitted to the party by opposing politicians. The proposal underlined the inflated cost of living, lack of freedom, and undemocratic governance, blaming the RPP for the nation's shortcomings. When a committee meeting on 12 June 1945 voted to reject it, the opposition resigned from the RPP to form the *Demokrat Parti* (DP, 'Democratic Party') on 7 January 1946. In the beginning, the RPP welcomed this new party, but in the following months, as the DP became more popular, tensions grew. The DP criticised RPP policies (Başgöz 2017), which was partly directed to the People's Houses and *Köy Enstitüleri* ('Village Institutes'), two important cultural political organs of the RPP, where laypeople, villagers, folklorists, and the republican elite collaborated. The People's Houses were charged with bringing in cultural aspects of Turkish nationalism and Western civilisation through adult education, mingled with 'a set of novelties such as sports, cinema and theatre, Western music concerts and dance parties, and similar activities' (Lamprou 2015, 2). The DP employed populist approaches towards the 'folk' and used them for political leverage, and it closed the Village Institutes in 1947 (Karaömerlioğlu 1998, 68–69). The right-wing politicians disapproved of the activities of People's Houses and Village Institutions and promoted anti-communist hysteria (Karaömerlioğlu 1998, 48). The DP also propagated that the People's Houses publicised communist ideas (Başgöz 2017). When all efforts to close the People's Houses failed, the DP confiscated the buildings that belonged to the Halk Evleri in 1951, thus hindering their activities (Akyol 1996; Başgöz 2017).

Many academic and semi-academic journals articulated their discontent with political life in Türkiye, which was subject to both internal and external pressures.

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Particularly the publications *Vatan* ('Homeland') and *Tan* ('Dawn') concentrated on democratising efforts in their publications and emphasised the importance of free-thinking liberalism (Karpat 1959, 147).[12] As mentioned earlier, academic and semi-academic journals became the target of hostile demonstrations. To counter the leftist threat, the right wing attempted to impose their ideology on the press to install uniform thinking. Anything that did not conform to the dictates of extreme nationalism was labelled communist. As a result of the rising power of the right wing, on 7 August 1946, the former student inspector Reşat Şemsettin Sirer replaced Hasan Ali Yücel, the minister of education who supported the People's Houses.

Meanwhile folklorists who identified with republican ideals saw these institutions as the embodiment of 'Kemalist peasantism', a standpoint which essentialised the peasantry as the backbone of the nation. Kemalist peasantism was, on the one hand, rooted in a romantic ideal of the peasant similar to the category of 'noble savage', while on the other hand, it took peasants as objects to be developed (Birkalan-Gedik 2013). As Yıldırmaz has shown (2017), peasantism meant idealising the concept by underlining its labour in relation to production and the army. At the same time, urbanisation policies of the single-party regime maintained a strict separation between urban and rural areas, with the term *köylü* ('peasant, villager') serving as a distinct working category. In contrast, the DP sought to bridge this divide by implementing policies that promoted rural development and increased political representation for villagers, thereby integrating them more closely with urban centres. The DP adopted a more lenient stance on religious expression, relaxing some of the strict secularist policies of the previous regime, which resonated with the rural populace's conservative and religious values.

I will be tackling the changing visions on the 'folk' in the next pages; however, for the time being, it could be argued that intellectuals – depending on their nationalist convictions, be they leftist or right-wing ideologies – formed their discourse from a repository of nationalist symbolism. The authors actually saw working with and for the folk as a part of their intellectual responsibility; they were working together at the Village Institutes and in the People's Houses. Therefore, the boundaries between the stance taken towards the folk by the so-called left and the so-called right, in that sense, also had commonalities. A great distinction was that the leftist intellectuals were for inclusion and eliminating class differences, collaborating with the villagers. The relationship between the left and villagers assumed that the cultural elite would learn from villagers and vice versa. Nationalism mixed with a Marxist vision gave the elite a chance to elevate the status of the folk.

The 1950s can be characterised in terms of a divergence of political views that stemmed from the single ruling party but also liberalism, which was brought about by the DP's increasing religious sentiment among people using populist ideas. Under the DP, failed agricultural reforms led to rural–urban migration; villagers did not have enough sustenance in their homeland and started migrating to the metropoles near their villages, and then to larger metropoles like Istanbul and Europe more broadly, to find work. By the 1950s, romanticism – one of the grounding epistemic forces of folklore – may have been experiencing its demise in Türkiye, but the framework of

12. The memoirs of Sabiha Sertel, the editor of the journal *Görüşler*, give important insights on *Roman Gibi* [Like a Novel]. (Istanbul: Ant Yayınları, 1969), particularly on pages 189–196.

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nationalism remained, and the national discipline became even more nationally confined.

The so-called left- and right-wing responses and their distinguishing features in Türkiye have been relatively well discussed. But how these different nationalisms impacted the study of the country's folklore (including and excluding certain groups, for example) in detail has received little attention. Rather than calling the right wing 'nationalist' and the left 'socialist', I suggest that we need to move beyond these categories and aim to understand what competing nationalisms entailed at various times. Certainly, these events stand as vital sources for writing the history of folklore and of ethnological disciplines in Türkiye at large. The case of Pertev Naili Boratav thus offers a pretext to discuss the more rooted political practices of despotism and autocracy in Türkiye.

Implications of the Cold War in Folklore Studies in Türkiye: Nationalisms and the changing meaning of 'Folk' in the Post-1950s

While folklore studies and research became less nationally focused in parts of post-war Europe, they grew even more nationally confined in Türkiye, as political agendas made new, consolidated claims. In the romantic nationalist vision, 'folk' symbolised an entity between the concept of 'nation' and 'people', embracing villagers – the *köylü* (Birkalan 2001) – an entity seen not only as *admirable* but also as subjects to be *modernised* (emphasis added). The idea of *halk* sprang from nationalist interests and carried a meaning similar to the German *Volk*, being at once 'the nation', 'the population', or 'rural people' (Kaya 2017; Ekici 1999; Çobanoğlu 2001; Birkalan 1995; 2000; 2001), as represented by the Kemalist elite in the earlier days of the Turkish Republic.

However, the multi-party era brought a shift, as the DP promoted political populism, which contrasted with the intellectual populism of the preceding RPP (Toprak 1992). This political shift marked Türkiye's transition from single-party rule to a multi-party democracy, fundamentally altering cultural policies. The RPP promoted a secular, nationalist identity aimed at modernising the country, while the DP embraced political populism, appealing to rural and religious identities. This shift not only impacted public cultural expressions but also influenced academic folklore studies by aligning research agendas with new political narratives. In the 1950s, the concept of 'folk' became paradoxically flexible, resonating with folklorists, bureaucrats, politicians, and civil society alike, due to its alignment with the DP's populist agenda. This political populism not only redefined the cultural identity of 'folk' but also influenced academic folklore studies in the next decades by steering research agendas towards themes that supported the DP's ideological narratives. Yıldırmaz (2017) observes that during this period, political parties recognised the need to engage rural communities, transforming peasants from passive subjects into active political actors. This newfound visibility played a crucial role in the DP's victory in Türkiye's first free election in 1950.

During this time, religion also re-emerged in public spaces, further shaping the notion of 'folk' as a representation of the 'populus', embodying both popularity and public identity.

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This transformation reflects the strategic use of 'folk' as a political category within the DP's ideological framework. Intellectual populism under the RPP aimed to modernise the nation through secular, state-led cultural education, whereas political populism under the DP embraced rural and religious identities, redefining 'folk' in order to garner electoral support. This ideological shift influenced public cultural practices but also academic narratives within folklore studies. The folk were conceptualised not only as the 'producers' of folklore but also as its 'audience' and 'consumers', influencing the evolving functions and values of folklore knowledge. The DP's populist approach allowed rural communities to practise religion more freely, even if their practices did not align with republican secularism (Öztürkmen 1993, 260). Additionally, the blending of nationalist views on folklore with the DP's liberal policies created a highly marketable, commercially lucrative, and performatively adaptable format for folklore activities.

In this context, the term 'folk culture' (*halk kültürü*) became popular in Turkish folklore research, encompassing a broad range of cultural practices. This shift parallels trends observed in some European countries, where folk culture was increasingly viewed as a resource (Slavec-Gradišnik 2010; Kuhn 2016). Slavec-Gradišnik notes that from the twentieth century onwards, folk culture in Slovenia became a valuable cultural heritage resource, being adaptable to national, regional, and local contexts, and commercialised as an economic asset (Slavec-Gradišnik 2010, 134, 139). Similarly, Kuhn (2016) illustrates how Swiss folklore studies (*Volkskunde*) shaped the image of Alpine folk culture, influencing public debate and cultural policies, including UNESCO's intangible heritage listings. This brief comparison highlights how 'folk culture' has been strategically used as a cultural resource in both academic and public spheres, influencing identity constructions and cultural policies. In Türkiye, 'folk culture' became integral to the names of emerging folklore associations, signifying a diverse knowledge milieu involving laypeople, professionals, academics, and the folk themselves. As state-regulated definitions of 'folklore' became synonymous with folk dancing (Öztürkmen 2002; Çobanoğlu 2001), some scholars and practitioners argued that shifting terminologies caused misunderstandings, as 'folk culture' better captured the broad spectrum of cultural practices. In summary, the shifting political landscape of the 1950s redefined the concept of 'folk' from a romantic nationalist ideal to a more politically instrumentalised category, reflecting broader changes in Türkiye's cultural policies.

Conclusion: Nationalisms in comparison or unparalleled disciplinary histories?

In several national ethnological traditions in post-war Europe, new epistemologies and theories were discussed and new disciplinary identities were sought. Especially in Germany, trajectories of folklore in the post-1950s focused on coming to terms with the detrimental effects of World War II and the past of *Volkskunde*, with its *völkisch* effects. In the case of the US, a different disciplinary self-reflection can also be found, whereby terms such as tradition, canon, and genre became prominent as the discipline was academised in 1963. Richard Dorson referred to an emerging group of folklorists

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as 'Young Turks', highlighting their approach with new contextual, anthropological, and interdisciplinary perspectives rooted in politics, signalling a turn to everyday life to understand folklore in modern contexts (Birkalan-Gedik 2021b). As a part of the 'paradigm shift', folklorists situated the discipline within contextual, anthropological, and interdisciplinary perspectives that were rooted in politics and freed the history-bounded meanings of folklore, especially when Dan Ben-Amos (1971) defined folklore as 'artistic communication in small groups'. These re-orientations signify processes of social liberalisation and mark a critical turn in the history of folklore.

But all these developments fall short of explaining why folklore remained indissolubly a national and nationalist endeavour and how it was oriented to the emergent neoliberal, economic, and political elements in Türkiye. They do not explain why after Boratav no debate about the *völkisch* effects took place at a time of evolving meanings of 'folk'. Although some scholars of the intellectual history of Türkiye have tackled the defence of Boratav (Çetik 2019) and evaluated the case of Boratav and nationalism (Öztürkmen 1995, 2005; Birkalan 1995, 2001), there has been no retrospection on the topic at large.

Though Pertev Naili Boratav received distinguished awards from the Ministry of Culture in 1993 (as a result of the RPP's power in government), it came as personal recognition, not as an apology for systematic political failures (Birkalan 1995). Çetik (2019) has posited that Boratav's political thinking was not free from nationalism and that it evolved from nationalism to socialism, which stands in stark contrast to the arguments that Boratav was trying to 'de-nationalise' folklore studies (Birkalan 1995; 2001; Öztürkmen 1995). However, in this context, I characterise de-nationalisation as intertwined endeavours comprised of three features. First, although Boratav did not refrain from studying 'national forms', he approached the concept of 'folk' through the lens of class awareness. Secondly, his perspective was rooted in a more humanistic view, emphasising folklore forms prevalent in Anatolia as a cradle with rich and diverse cultural traditions. By focusing on Anatolia, Boratav highlighted the region's cultural diversity and social complexity, challenging the racialised interpretations of national folklore promoted by Turkist-Turanist nationalists. His emphasis on Anatolia allowed him to move away from and oppose the ethnocentric and racially exclusive narratives of folklore. Thirdly, as he made clear in his defence, he consistently distanced himself from the racist ideologies associated with Turkist-Turanist nationalism. In short, Boratav faced political persecution for his interpretations of nationalism that challenged the dominant narratives of the time.

Concluding without a definitive narrative, I invite ongoing discourse. A key question arises: how do 'national', 'nationalism', and 'nationalistic' interplay, each in its distinct realm? In this regard, a thorough exploration of their roles, functions, and connotations is essential. As observed, diverse nationalist manifestations exist across nations, akin to various story versions, each vying for hegemony. This invites scrutiny and contemplation and encourages enriched dialogues. The evolving story of folklore and nationalism beckons us to delve deeper, fostering a broader comprehension of its intricate layers.

For instance, the German case laid the groundwork for criticism, challenging the assumption that a primordial collective serves as the bearer of an authentic and inherently 'better' culture. This assumption underpins various toxic ideologies, including nationalism, racism, and white supremacism. To fully grasp the relationship

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between folklore and nationalism, we must examine how these connections manifest across different traditions, mapping their variations before attempting to understand their implications. At the same time, we must remain aware of the persistent threat to our discipline posed by the 'phantoms of romantic nationalism' (Abrahams 1993). On another level, we need to ask why folklore has relied on nationalism not just as an epistemic source but also as a theoretical framework. In this light, I invite our colleagues to reconsider *Theoriemangel*, a term I borrow from Hermann Bausinger (1969). Does the 'lack of theory' foster a cycle in which weak theoretical foundations fuel nationalism, and nationalism, in turn, weakens theory? In other words, do weak theory and strong nationalism reinforce each other?

The second plea is to think about the following questions: Is it acceptable that folklore at face value is a 'national' discipline and can be practised through a nationalist lens? Should we perhaps discern between 'nationalist' and 'national', in the fashion that, for example, we speak of 'national ethnologies'? To take this a bit further, does the term 'European ethnology' solve the problem of nationalism or does European ethnology imply a 'supranational' identity for folklore studies that can avoid nationalism? While I cannot delve into these questions here, it is clear that we need disciplinary narratives to de-centre and de-colonise with a more radical lens the narratives of already told traditions.

Lastly, by dwelling on what I term 'epistemic myopia', I tried to underline that folklore historians should break the complex historical narratives in that history to de-colonise long-standing hegemonic narratives. The Turkish case in the post-1950s shows that 'marginalised' traditions seldom found a place in European disciplinary development, mostly because of assumed historical and disciplinary commonalities in European ethnology. This ethnocentric bias, deriving from the mistaken imagination of a geopolitical entity and a certain hegemonic narrative, has ignored the interactions among several folklore traditions. For folklorists, anthropologists, and ethnologists, it is crucial to challenge these categories in order to de-colonise the historiography of the discipline as we break with earlier treatments.

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Between Science and Repression

The Intellectual Circle of the Ethnologist Milovan Gavazzi and Croatian Ethnology in the Period from 1945 to 1955

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Introduction: topic, starting points and research questions

The subject of this chapter is the intellectual circle of ethnologist Milovan Gavazzi and his influence on the development and shaping of Croatian post-war ethnology in the period from 1945 to 1955. Although this topic has been written about in passing, to date it has not been systematically problematised in the history of Croatian ethnology (Rihtman-Auguštin 1997, 83–93; Belaj 1998a, 355–356; Čapo 1999, 42–44). In this chapter, we are therefore trying to problematise the question of why, even though there were objective preconditions for a series of qualitative theoretical-methodological changes to occur, they were absent within Croatian ethnology in the period after the Second World War.

The period covered by the research coincides with significant political, social, and cultural changes within socialist Yugoslavia, which occurred after the end of the Second World War (see Radelić 2006; Goldstein 2008). Following the Soviet model of socialism, the new government sought to introduce a series of changes in education and science through legislation, ideologisation, and politicisation. This provided the ruling regime with an ideal opportunity to introduce the Marxist paradigm into the scientific discourse. Despite the pressures, significant qualitative changes in theoretical and methodological terms did not occur in Croatian ethnological science until the beginning of the 1970s. In that period, qualitative theoretical and methodological changes took place in most social and humanistic disciplines in Croatia and Yugoslavia, stimulated by changed political and social circumstances. Croatian ethnology thus shows disciplinary specificity in relation to some social and humanistic disciplines, which in the period of socialism in Croatia went through theoretical and methodological (re)shaping. In this sense, it is possible to observe disciplinary continuity between the interwar and postwar periods.

The chapter's central thesis is that significant changes in the functioning of Croatian ethnological science did not occur at the critical moment of the positioning of the new regime after the end of the Second World War. From 1945 to 1955, therefore, two essential preconditions were not fulfilled. The dominant culture-historical paradigm

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had not yet gone through an inherent research crisis as an explanatory model. Furthermore, there was no affirmation of new ethnological centres and the creation of a critical mass of bearers of new theoretical and methodological approaches that would compete with the dominant model. The reason for this was the fact that in this period, the communist regime did not succeed in gaining control over the traditional places of scientific and educational formation of the ethnologists, or in creating alternative institutions that would compete with them. After the Second World War, despite politicisation and various forms of repression, scientists connected with the intellectual circle of ethnologist Milovan Gavazzi, a central figure of older Croatian ethnology, continued to work in them.

Here we focus on two questions: 1) why, after the Second World War, were there no significant changes within the existing institutions related to ethnological science, and 2) what was the role of ethnologist Milovan Gavazzi and his intellectual circle in the development of the profession and maintenance of the status quo? The answers to these questions will be given from the perspective of intellectual history, where we will follow the relations between intellectuals and institutions related to ethnological science and the reception of certain ideas within the profession.[1] We base our work to a greater extent on our research into Milovan Gavazzi's personal archives, which are kept in the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb,[2] and literature in which certain aspects of the history of the profession are touched upon in this period (Petrović Leš 2018; Grkeš 2020; Grkeš and Petrović Leš 2022; 2023).

The chapter is structured into three parts. In the first part, we present basic information about Milovan Gavazzi's professional and intellectual activities and present his intellectual circle. In the second part, we focus on the question of why there were no significant changes within the institutions related to ethnological science after the Second World War, while in the third part, we consider the influence of Milovan Gavazzi and his intellectual circle in maintaining research continuity in the post-war period.

Milovan Gavazzi: The central figure of older Croatian ethnology

To comprehend the intellectual circle of Milovan Gavazzi, it is necessary to briefly outline his scientific and intellectual formation. Milovan Gavazzi (1895–1992) was a

1. We ground our research by considering newer approaches in the history of ethnology and cultural anthropology that focus on problems such as the transfer and reception of ideas among intellectuals; special attention is paid to the relations between central figures and other professional stakeholders, analyses of the intellectual circles within which certain ethnologists/anthropologists move, etc. In general, an attempt is made to go beyond the classical approach with a focus on the events and biography of the central figures of cultural anthropology. For more information, see Darnell and Gleach 2021; Delgado Rosa and Vermeulen 2022; Darnell 2022; D'Agostino and Metera 2023.
2. The correspondence consists of 11,900 letters with 1,358 correspondents (Stipančević 2005). Since Gavazzi corresponded with numerous domestic and foreign scientists, the correspondence includes many letters in English, German, Italian, French, Czech, Slovak, and Russian.

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central figure of Croatian cultural historical ethnology.[3] At the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Zagreb, he studied philosophy and Croatian studies (which, at the time, were closely linked to Slavic studies). He received his doctorate in 1919 with a topic in the field of ethnomusicology called 'Rhythm of Croatian Folk Songs' (Belaj 1998b). After completing his studies, he was briefly employed as a professor at Zagreb's Male Teachers School and Donjograd High School, and from 1922 to 1927 he worked as a curator at the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb (Šestan 1995, 1). As a museum curator, he started to publish his first ethnographic papers in the Croatian interdisciplinary journal *Narodna starina* ('Folk Antiquity').[4]

He continued his professional development in 1918 and 1925 in Poland and Czechoslovakia. In 1918 in Prague, he met the Czech archaeologist and Slavic comparative ethnologist Lubor Niederle (1865–1944), who influenced his scientific formation (Belaj 1992, 203). He came to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb in 1927 as an associate professor, where he worked actively until his retirement in 1965. After that, he continued to teach part-time at graduate and doctoral levels in ethnology (Belaj 1996, 11).

Gavazzi came to the then-Chair of Ethnology and Ethnography, which was founded in 1925, to replace the ethnographer and folklorist Petar Bulat (1899–1945), who held that position for only three semesters, after which he retired and lectures were not held until 1927 (see Petrović Leš 2012; Belaj 1998, 353). After arriving at the Faculty of Philosophy, which would soon in 1926 change its name to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, he (re-)organised the study of ethnology.

Within the framework of the Ethnological seminar, he developed comprehensive scientific, publishing, and collecting activities. He introduced lectures on the history of ethnology, as well as non-European and European ethnography (mainly South Slavic). The curriculum included auxiliary subjects, such as physical anthropology, prehistory and Slavic archaeology, dialectology, and ethnological musicology (Belaj 1996, 9–10). With this, Gavazzi laid the foundations of ethnological work in Croatia, and generations of Croatian ethnologists were educated under his mentorship.

Milovan Gavazzi is responsible for the affirmation of the cultural historical approach within Croatian ethnology (see Španiček 1996, 105–119). Although it contains many original elements, this approach was an offshoot of the school of culture circles (*Kulturkreise*) of the German ethnologist Fritz Graebner. It was an analytical method based on the reconstruction of cultural history through the analysis of cultural elements of traditional culture (see Gavazzi 1928). Gavazzi tried to encompass Croatian traditional culture in a broader European and South Slavic context in a highly inter- and transdisciplinary way. His approach was based on two types of analysis: *cultural-geographic* (spatial networking of the phenomena under investigation) and *cultural-genetic* (tracing the genesis of cultural phenomena) (Belaj 1998, 353; Gavazzi 1928; 1978).

3. Distrustful of theorising in general, like the entire generation of scientists of that time who had a disdain for their research reflection (Theoriefeindlichkeit), Gavazzi reflected on his scientific habitus and intellectual origins only at the end of his life in 1991 in a short autobiographical article. See Gavazzi [1989] 1996, 23–26.
4. The journal was edited by the cultural historian Josip Matasović. See https://hrcak.srce.hr/narodna-starina.

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The cultural-geographic analysis was based on an attempt to spatially group the analysed cultural phenomena from traditional culture concerning similar or identical features not found in other places. In this sense, Gavazzi singled out three cultural regions in today's Croatia (and altogether 11 in the Yugoslav area): the Pannonian, Dinaric, and Adriatic (Gavazzi 1978, 184–185). The cultural-genetic analysis rested on determining the origin of certain cultural phenomena from the traditional culture. Gavazi determined that Croatian traditional culture was shaped by four cultural layers: Old Slavic, Paleo-Balkan, Turkish-Oriental, and Mediterranean. In this sense, he tried to determine where certain traditional phenomena came from, in what way, and when they came into the Croatian historical territory (Gavazzi 1928, 115–143). The cultural-historical approach that he introduced into Croatian ethnology would gradually be abandoned only in the 1970s, when new research directions penetrated and changes in the understanding of the goals and purpose of ethnological science took place.

Gavazzi dealt with various topics from the field of traditional culture, which can be divided into four groups: (1) the study of common elements of Slavic culture, (2) structures and types of Slavic cooperative families (called *zadruga*), (3) ethnomusicological features of Southeastern Europe, and (4) (Southern) Slavic linguistic heritage (Belaj 1996, 7–18, based on Gavazzi [1989] 1996).

Given all this, it is unsurprising that Gavazzi received several professional recognitions. In 1965, the Branch of the Ethnological Society of Yugoslavia for the Federal Republic of Croatia (today the Croatian Ethnological Society)[5] awarded him the Lifetime Achievement Award. Due to his international reputation and contribution to the preservation of European cultural heritage and the promotion of cultural relations between Central and Eastern European nations, in 1970 the University of Vienna awarded him the Herder Prize. In 1974, he was awarded the 'Istvan Györffy' plaque of the Hungarian Ethnological Society for his scientific work.[6] At the Twelfth Congress of the Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences in Zagreb in 1988, he was awarded a plaque as an ethnologist of world significance (Šestan 1995, 3).

Milovan Gavazzi's professional activity and intellectual engagement in the interwar period

The intellectual circle of ethnologist Milovan Gavazzi was formed in the interwar period (1918–1941). Thanks to his scientific authority, reputation, and political connections, Gavazzi was able to position himself as a central figure of Croatian ethnology.[7] From the late 1920s, he gradually gained influence over the important functions within the profession. For example, he was the head of the Chair of Ethnology and Ethnography (from 1927) and also the president of the examination committee for the staff of all museums in Zagreb. In this manner, he was able to directly influence events within the profession. Together with Branimir Bratanić,

5. On this professional association's first 50 years of activity, see Škrbić Alempijević et al., 2009.
6. See http://neprajzihirek.hu/gyorffy_istvan_emlekerem (last accessed 14.06.2025).
7. Gavazzi's scientific formation and positioning as a central figure of Croatian interwar ethnology is the subject of Ivan Grkeš's doctoral dissertation at the Doctoral Study of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb.

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the first employed assistant for the Chair (1936), he was publicly involved in the organisation of Peasant Festivals (Leček and Petrović Leš 2010, 64). The organiser of the festivals was Seljačka sloga (henceforth Sloga),[8] a cultural organisation of the Croatian Peasant Party, the strongest political party in interwar Croatia and the leader of the Croatian national movement in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. At the same time, Gavazzi was strongly engaged in the professional field (teaching and scientific research) when his most important works were published, which positioned him in relation to both the Kingdom of Yugoslavia's ethnology and the broader European context (see Gavazzi 1928; 1937; 1939; 1940).

Milovan Gavazzi's public engagement reached its peak after the establishment of Banovina Hrvatska (1939–1941), a self-governing region within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia that included a larger part of today's Croatia territory. It was created in 1939 based on a political agreement between Croatian and Serbian parties on the basis of which the so-called 'Croatian question in Yugoslavia' – questions about the status of Croatian territories and the Croatian people in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia – was resolved. Banovina Hrvatska had autonomous powers in legislation, administration, and the judiciary.[9] Soon after the establishment of Banovina Hrvatska from 1939 to 1941, Gavazzi became the director of the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb. He participated in the creation of teaching principles by publishing textbooks for university and high school reformed teaching; later, he became an editor of the ethnological science section for the Croatian encyclopaedia (Leček and Petrović Leš 2010, 64) and was actively engaged in the work of Matica Hrvatska, the oldest Croatian national cultural institution, founded in 1842 (Damjanović 2018).

In 1940, he was given the opportunity to step outside the narrow professional framework by participating in the Great School Reform of Banovina Hrvatska: becoming one of its leaders (Leček and Petrović Leš 2010, 61). With the aforementioned reform, the cultural policy of the Croatian Peasant Party, of which he was a sympathiser, was translated into the school curriculum so that ethnological science gained a prominent place. According to the reform, carried out in 1940, ethnology was introduced as an independent subject in teachers' schools (where it was taught two hours per week in the 4th and 5th grades), while in lower grammar schools it was introduced as part of geography classes (Leček and Petrović Leš 2010, 38). The reform also affected primary school teaching. In the countryside, village teachers were given the task of collecting information about folklife and publishing it in the form of monographs. Such writing became mandatory. City teachers were exempted from research work, but they had to follow the literature and regularly participate in the peasant festivals and take extensive notes about them (Leček and Petrović Leš 2010, 31). Therefore, Gavazzi was involved in various courses in schools and colleges where current and future educators were

8. Sloga was founded in 1925 in Zagreb, and its work included various cultural and educational activities: improvement and promotion of peasant culture, a fight against illiteracy, the foundations of libraries and reading rooms, encouragement of activities of various cultural and artistic societies and organisation of peasant culture fairs, etc. See Leček 2005. Peasant culture fairs were organised as multi-day events where peasant culture was presented (dance and music, folk art, etc.). For more information, see Ceribašić 2003.
9. For more about the *Croatian question in Yugoslavia*, see https://enciklopedija.hr/natuknica.aspx?ID=5743.

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educated about the reform and the application of its central postulates in teaching (e.g. the ethnological engagement of rural teachers).

In addition to his active social and scientific involvement, Gavazzi is remembered in the interwar period for the polemic he publicly led in the newspapers with the then-politically appointed director of the Ethnographic Museum, Ivo Franić. In 1935, the retired director of state railways and pro-regime bureaucrat Ivo T. Franić was appointed director of the Ethnographic Museum (Pletenac 1996, 83; Stipančević 2016). With this, the Yugoslav regime established control over a museum institution that was crucial in shaping the Croatian national identity. As an engaged intellectual, Gavazzi was then involved in a public polemic with Franić related to his management of the museum, which effectively ended in 1939 when Franić was fired and Gavazzi appointed as the new director.[10]

Milovan Gavazzi's intellectual circle and network

Because of his various engagements within the profession, Gavazzi acquired a particular network of domestic and foreign scientists and intellectuals, with whom he remained in contact throughout his life. That circle narrowed and expanded over time, depending on different life and professional circumstances. In the interwar period, Gavazzi built an intellectual circle of various experts, often from related disciplines, with whom he shared an intellectual habitus, views on science, and political ideas. He worked closely with most of them in various fields. Because the intellectual community in the interwar period was relatively small, Gavazzi's intellectual circle at that time was heterogeneous. Important places in this circle were occupied by art historian Vladimir Tkalčić, cultural historian Josip Matasović, historian and medievalist Miho Barada, ethnologists Aleksandar Gahs and Branimir Bratanić, Slavicist Dragutin Boranić, and others. With all of them, Gavazzi maintained a close relationship and often collaborated on different scientific projects.[11]

10. For more information about the life of Ivo Tadija Franić-Požežanin and the conflict with Gavazzi, see Stipančević 2016, 177–193.
11. Josip Matasović (1892–1962) was the editor of the interdisciplinary magazine *Narodna starina*, with which Gavazzi collaborated. See Matasović, Josip. *Hrvatska enciklopedija*, online edition, Miroslav Krleža Lexicographic Institute (https://www.enciklopedija.hr/natuknica.aspx?id=39378) (last accessed 14.06.2025). Miho Barada (1889–1957) was Gavazzi's close associate and worked at the Faculty of Theology (1932–1940) and at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb (1940–1954). See Barada, Miho, *Hrvatska enciklopedija*, online edition, Miroslav Krleža Lexicographic Institute, 2021 (http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=5804) (last accessed 14.06.2025). Vladimir Tkalčić (1883–1971) was Gavazzi's former colleague at the Ethnographic Museum. From 1934 to 1952, he worked as the Zagreb Museum of Arts and Crafts director. See Tkalčić, Vladimir, *Hrvatska enciklopedija*, online edition. Miroslav Krleža Lexicographic Institute (http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=61533) (last accessed 14.06.2025). Branimir Bratanić (1910–1986) was Gavazzi's assistant and later a faculty colleague at the Department. See Bratanić, Branimir, *Hrvatska enciklopedija*, online edition, Miroslav Krleža Lexicographic Institute, 2021 (http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=9296) (last accessed 14.06.2025). Aleksandar Gahs was the first employed professor of ethnology at the University of Zagreb and Gavazzi's colleague and collaborator. He taught the comparative science of religions at the Faculty of

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During the interwar period, Gavazzi engaged in correspondence with foreign scientists, and this continued until the late 1980s. His circle of correspondents was vast and varied, consisting of scientists from such different fields as anthropology, ethnology, history, linguistics, and philosophy, hailing from various countries, including Hungary, the Soviet Union, Germany, Sweden, Poland, and the United States. Some correspondents exchanged brief messages with him, sharing information and literature, while others engaged in extensive and long-lasting correspondence. For instance, he exchanged 315 letters with Polish ethnologist Kazimierz Moszyński from 1926 to 1958. Other foreign scientists that he corresponded with at length include German anthropologists Artur and Elsa Byhan (286 letters between 1926 and 1969), Austrian ethnologist Leopold Kretzenbacher (266 letters between 1939 and 1989), German Slavicist and Balkanologist Alois Schmaus (114 letters between 1940 and 1969), and American art historian Carl Schuster (189 letters between 1934 and 1969).[12]

By the outbreak of the Second World War in Yugoslavia, M. Gavazzi had already established himself as a central figure of Croatian ethnology science; he controlled all important functions within the profession, and the Chair of Ethnology became a scientific and educational centre within which generations of Croatian ethnologists were educated; he established a narrower intellectual circle of domestic scientists with whom he influenced scientific trends within the profession and developed a wider intellectual network of scientists with whom he corresponded and shared experiences and various ideas.

The Second World War and the postwar period briefly destabilised political and social life in the country. In just a few years, three states changed (Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Independent State of Croatia, Socialist Yugoslavia). Being politically suspicious in the eyes of the new regime, Gavazzi was under police surveillance by the regime of the Independent State of Croatia during the war, and he lost his privileged position within the profession. The war made it impossible to teach at the faculty, scientific life in the country quieted down, and Gavazzi was dismissed from the director position of the Ethnographic Museum.[13] The end of the war brought the formation of a new state and a new political-economic order, but it also brought certain changes within science in socialist Yugoslavia.

The period after the Second World War and events in institutions related to Croatian ethnological science

In this section, we present the political and social changes that took place during the short period of establishment of the new communist regime in socialist Yugoslavia.

Theology, dealing with religious anthropology. See Gahs, Alexander, *Hrvatska enciklopedija*, online edition, Miroslav Krleža Lexicographic Institute, 2021 (http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=20994) (last accessed 14.06.2025).

12. Among the other correspondents with whom Gavazzi was in brief contact, Gösta Berg (54 letters, 1934–1974), Petar Bogatyrev (72 letters, 1926–1970), Sigurd Erixon (52 letters, 1938–1968), Roman Jakobsen (17 letters, 1929–1973), Axel Steensberg (35 letters, 1940–1970), Wilhelm Koppers (57 letters, 1930–1960), and Frans Olbrechts (73 letters, 1935–1955) can be highlighted.
13. This period has not yet been thoroughly studied, so future research is still ahead.

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We focus on a shorter period, from 1945 to 1955, and follow events in institutions connected with ethnological science. In doing so, we offer an explanation as to why there were no major changes in the functioning of these institutions after the war, which was one of the important factors that contributed to the theoretical and methodological continuity between interwar and postwar ethnology.

The end of the Second World War brought a series of changes in the political, social, and cultural life on the territory of former Yugoslavia. The old monarchical regime with autocratic elements was replaced by the communist system, which in its first years of existence tried to faithfully follow the Soviet model of socialism and translate it into concrete practice. Croatia became one of the republics within the newly created state of socialist Yugoslavia.[14] In this period from 1945 to 1955, when Yugoslavia closely followed the Soviet model of socialism, a series of comprehensive changes occurred. The new communist government tried to radically alter the inherited sociopolitical order (see Radelić 2006; Goldstein 2008). It aimed to transform the inherited socioeconomic system into a new socialist society through processes of nationalisation, collectivisation, and industrialisation (Radelić 2006, 134–249; Goldstein 2008, 409–427).

Changes also happened in the field of science and culture, which in Marxist jargon was understood as part of the *superstructure*. The Communist Party of Yugoslavia, therefore, sought to gain control over traditional scientific and educational centres: universities, academies of science, museums, and professional associations. At the same time, just like in other communist countries, it attempted to establish alternatives to these institutions (Najbar Agičić 2013, 101).[15] Soon, in line with the ideology of the time, a new law on education was passed that turned universities into strictly educational centres, while all scientific and research work was to be done within the framework of scientific institutes under the auspices of republic academies of science or directly under the state authorities (Najbar Agičić 2013, 109). Parallel to this process, efforts were made in academia to advance the Marxist paradigm, which was understood as a new model for interpreting social development.

The traditional places of research and the scientific and educational activities of Croatian ethnologists were: (1) the Committee for Folklore at the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts (founded in 1888), (2) the Ethnographic Museum (founded in 1919), and (3) the Chair of Ethnology and Ethnography (founded in 1925). After the war, in 1948, these were joined by the Institute for Folk Art. However, the Chair of Ethnology and Ethnography still remained the only scientific and educational institution related to Croatian ethnology; it was also the centre of ethnological research in Croatia. Another important scientific centre was the Committee for Folklore at the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts. Although the Committee played an important role in ethnological science, its postwar activity was limited to organising field research and collecting and

14. Since political history is not the focus of our paper, we use the term 'socialist Yugoslavia' (1945–1991), a simplified historiographically valid name for the state of Yugoslavia. Sometimes the state is also referred to as 'Second Yugoslavia' or even 'Tito's Yugoslavia'. In fact, the new state changed its name several times, from the Democratic Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1945) to the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (1946) and, finally, to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1963). See Radelić 2006; Goldstein 2008.

15. In Poland, for example, the communist authorities failed to gain control over the Polish Academy of Arts (PAU) and founded a new institution, the Polish Academy of Sciences, in Warsaw, which took over the assets and liabilities of PAU in 1952 (Najbar Agičić 2013, 102).

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publishing materials (Čulinović-Konstantinović 1979, 82). The Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb, the central museum institution in the field of ethnology, was primarily concerned with museological work, while professional research work was secondary (see Gjetvaj 1989, 24–26). Finally, the newly established Institute for Folk Art engaged in folklore research and became a refuge for politically unsuitable intellectuals (Muraj and Rihtman-Auguštin 1998, 112; Marks and Lozica 1998, 73–110),[16] which is why it did not have a pronounced role in scientific research in Croatian ethnology in the first postwar decade.

For this reason, we will direct our attention to the events after the Second World War that took place at the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts and at the Chair of Ethnology and Ethnography at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of the University of Zagreb. In the postwar period, the scientific and research activities of these two institutions were intertwined. Indeed, both of them played an important role in the political agenda of the Communist Party, which had already been outlined during the war: the academy was to be the centre of scientific life, while the university would serve as a place of education.

The Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts

After the end of the Second World War, the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts was restored and soon resumed its work.[17] In December 1947, the Law on the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts was adopted, introducing some functional changes: the institution was (re)organised, the number of its regular members was limited, and it was designated as a primarily scientific and artistic institution 'under the general direction of the government of the People's Republic of Croatia' (Najbar Agičić 2013, 115). The Academy's main goals included linking scientists, contributing to their professional education and training, and connecting scientific and research institutes; at the call of state authorities, it could also discuss specific issues and give expert opinions (Najbar Agičić 2013, 115). The task of restarting the Academy fell to its older members, most of whom had been active in it before the war; these included philosopher Albert Bazala, legal historian Marko Kostrenčić, Slavicist Dragutin Boranić, mineralogist Fran Tućan, botanist Vale Vouk, and mathematician Željko Marković (Najbar Agičić 2013, 107–108). Thus, the continuity of the Academy's prewar activities was preserved.

16. The Institute was primarily concerned with the collection of folkloric material, mostly of ethnomusicological provenance. The first director of the Institute was the musicologist Vinko Žganec, who employed the writer Olinko Delorko and provided him with political protection from the communist regime (Muraj and Rihtman-Auguštin 1998n12). Delorko was engaged in recording the lyrics of folk songs that Žganec collected during his fieldwork. On folklore activities in the first decade of the Institute's existence, see Marks and Lozica 1998, 73–110.
17. The communist authorities decided to suspend all regulations issued by the occupation authorities. The Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts had been renamed in 1941 as the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, when the fascist regime of the Independent State of Croatia took power (Najbar Agičić 2013, 105). After the war, the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts was abolished, and the prewar Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts was restored.

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In 1949, the Folklore Committee, which was an important meeting place for Croatian ethnologists and folklorists, resumed functioning within the Academy. There, too, continuity with the prewar period was preserved, because most of the Committee's members had been active in the interwar period. Dragutin Boranić, editor of *Zbornik za narodni život i običaje* ('Proceedings of Folk Life and Customs'), which was published by the Committee, was re-elected as president, and anthropo-geographer Ivo Rubić became secretary. The following were elected as members: Milovan Gavazzi, Branimir Gušić, Marijana Gušić, Branko Magarašević, Marijan Sremec, and Vinko Žganec (Čulinović Konstantinović 1979, 78n41). In most cases, these individuals collaborated with Milovan Gavazzi's intellectual circle and were connected to it in different ways.[18]

The fundamental goal of the Communist Party's new scientific policy was to concentrate scientific research work in institutes supervised by academies of science. This is why, after the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts was relaunched, scientific institutes and centres were established under the auspices of the Academy; by 1952, their number totalled 37 (Najbar Agičić 2013, 122).[19] Compared to the functioning of the Slovenian and Serbian academies of sciences, the establishment of new institutes under the auspices of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts was somewhat slower and exceeded the planned pace. In his 1948 secretarial report, the Academy's Secretary General, physician and anthropo-geographer Branimir Gušić, pointed this out, expressing his dissatisfaction that the work dynamics to date did not follow the plan and program laid out in the Law on the Academy and in the Academy's statute.[20] The newly founded institutes very quickly fell into crisis and collapsed. There were several reasons behind this, such as insufficient investment in science, but the most devastating of all was the noticeable lack of professional staff (Najbar Agičić 2013, 122). In addition, it should also be kept in mind that many academics were also university professors, who were able to indirectly influence the work of academies and thus limit the scope of Sovietisation of science in Yugoslavia. Milovan Gavazzi was himself also a corresponding member of the Academy and a member of its Committee for Folklore until 1959. In that year, due to dissatisfaction with the editorial policy of

18. Gavazzi maintained collegial relations with the anthropogeographer Ivo Rubić, and they collaborated in the Academy's Committee for Folklore. Gavazzi and Dragutin Boranić were faculty colleagues, and during Boranić's tenure as dean, Gavazzi joined the Faculty. Boranić was a long-time professor at the Zagreb Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (1906–1946) and editor of the journal *Zbornik za narodni život i običaje* ('Proceedings of Folk Life and Customs') (Batina et al. 2010; Vince 1989). Gavazzi collaborated with Vinko Žganec as a curator in the Folk Music Department of the Ethnographic Museum. During the interwar period, they worked together on phonographic recordings of traditional songs from Međimurje (Gavazzi 1976, 139).
19. For comparison, the Serbian Academy of Sciences already had 19 institutes in the second half of 1947, and the Slovenian Academy of Sciences had 12 institutes by the mid-1950s (Najbar Agičić 2013, 121).
20. In a 1949 report, Gušić emphasised that 'the spirit and pace of our scientific, artistic, and organisational work has not yet reached the ideal that we have set for ourselves with the new Law and Statute and for which the national government has provided us with full and unlimited material and moral support. For example, we have not yet sufficiently succeeded in concentrating our scientific efforts in organised units: institutes, commissions, sections; and where we have established them, we have not put them into full operation' (Najbar Agičić 2013, 122).

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Zbornik za narodni život i običaje (Belaj 1998a) but also because of private and political disagreements with some members, he resigned from the Committee.

University of Zagreb: The Chair of Ethnology and Ethnography at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

The situation at the University of Zagreb was even more complex. Along with the University of Belgrade and the University of Ljubljana, the University of Zagreb was the most important higher education institution in Yugoslavia. Unlike Belgrade, classes in Zagreb were not suspended during the war, although admittedly they were held with difficulty during the 1944–1945 academic year: no lectures took place at all during the summer semester, and teaching was also halted during most of the winter, mainly due to a lack of firewood (Najbar Agičić 2013, 150). According to the 1945 decision of the new authorities to invalidate certificates issued by the occupation authorities, all academic titles, appointments, diplomas, and exams received in the Independent State of Croatia were annulled (Radelić 2006, 153).

All faculties were placed under the expert supervision of individual ministries.[21] At that time, 12 full professors and assistant professors and 12 assistants were removed from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Some of them were later allowed to return to their jobs. In order to remove unsuitable personnel from the Faculty, the University established the so-called 'University Court of Honour'. The court dealt with the activities of university teachers during the war, and all teachers appointed to the Faculty by April 1941 fell under its jurisdiction. Anyone could be tried for actions 'that violated the interests and honour of the Yugoslav peoples, the interests of the university, its autonomy, and tradition' (Najbar Agičić 2013, 160). The Court had various powers at its disposal, ranging from issuing admonishments, written reprimands, and fines (reduction of monthly income by 20%) to retirement or even removal from the University without entitlement to a pension (Najbar Agičić 2013, 160). Out of 139 teachers at the University of Zagreb, 35 were prosecuted – while verdicts were issued in only five cases (Najbar Agičić 2013, 167).

In addition to conducting investigations against employees, the new government tried to isolate the existing staff by pushing new assistants onto the faculties. However, the state encountered unexpected resistance from the senior professors, which is why the process went much more slowly, without achieving major successes in the end (Najbar Agičić 2013, 173). At the same time, attempts were made to introduce the Marxist paradigm to the Faculty as the only possible scientific approach to social research, and compulsory subjects related to Marxist ideology were introduced. Thus, from 1948, the courses 'Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism' and 'Political Economy'

21. The Faculty of Medicine was placed under the supervision of the Ministry of Health and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education (Najbar Agičić 2013, 151). These jurisdictions would later change. From 1945, higher education was supervised by the Ministry of Education, from 1947 by the Committee for Scientific Institutions, Universities, and Colleges, from 1950 by the Ministry of Science and Culture, and so on.

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were added to the curriculum.[22] Since the senior cadres resisted Marxism, it ultimately gained only a limited foothold in academic life. Most professors followed the advice of historian Grga Novak, an academician and university professor, who advised his colleagues to continue their work as before 'but to paint it over in red' (Janković 2016), that is, to conduct their research in the same manner but to use more Marxist terminology in their papers without fully applying its theoretical and methodological instruments. On the other hand, the emergence of Marxism also had a positive effect on some disciplines by opening new areas that had not been researched before. In the context of historical science, for example, more attention began to be paid to economic and social topics and less to political event history (see Janković 2016).

In Croatian ethnology, the process of politicisation came to a halt at a critical time. In the period from 1945 to 1955, there were no key changes in the functioning of Croatian ethnology: control over the Chair of Ethnology was not established, nor was an institute founded within the Academy as an alternative to the Chair. After 1955 there ensued a period of 'limited liberalisation' of social life during which repression subsided. The Communist Party thereby abandoned the Soviet model of socialism, reducing the pressure on science – and on society in general – and stopping the processes that had started in the first few years of the postwar period. In the rest of this chapter, we provide a brief view of that period and offer an answer to why there were no major changes in the functioning of Croatian ethnological science at that time.

The role of Milovan Gavazzi and his intellectual circle in the development of Croatian ethnology after the Second World War

Compared to other social sciences and humanities in Croatia, the Second World War did not bring major changes in the functioning of the scientific field of Croatian ethnology. After the war, the members of Gavazzi's intellectual circle remained in their positions. Historians Josip Matasović and Miho Barada thus remained active at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Museologist Vladimir Tkalčić continued to head the Museum of Arts and Crafts, as he had before the war. Ethnologist Aleksandar Gahs continued to work at the Faculty of Theology, despite the political marginalisation of this institution.[23] Dragutin Boranić remained at the Academy and participated in its reconstruction after the war.

At the Chair of Ethnology and Ethnography at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Zagreb, the situation remained unchanged after the war. Two staff members were employed there: Milovan Gavazzi, full professor, and Branimir

22. A transcript of the syllabus for the course entitled 'Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism' is kept in the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb as part of the archival fonds pertaining to the Secretariat for Education and Culture of the People's Republic of Croatia. The course spanned four semesters and consisted of four thematic units: 1) Historical and philosophical introduction, 2) Marxist dialectical method, 3) Marxist philosophical materialism, 4) Historical materialism. See HR-HDA-314, box 214.
23. The Faculty of Theology, where Gahs taught during the academic year 1951–1952, was excluded from the University of Zagreb. It was not re-affiliated with the University until 1996. Also, an investigation was initiated against Gahs before the Court of Honour, but it did not result in an indictment. See Najbar Agičić 2013, 157.

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Bratanić, assistant. The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences itself was in an extremely complex situation at the time. The recruitment policy was very modest, and after the war only 18 new teachers were hired. In 1946, science studies were excluded from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences to form the Faculty of Science. As a result, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences became dedicated exclusively to social and humanistic subjects (Agičić 1998, 13–23).

The new government was suspicious of older professors who had been active in the interwar period. This group included Gavazzi and Bratanić, who had been supporters of the nationalist Croatian Peasant Party in the interwar period and were heavily involved in its cultural and educational organisations. The new regime was distrustful of Gavazzi, who belonged to the senior cadre of intellectuals. Sometimes, as is evident from the preserved archival material, its distrust turned to downright animosity. However, no drastic measures, such as forced retirement or dismissal, were taken against him. There were several reasons for this. One of them was certainly that, at the time, there were no other well-established ethnologists who could replace the Chair's employees or offer a valid alternative to their approach. Indeed, most ethnologists at the time were Gavazzi's students, with whom he had forged collaborative and often friendly relationships. He also maintained cordial relations or successful long-term collaborations with individuals in positions of power, both within the profession and outside of it: for example, with academician Dragutin Boranić, with ethnomusicologist and institute director Vinko Žganec, and with the staff of the Ethnographic Museum.[24]

What is more, Gavazzi did not aggravate the new regime too much with his scientific and intellectual activity. During the war, he had been politically inactive and did not participate in the fascist regime of the Independent State of Croatia or support it in any way. This is why the new regime tolerated him, even though they were aware of his prewar involvement in the Croatian Peasant Party (and did not let it be forgotten). The Archives of the University of Zagreb hold the completed 38-point questionnaires that Zagreb university teachers were supposed to submit to their faculty commissions. Based on the content of the questionnaires, the commissions then assessed whether to launch an official investigation with the University Court of Honour. Milovan Gavazzi's questionnaire is there, too, and it helps us reconstruct his scientific and intellectual activity during the war.

Dated 6 November 1945, the questionnaire is filled out mostly with yes/no responses. In some places, Gavazzi added more extensive answers. For instance, he stated that he was never a sympathiser of the Ustasha or National Socialist movement, and he denied any participation in their activities (Archives of the University of Zagreb, University Court of Honour 1945/1946). Among the works he published during the war years as a member of the association *Matica Hrvatska* ('Matrix Croatica'), he listed short reviews that appeared in its magazine *Hrvatska revija* ('Croatian Review'), which

24. Although his cousin Marijana Gušić (a historian, member of the National Liberation Movement, and supporter of the regime) became the head of the Museum, Gavazzi continued to work there. He had struck up long-term collaborations with several employees. For example, he collaborated with ethnomusicologist Božidar Širola in his work at the Museum's Folk Music Department. In addition, Marijana Gušić herself, despite a somewhat strained relationship with Gavazzi, accepted the theoretical propositions derived from his school, which were modified to a certain extent in accordance with current political circumstances. See Čapo 1998, 40.

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was right-leaning but not directly politically engaged. Among the positions he filled during the Second World War, he listed the following: director of the Ethnographic Museum (until the autumn of 1941), vice-dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (academic year 1942–1943), and member of the board of *Matica Hrvatska*. To question number 35, *What was your view on the NOP* ('National Liberation Movement')*?*, Gavazzi replied: 'objective – approving any resistance against any (especially Axis) imperialism' (Archives of the University of Zagreb, University Court of Honour 1945/1946). Thus, there was no legal basis for his removal from the Faculty, and an unknown civil servant briefly wrote at the bottom of the document: 'Further proceedings are not warranted' (Archives of the University of Zagreb, University Court of Honour 1945/46).

The cultural historical paradigm that Gavazzi introduced into Croatian ethnology therefore remained the dominant mode of scientific reflection on ethnological topics. The object of study of Croatian ethnology – traditional culture – as well as the rural population as its bearers had not yet undergone through profound sociocultural transformations, which justified the relevance of the cultural historical approach. Although the wave of migration to the cities continued after the Second World War, during this period stimulated by the wave of industrialisation in the 1950s, the share of the rural population slowly declined (Goldstein 2008, 521–522). For this very reason, the cultural historical approach did not experience inherent contradictions in the Kuhnian sense, which would call into question the entire paradigm and generate new approaches and centres of research (Kuhn 1974). The dominant approach would not be questioned until the end of the 1960s, when the share of rural and agricultural population fell below 50 percent (Štambuk 1990, 64). At that time, due to thorough sociocultural transformations and changed political circumstances, new approaches gradually gained momentum, culminating in the 1970s with the affirmation of the *new paradigm* within the Institute for Folk Art (see Čapo, Gulin Zrnić and Šantek 2006, 14–15).

The new regime did not object too much to the cultural historical approach, and it also seems that it did not fully understand it. Instead, it focused on creating a new social group that would support it – the working class – and it was not too interested in ethnology as a science closely related to traditional, mostly rural culture. The communists viewed traditional culture as 'rural, backward, probably nationalistic, and intertwined with religion' (Muraj and Rihtman-Auguštin 1998, 111). In this sense, the regime's relationship with ethnology as a science should certainly be regarded as part of a broader process of the communist authorities' struggle against tradition. Moreover, not long after coming to power, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia began the fight against religion and all forms of national ideologies. The communists considered religion a superstition, a brake on progress, and something that divided the Yugoslav people. Fearing the spread of any form of nationalism as a disintegrating factor, they allowed traditional activities to take place only in state-controlled folklore associations. For this very reason, the Communist Party developed a broad campaign to eradicate religion and its associated traditions. Religious holidays were removed from the list of public holidays and new, uniform secular customs were introduced. Therefore, ethnologists could not research national and religious characteristics of traditional culture and folklore or topics such as ethnicity or mentality (Radelić 2006, 164–177).

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Another reason why the cultural historical approach survived was the nature of Marxism itself, which the government promoted as the only alternative to the scientific methods of the time. But as far as the current research tells us, Marxism never truly gained ground either in Croatian ethnology or in the ethnologies of other Yugoslav republics. The reach and reception of Marxism in Yugoslav ethnology is evidenced by the 1952 polemic between Bosnian ethnologist Špiro Kulišić and Serbian ethnologist Milenko S. Filipović, which took place in the journal *Pregled* ('Review').[25]

Although there were indeed individuals in Croatian ethnology who advocated Marxist approaches to the humanities (such as Oleg Mandić), they remained on the margins of the profession (Rihtman-Auguštin 1997, 87n8).[26] The centre of Croatian ethnology still remained at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, more precisely with its Chair of Ethnology (from 1960, the Department of Ethnology), which was the main stronghold of theoretical and methodological approaches. A new institution that would succeed in breeding new approaches was not yet in sight. In addition, Marxist theoretical and methodological starting points were already regressive at that point; they meant a return to evolutionist theories and dialectical materialism, which had long since been overcome in Croatian and Yugoslav ethnology and in anthropology in general (Filipović 1956).

Therefore, in contrast to other humanistic disciplines that were more useful to the regime, ethnology was being marginalised as the 'most national' science (Belaj 1989, 9–13) at a time when national expression became less desirable. Also, the government focused on the working class, while Gavazzi's ethnology dealt with the peasantry. The attitude of the new authorities towards ethnology can be seen most clearly in a confidential party report from 1949. The report dealt with the ideological situation in three faculties: Economics, Law, and Humanities and Social Sciences. Its unknown author also touched on the activities of the Chair of Ethnology. The work of the chair was evaluated as 'non-scientific', and the staff was labelled as 'clericalists' (Belaj 2009, 19). In light of the report's conclusions, a commission was to be formed to review Gavazzi's lectures and submit a report on them to the Central Committee (Belaj 2009, 19).

25. In *Pregled*, Špiro Kulišić, the director of the National Museum in Sarajevo, accused Milenko Filipović of being a functionalist. Kulišić criticised Filipović from a Marxist point of view, claiming that functionalism was an imperialist approach whose goal was to justify colonial rule and support the spread of capitalism to non-European countries (Kulišić 1955, 298). In the next issue of *Pregled*, Filipović responded sharply to Kulišić, explaining from a professional standpoint all the inaccuracies in the text as well as the unsuitability of Marxist approaches in ethnological research (Filipović 1956, 143).
26. Oleg Mandić (1906–1979) was a Croatian lawyer and sociologist. He taught at the Faculty of Law. He researched the development of religion and religious systems and the problems of social foundations (see Mandić, Oleg, *Hrvatska enciklopedija*, online edition, Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2021, http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=38577) (last accessed 14.06.2025). In terms of research, he advocated Marxist approaches in the social sciences and humanities. Indeed, as Dunja Rihtman-Auguštin notes, the Soviet Marxists emphasised that the entire ethnological theory was based on Friedrich Engels' *Origin of the Family*, and ethnologists were therefore assigned with collecting materials to confirm this theory (Rihtman-Auguštin 1997, 87). As a researcher, Mandić contributed to the Marxist interpretation of the development and origin of the family (Mandić 1948, 153–174), family cooperatives (Mandić 1974, 25–27), and legal customs (Mandić 1957, 7–55).

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It seems that in the end the Chair was not discontinued, because Gavazzi and his assistant, Bratanić, continued to work at the Faculty. Ethnologist Aleksandra Muraj, a student at the time, commented in an interview on the marginal position of ethnology in the postwar period, noting that Marxist professors who worked at the Faculty pejoratively referred to ethnology as 'Catholic ethnology' (Zrnić and Pleše 2014, 222). The distrust the new authorities felt towards Gavazzi and Bratanić is also reflected in the fact that for many years the Chair could not get new assistants and associates. In fact, Branimir Bratanić, Gavazzi's assistant and colleague, did not become assistant professor until 1951. Just as the new regime was focused on the workers, its academic policy tended to focus on opening new study groups that would serve to produce desirable personnel (e.g. sociology studies) or on strengthening existing programs, like pedagogy and philosophy.[27]

The authorities' distrust of Gavazzi is best illustrated by their rejection to issue him a passport, which he needed to go to a conference in Stockholm in 1951. Gavazzi was to attend the International Conference for European and Western Ethnology, organised by the *Commission des Arts et Traditions Populaires* (CIAP).[28] The procedure required conference participants to apply for a travel document in order to travel to Sweden. Gavazzi sent a timely request to the Secretariat of the Personnel Service of the Government of the People's Republic of Croatia, the political body responsible for approving passport requests. The application, which has been preserved, was signed by the president of the Academy Andrija Štampar. It requested that Gavazzi be sent as a delegate from the territory of the People's Republic of Croatia.[29] All other requirements for going to Stockholm were fulfilled (tickets, accommodation, per diem expenses, a travel permit). However, the answer to Gavazzi's inquiry came more than a month later. On August 20, 1951, a short answer arrived without a detailed explanation, stating merely that 'Milovan Gavazzi's request is not approved' (HR-HDA-314, box 214: 'Request' br. 120/51, 9. 7 1951).

By all accounts, the authorities' deep distrust of Gavazzi would last until 1952, when the regime's repression gradually eased. During the academic year 1951–52, Gavazzi served as dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Interestingly, when the University Committee of the Croatian Communist Party called a meeting to discuss the worrisome personnel and ideological situation at the Faculty of Engineering and the Faculty of Medicine in Zagreb, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences under Gavazzi's administration was highlighted as a positive example, 'affirming with satisfaction that an "organised teachers' front" [against the party] was absent from the Faculty, and that the dean (Milovan Gavazzi) "tactfully implemented the Party's line"' (Najbar Agičić 2013, 178).

27. The sociology program was formally established in 1963 and evolved from the Chair of Sociology at the Department of Philosophy. The first teachers at the Department, and also its founders, were Rudi Supek and Ivan Kuvačić (Cifrić 1998, 254–255).
28. The CIAP was a professional association that gathered European ethnologists and folklorists. It was founded in 1928 under the auspices of the League of Nations and changed its name to the Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore (SIEF) in 1964. See https://www.siefhome.org/about/history.shtml (accessed 14.06. 2025).
29. The conference was held from 26 August to 26 September 1951 in Stockholm (HR-HDA-314, box 214: "Request" no. 120/51, 9 July 1951).

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In the mid-1950s, a generally noticeable trend towards easing the regime's repression was fostered by political changes triggered by a shift in the political paradigm within the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. New currents emerged after the Yugoslav-Soviet split in 1948, when Yugoslavia ceased to be part of the Soviet sphere of influence. As early as the mid-1950s, a period of liberalisation of political and social life began, and Yugoslavia gradually opened to the world. The Communist Party abandoned the application of the Soviet model of communism and partially relinquished control over certain segments of social and cultural life, confining itself mainly to the political sphere. In the case of Croatian ethnology, this meant that the repression eased and the life of Gavazzi's cultural historical approach was briefly prolonged. Changes in the Communist Party's policies led to the abandonment of the Sovietisation of science, but they would subsequently also lead to major paradigmatic changes in the humanities, including ethnology. In those years, more funds were allocated to science, domestic scientists began to go abroad in greater numbers and participate in international conferences, and the works of foreign authors were translated to a greater extent. All these events created the conditions for the development of a critical mass that would be responsible for the establishment of new research directions in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This *new paradigm* in Croatian ethnology led to a gradual weakening of Gavazzi's influence and his cultural historical approach.

Conclusion: Theoretical and methodological continuity of Croatian postwar ethnology (1945–1955)

In the period from 1945 to 1955, when the new communist regime was established, fundamental political, social, and cultural changes took place in socialist Yugoslavia. These changes were also reflected in the field of science. Although the new regime utilised constitutional legislation and imposed ideology and politicisation, it did not succeed in bringing about significant changes in the functioning of the social sciences and humanities. This fact was particularly evident in Croatian ethnology, where the theoretical and methodological continuity from the interwar period was preserved. The central thesis of this paper, which we have now confirmed in our research, was that there were no significant changes in the functioning of Croatian ethnological science at the critical moment of the positioning of the new regime after the Second World War (1945–1955). There were two crucial reasons for this.

The first reason lay in the fact that the cultural historical approach that Gavazzi introduced into Croatian ethnology had not yet passed through an inherent paradigmatic crisis. Despite increasing industrialisation and urbanisation, traditional culture and the peasant population as its bearer still occupied a significant place in Croatian society. The explanatory model of the cultural historical paradigm was therefore still relevant and provided valid answers to the posed research problems. The second reason lay in the fact that the new regime did not manage to dominate the traditional places of the scientific and educational activities of Croatian ethnologists: the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts and its Committee for the Study of Folklore, and the Chair of Ethnology and Ethnography at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Zagreb. Thus, the possibility that ethnology could play a similar role to the one it played in the countries of the Soviet Union was not realised.

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The scientists connected with the intellectual circle of ethnologist Milovan Gavazzi, founded in the interwar period, continued to occupy the same positions. The regime also failed to create alternatives to these institutions. In the mentioned period, not a single new institution was founded that could compete with the Chair of Ethnology and Ethnography as the centre of theoretical and methodological currents. For this reason, in the short period from 1945 to 1955 the theoretical and methodological continuity from the interwar period was in fact preserved. It would gradually wane and finally be overcome from the 1960s onward, when certain social and political changes occurred in socialist Yugoslavia as a result of changed internal and external political circumstances. The abovementioned changes, together with a number of different political and social factors, would culminate in the 1970s with the establishment of a new scientific centre, the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies, which would become the breeding ground for new theoretical and methodological approaches.

Through this chapter based on literature and archival data, we have tried to contribute to the knowledge about a short but, in our opinion, crucial period that has not yet been systematically researched or problematised in Croatian ethnology. In order to gain deeper insights into the described period, more thorough archival research will be necessary.

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Following the Money

Ethnological Research and its Funding in Finland, 1930–1945

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Introduction: Political expectations in research funding

Research funding is an indicator of the kind of knowledge that is valued and used not only by the scientific community but also by society. An analysis of research funding provides insights into the development and priorities of research and the use of knowledge also at a time of strong political tensions. In Finland in the 1930s and early 1940s, ethnology played a significant role in building the identity of the young nation. During the Second World War, it was also used as a tool for pursuing nationalist goals.

In this chapter, I review the factors that influenced Finnish ethnology and its context during the Second World War and the years preceding it. Using archival material from different scientific societies, I examine the intertwining of research funding and political expectations at a time of societal upheaval. I ask the following questions: What kind of ethnological research received funding, and what scientific and political ideas informed such funding decisions? How are broader political and societal objectives visible in the ways research was funded and managed, and what was the relationship between ethnological knowledge and the ideological objectives of the time?

To understand the production and use of ethnological knowledge in Finnish society in the 1930s and early 1940s, I apply the history of knowledge approach, a field of study developed mainly in the 2000s that concentrates on cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary dialogue on the forms and characteristics of knowledge and its production and circulation (Myllyntausta, Mäkilä and Skurnik 2023, 45–46), hence enabling new approaches to the study of ethnological knowledge.

In history of knowledge research, a *truth-spot* refers to a place where legitimate knowledge is generated: knowledge that is considered reliable, credible and trustworthy by contemporaries. Truth-spots can include, for example, laboratories, museums, hospitals, cathedrals, or even geographical places (Gieryn 2018; Livingstone 2003, 16–86; Myllyntausta, Mäkilä and Skurnik 2023, 29–31). However, it is important to note that a truth-spot is not absolute or immutable; rather, it is socially produced depending on the particular time and place. In this chapter, I discuss how the truth-spot concept fits into the role of scientific societies at the time, on the one hand, and specifically to East Karelia[1] as a geographical region, on the other, highlighting what the role of truth-spots tells us about their importance in society. Legitimate knowledge

1. Also known as Russian Karelia, East Karelia refers to the area left behind Finland's eastern border in the 1920 Tartu Peace Treaty. In Finland, the name 'East Karelia' was commonly used to refer to this area east of Finland (Jalagin 2021, 23). The name can also be seen as implying

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does not just refer to scientific knowledge; there are always several concurrent ways of knowing in a community (Burke 2000, 13–16). However, this chapter focuses primarily on scientific, especially ethnological, knowledge. Ethnological knowledge itself also consists of different forms of knowledge, as it is based on the analysis of vernacular knowledge. Understanding the production, use, and legitimisation of ethnological knowledge sheds light on the societal role of ethnological research in Finland at a politically turbulent time.

In recent years, the work, contacts, and activities of Finnish ethnologists during the Second World War have been studied by both ethnologists (Pimiä 2007; 2009; 2012; Laaksonen, Knuuttila and Piela 2004) and scholars in related fields (Laine 1993). Especially East Karelia and research on it, on national unification, and on kinship ideology have been strong points of focus. The activities of researchers from other national disciplines have also been studied from a similar perspective. The funding and impact of ethnological research, however, still need to be studied in more detail. Research on the history of various foundations, societies, and organisations has certainly dealt with research funding in general (e.g. Pohls 1989) and the societal impact of funding in modern times (Heikkilä 2017), but not from the perspective of the politics of funding.

In examining the relationship between research funding and political expectations, I focus on four major funders of ethnological research at the time. They include two scientific societies – the Finnish Literature Society (*Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura*) and the Finnish Antiquarian Society (*Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistys*) – as well as the Finnish Cultural Foundation (*Suomen Kulttuurirahasto*) and the State Scientific East Karelia Committee (*Valtion Tieteellinen Itä-Karjalan toimikunta*), which was established by the Ministry of Education to coordinate research in the occupied areas during the Continuation War of 1941–1944.

'Following the money': A close reading of the minutes

To answer my research questions, I have 'followed the money' in the archives of the four organisations. The archives contain the minutes of board meetings and their appendices, such as grant applications, letters of recommendation, annual reports, and other documents, such as researchers' reports and even work diaries. The archive of the State Scientific East Karelia Committee is an uncatalogued collection of memoranda, letters, and other documents. Not all the annexes of the minutes have survived, and some minutes are missing entirely, but overall the material provides a comprehensive picture of the topic. The sources provide information on the number of applications accepted and rejected, the number of research grants awarded, and the research topics covered. The materials are often sparse in text and information, but they offer a view of the research field and its actors at the time. The archives also contain other materials besides the minutes, for example, invitations to events, some reports from researchers, and collection guides. These materials reveal much about the thinking, goals, and plans of the era.

that the area is part of a larger regional entity known as Karelia, located on both the Finnish side and the Russian side of the border.

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One of the reasons for the conciseness of the material is that the minutes of board meetings only include the final decisions. The related discussions that took place were not recorded, which makes it difficult to fully understand the underlying debate. Sometimes, however, the notes are more detailed and the opinions of or even objections made by different people are recorded. On occasion, the research grants had to be decided outside the actual meetings, on a 'per capsulam' basis, for example, by telephone calls to members of the board. In such cases, the votes of the members were recorded individually, which gives a richer picture of the decision-making process than a single decision on its own.

The act of awarding research grants seems to have been a straightforward process. Academic circles in Finland were small, so most people in the field knew each other (e.g. Aaltonen 2017; M. Räsänen 1992). There was not necessarily a need for letters of recommendation – or at least only very few such letters have been preserved in the archives. Most of the applications are just one page long, handwritten, or typed. Some are just a couple of sentences in length, leading to the question of whether previous discussions had been held on the matter and a preliminary agreement reached. In the shortest version of an application, just the projected expense and research topic might be mentioned:

> I most respectfully request a grant of 5000 marks for research into the history of the development of traditional Finnish lace. Helsinki, 24 October 1934, Aino Nissinen. (FLSboard, 29 November 1934)

The decision recorded in the minutes of the board is often as concise as the application itself. For instance, the minutes do not say why the decision had been put on the table just once and why the sum has been reduced to 4000 marks:

> 19§ It was decided to approve a grant of 4000 marks from the Lallukka Fund for MA Aino Nissinen, whose grant application was put on the table at the December meeting. (FLSboard, 31 January 1935)

The archival material does not mention whether the grants were advertised in any way outside academic circles, only that the people in the field knew how and when to apply for them. Thus, the archives do not include many applications from people other than students or researchers in the field. This might be one reason for the low number of rejections. Overall, the award rate was quite high, and it was rare for an application to be rejected. As with approved applications, at this point it is often only possible to speculate on the reasons for rejection. Sometimes, however, the reason is mentioned explicitly or implicitly. For example, grantees were required to submit a report on how the grant money would be used, and if no such report had been received for a previous grant, the new grant application might be rejected (e.g. FLSec, 26 May 1937), or else the amount of money awarded would be much less. For example, a grant of 2500 marks was awarded to student V.R. Rikkonen by the board of the Finnish Antiquarian Society on 25 May 1934 to study traditional buildings in (Finnish) Karelia. In 1935, Rikkonen had applied for a new grant of 4000 marks but was awarded only 2000 marks.

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Also, applicants from outside the academic world could receive grants, especially if they had a recommendation from someone in the field. However, the applications from lay collectors, like teachers, were rejected more often than those from researchers. For example, the Finnish Antiquarian Society awarded journalist F.M. Karrakoski a grant of 1000 marks to obtain information, pictures, and samples of work on timber and tableware in Vakka-Suomi, but his application had included recommendations by two researchers (FAS Cd3, 5 October 1933). The following year, though, his application was rejected without any explanation in the minutes (FAS Cd3, 25 May 1934).

When examining the archival material, I have done a close reading (Pöysä 2015, 5–32; Pöysä 2010) of the texts, focusing on both their actual content, such as grant sums, applicants, and research topics, and the implicit clues and silences. In the material, financial issues appear in ways other than just the awarding of grants. Discussions about the economy, money problems, and salaries, for example, provide a broader context for research funding. Analysis of the research topics, the geographical distribution of the research topics, and the ideological aspects of the research, such as references to kinship ideology (*heimohenki*) reveal the values and preferences behind the research funding. Even in a concise text, word choices reveal such values and attitudes. Money is power, as is the knowledge produced by research.

It is important from a research ethics point of view for the researcher to maintain an analytical approach. The first reading is never an entirely 'innocent', or 'pure', reading: the reader's preconceived expectations influence their reading and understanding of the text (Pöysä 2010, 339). The reader of the archive material looks at the documents from a contemporary perspective and knows how events unfolded. It is thus important not to fall into the trap of repeating anachronisms but instead to understand the actors in the social context and in the spirit of the times. Furthermore, the presence of political influences in the past is more readily apparent than in the present. It should also be kept in mind that in the 1930s and early 1940s, the ethical principles of research as they are understood in contemporary research were still in their infancy,[2] and the exceptionalism of wartime especially brought its own constraints to the conduct of research and the lives of researchers.

The societal and ethnological context of the 1930s and wartime

In Finland, ethnological research began in earnest in the 19th century, together with other so-called national disciplines, such as archaeology and folklore studies. Some contemporaries refer to ethnology as 'archaeology's and folklore studies' younger sister' (e.g. Professor Hämäläinen in FAS Cd3, 3 May 1935). In the spirit of nationalism, the aim was to explore and highlight the history of the Finns. In addition, the study of the Finno-Ugric peoples living in different parts of Russia was considered important for gaining as complete a picture as possible of how the Finns had become Finns. In the evolutionary theory popular at the time, the underlying idea was that people were related not only linguistically but also culturally. Finns, Hungarians, and the Siberian Finno-Ugric peoples were thus considered to be at different stages of evolutionary development, with the Hungarians being the most advanced, the Finns

2. The Finnish National Board on Research Integrity, TENK, was not established until 1991.

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at almost the same level, and the Siberian peoples the most primitive (Lehtonen 1972; Snellman 2001; M. Räsänen 1992). Research on the Finno-Ugric peoples was actively conducted until Finland's independence in 1917, after which the eastern border with Russia was gradually closed (Pimiä 2012, 395–396), forcing researchers to concentrate on Finland's own territory. By the 1930s, the research material collected on distant kindred peoples had already been studied and processed, and the new generation of researchers no longer had access to lands to the east. Also, the research questions were changing.

In the 1930s, the focus shifted to the research opportunities offered by the Finnish region, covering both Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking Finns. Social aspects of the culture became more prominent than before, for example, in the form of village studies (e.g. Snellman 2001, 7–13). The ethnology professorship at the University of Helsinki covered both Finno-Ugric ethnology and a focus on the cultures of the world, like its German counterpart *Völkerkunde* (Lehtonen 1972). Finnish ethnologists followed developments in the field in other countries, for example, in Sweden and Germany (on researchers' relations with Germany in general, see, e.g., Hietala 2006). Both individual researchers and scientific societies had established connections with other scholars around the world, and on occasion research expeditions were also still carried out abroad (Talve 1992, 72).

The ethnological mapping work that started in Germany in the late 1920s aroused a great deal of interest in Finland. The idea of mapping cultural phenomena really took off in Finnish ethnology in the mid-1930s (Talve 1963, 17–18; 1992b, 136). The work progressed well: during the years 1937 and 1938, material for more than a hundred maps had been assembled (FAS Cd3, 3 May 1939).

Ethnological circles – like Finnish academic circles in general – were still small in the 1930s and during the war. The same names appear in the records of several organisations and societies, as employees, board members, working members of scientific societies, officials, and other active members. Women in ethnology, as in many other fields, were few in number for a long time, but their number was increasing. One of the first was Tyyni Vahter, an ethnologist specialising in crafts, who was the first woman to hold a post at the National Museum and also an active member of the Finnish Antiquarian Society. Many of those working in ethnology had a degree originally in another, yet related field: Helmi Helminen was a historian, Kustaa Vilkuna a linguist, and Sakari Pälsi an archaeologist as well as an ethnologist. (M. Räsänen 1992; Aaltonen 2017.)

The 1930s was a politically turbulent period in Finland, marked by political extremes (see, e.g., Valtonen 2018). The Greater Finland ideology, the political dimension of kinship ideology (*heimoaate*), prevailed. Kinship ideology refers to empathy and support for and a sense of solidarity with the Finno-Ugric peoples left on the Russian side of the border after Finland's independence in 1917. The idea of the Greater Finland ideology was that the 'natural area' of Finland, in a geological, botanical and cultural sense, was larger than the borders that had been defined for Finland after independence, and Finland should gain control of this area not only for cultural but also for economic and militarily strategic reasons (see, e.g., Jokisipilä and Könönen 2013, 309–321; Hietala 2006, 102–103).

One of the ways in which the Greater Finland ideology manifested itself in Finnish society was a nationalistic movement among university students. The Academic Karelia

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Society (*Akateeminen Karjala-Seura*; AKS) and its sister organisation, the Karelia Society of Academic Women (*Akateemisten Naisten Karjala-Seura*; ANKS), were both nationalistic associations that enjoyed growing influence and popularity first among university students and later among a wider academic population. (Eskelinen 2004, 195–229.) The main objective of the AKS and ANKS was to advance the independence of Finno–Ugric East Karelia, on Russia's side of the border, and to incorporate the area into Finland. It is quite likely that some ethnologists at the time were supporters of the Greater Finland ideology, or at least of *heimoaate*, kinship ideology, and were therefore interested in East Karelia for more than just ethnological research purposes. Several ethnologists were members of the AKS or ANKS at least at some point during their studies or career. (Kuusi and Aitola 1991; Eskelinen 2004, 195–229; Salminen 2008, 104.) Both societies were dissolved in the aftermath of the peace treaty between Finland and the Soviet Union in 1944 as anti-Soviet organisations.

During the Second World War, Finland was involved in three wars: the Winter War against the Soviet Union (1939–1940), the Continuation War (1941–1944) against the Soviet Union in alliance with Germany, and finally, the Lapland War (1944–1945) to push the German troops out of the country, as agreed in the truce with the Soviet Union after the Continuation War (see, e.g., Tuunainen 2012, 140–171). During the Continuation War, the Greater Finland movement became, in a sense, a reality for some years, as Finland occupied large parts of East Karelia on the eastern side of the Russian border. The land known as East Karelia was populated by Russians, Finns, and various Finno-Ugric peoples, like Karelians, Veps, Ingrians, and Ludian peoples. Research in various fields, including ethnology, was conducted in East Karelia during the years of the occupation.

The Continuation War period is of great interest from the standpoint of ethnology and the work of ethnologists. The conquered territories offered new opportunities for ethnology, but a strong political dimension was also now fundamental to research projects. Many ethnologists held important positions in the society and the military, including with respect to propaganda, during the war, like Dr Kustaa Vilkuna, who was the head of the War Censorship and Information Inspectorate (*Sotasensuuri- ja tiedotustoiminnan tarkastusvirasto*) and later head of the State Communications Agency (*Valtion tiedoituslaitos*). Dr Martti Haavio, who was a folklorist but also chairman of the Ethnological Commission of the Finnish Literature Society, served as a military front-line correspondent and chief of an information company. Ethnologist and archaeologist Dr Sakari Pälsi was likewise a military front-line correspondent. Albert Hämäläinen, professor of Finno-Ugric ethnology at the University of Helsinki (1931–1949), spoke fluent Russian and was put in charge of matters pertaining to the Ingrian peoples. He also served as an inspector for prisoner-of-war interrogations and as head of the interrogation department of the special prisoner-of-war unit. (R. Räsänen 1992, 106; Pimiä 2009, 207–210; Salminen 2008, 155.)[3] Expeditions to occupied territories provided younger generations of ethnologists – many of them women – with

3. Finnish authorities treated the local population in the occupied territories differently based on their ethnic background. Camps with high mortality rates were established for prisoners of war as well as for civilians of "non-national" background (see e.g. Näre and Tepora 2010; Westerlund 2009). Ethnological and linguistic research was carried out during the war among those prisoners of war who were of Finno-Ugric origin (Pimiä 2009, 210, 232; Salminen

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opportunities to study Finno-Ugric peoples and continue a line of research that had flourished in the early 20th century.

When the Continuation War ended with the loss of East Karelia and several other areas, including new territorial cessions in eastern Finland, resulting in a new phase in Finland's political situation (see, e.g., Meinander 2012, 80–86), ethnologists had to look for new paths of research and also carefully evaluate how best to use the wartime research. After the Second World War, relations between Finland and the Soviet Union were tense (see, e.g., Meinander 2012, 86–91), which influenced the topics studied and how they were written about; most notably, this concerned the research that had been conducted in East Karelia during the war.

Funding in the 1930s with a focus on Finland

The funding of ethnological research in Finland was modest in the 1930s. However, even though the amounts awarded in research grants were small, they still reflect societal and scientific objectives and help define what was considered worth studying and what kind of knowledge was needed in academia and society.

The early 1930s were marked by economic depression, but the economy improved towards the end of the decade. Scientific societies operated on the basis of state subsidies, which had dwindled in size and been eroded by inflation. They improved their finances by selling their own publications, by charging membership fees, and by applying for funding themselves, including the state's lottery funds as well as money from companies (FAS Cd3, 2 February 1932). The societies also had other assets, such as testamentary donations, the proceeds of which could be used for their activities. The Finnish national epic *Kalevala* celebrated its centenary in 1935, which gave visibility to the national disciplines, including ethnology. The societies used such momentum to improve resources in the field. For example, ideas were put forward for the construction of a special building for national disciplines and the creation of an ethnological institute. (FAS Cd3, 5 October 1934; 3 April 1935.)

Numerous applications submitted to the Finnish Literature Society have been preserved. Applications by researchers – and sometimes non-academic persons – were first reviewed by members of the Ethnological Commission (*Kansatieteen valiokunta*), which either recommended that the grant be awarded or rejected and then decided upon that at the meeting of the board. Between 1930 and 1940, the Board of the Finnish Literature Society met more than 93 times. It discussed grant applications at 58 of those meetings, which reflects the importance of research and collection to the society's activities. The total number of applications, out of which only some have been preserved, was more than 150.

The receiving of so many grant applications may have been due to the society's network of lay collectors, who also collected folklore. The society and its activities were well known across the country: the number of non-academic researchers for the Finnish Literature Society was clearly higher than for the Finnish Antiquarian Society. It is difficult to distinguish between applications that were purely ethnological, since

2008, 152–155). From today's perspective, research conducted in prison camps was ethically questionable due to the subordinate position of the people who were held there.

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ethnological knowledge often came as a by-product of folklore collection efforts and as the result of numerous multidisciplinary expeditions by different student nations (societies of university students that are affiliated with the students' home region). More than 40 grants were awarded to student nations at universities for expeditions to their home regions. The ethnological material collected by the society generally included oral traditions, such as customs, since the collection and storage of artefacts was the responsibility of the National Museum.

The Finnish Antiquarian Society usually awarded grants at its spring meeting in May, just before the board members took a summer break. It awarded fewer grants than the Finnish Literature Society, and the recipients were not only ethnologists but also archaeologists and art historians. In total, the Finnish Antiquarian Society awarded 51 grants in the 1930s, out of which 31 were for archaeologists or for research done in the field of cultural history, like studying medieval churches, while 20 were for ethnologists. The topics of the ethnological studies typically ranged from the study of textiles, agricultural culture, or rural buildings to the more general 'collection of ethnological material'. The number of grants awarded to ethnologists increased during the 1930s, and in 1939 it exceeded the number of grants awarded to archaeologists for the first time. The number of rejected grant applications (FAS CD3, 25 May 1938; 5 July 1938; 9 May 1939) also increased as the decade progressed, which may reflect increased competition. At its board meeting on 25 May 1934, for example, the Finnish Antiquarian Society chose to award five grants to archaeologists and two to ethnologists:

> 6§ The following grants were awarded: 1 MA Ella Kivikoski 3000 marks, Jacob Tegengren 2500 marks, both for archaeological research trips, MA Arne Appelgren 2500 marks for ethnological inventories in the parishes of Alavude, Pietarsaari, Jepua (Kauhava), student V.R. Rikkonen 2500 marks for research on the folk-building culture of the Karelian people, student Martti Salme 2000 marks and MA Nils Cleve 2000 marks for archaeological expeditions, and student Jorma Leppäaho 1000 marks for archaeological collection and survey work in Kemijärvi parish. (Written in pencil at the bottom of the page: 'Rejected application F.M. Karrakoski'.)

Neither of the societies awarded any research grants for long-term work; most grants were for research trips. As seen in the example above, the sums applied for were relatively small, typically being enough for a work period lasting from a couple of weeks to several months. The grants awarded to the student nations usually covered the participation costs of one member of the expedition.

In the 1930s, the demand for legitimate ethnological knowledge in a young country that wanted to build and better understand its history was prominent, thus highlighting the role of the scientific societies in funding research as truth-spots. Throughout the early decades of the 20th century (or, in the Finnish Literature Society's case, for more than a century), the societies had established themselves as respected hubs of knowledge and research in their field, both in the academic world and in society at large. The societies had a strong vision of what was authentic heritage, and hence worth collecting, and they instructed researchers and lay collectors accordingly (Olsson, Mikkola and Stark 2023). The esoteric currents of German ethnology (see, e.g., Dow and Lixfield 1994) at the time did not arouse enthusiasm among Finnish colleagues

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(FLSboard, 29 April 1937; Pimiä 2012, 401–402), but later Heinrich Harmjanz, head of the ethnological department of the *Deutsches Ahnenerbe* research institute, was at least considered as a correspondent member of the Finnish Literature Society (FLSboard, 26 November 1942; see also Salminen 2008, 145–146). Ethnological knowledge grew through fieldwork, which reinforced the legitimacy of such knowledge (see Gieryn 2018, 41–42; Myllyntausta 2023, 177). Most of the funding was specifically intended for fieldwork. Being part of the funding system, the societies also defined what was considered valuable knowledge.

During the years 1930–1939, before the Winter War of 1939–1940 put a stop to all research activities, the grants were awarded for research conducted throughout the country. The Finnish Literature Society awarded 18 grants for research in Finnish Karelia, and the Finnish Antiquarian Society also awarded some grants for research in Karelia, but there is no evidence in the archives of the decisions having been politically motivated. The societies acted based on their own interests, addressing the important research issues of the time. The increasing number of research grants in the field of ethnology may indicate that ethnology was emerging strongly alongside previously established national disciplines, such as archaeology and folklore studies, and the role of scientific societies as truth-spots was also thus strengthened from an ethnological standpoint. Anniversaries that brought additional attention to the national disciplines, such as the *Kalevala* centennial in 1935, strengthened the recognition of the field even more.

Wartime research funding targeting East Karelia

During the Second World War, two new major players appeared on the Finnish research funding scene: the Finnish Cultural Foundation and the Scientific State Committee on East Karelia. After a long fundraising campaign, the Finnish Cultural Foundation was established in 1939. The base capital for the foundation was provided by collections from ordinary people and from several affluent donors. The collection effort proved successful: in 1939, the foundation had collected more than 20 million marks in donations. (Pohls 1989, 62–69.) The huge number of people donating small amounts of money reflects their enthusiasm for and trust in science and research, which supports the notion that the public viewed scientific institutions as reliable and legitimate sources of knowledge. The first grants by the Finnish Cultural Foundation in 1940 were more in the form of prizes than research grants, with one million marks being awarded each year between 1940 and 1941. In 1942, only two grants were awarded, both for food research. In 1943, on the other hand, most of the grants were allocated to research in East Karelia.

In 1943, a special East Karelia Committee[4] (Pohls 1989, 68) was established to review the grant applications received by the foundation and to make recommendations on whom was to receive the grants. As the name suggests, the focus was on research in East Karelia. The by-now wealthy foundation played an important role in funding research in various fields, including ethnology, in East Karelia during the Continuation War.

4. This was the Finnish Cultural Foundation's own governing body, which differed from the State Scientific East Karelia Committee.

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It was the major funder of research coordinated by the Scientific State Committee on East Karelia, and, according to Pohls, the proportion of national disciplines represented among the foundation's grant receivers was quite high. The grants were larger than those awarded by the scientific societies. For example, a total of 588,600 marks was awarded for 12 projects or expeditions from various fields in 1943. An expedition led by Dr Haavio for ethnological research on the Vepsian people received 40,000 marks – a large sum considering that the average grant from scientific societies was 3000–4000 marks (FLSssekc, letter to the Ministry of Education, 17 May 1944) per person per month (FCF, extract from the minutes of the Board, 7 April 1943). The foundation awarded two million marks in research grants in 1944 (Pohls 1989, 76). While the documents from that year have gone missing, traces of what the grants covered can be found in the archives of the scientific societies. For example:

> 3§ The Finnish Cultural Foundation [board] granted the society in the spring – letter dated 16 May, annex (not available) – a sum of 70,500 marks for grants to researchers travelling to East Karelia, and it was decided to account for and return the unused 60,500 marks. (FAS Cd3, 31 October 1944)

The State Scientific East Karelia Committee was set up by the Ministry of Education in December 1941. The aim of the committee was to coordinate and manage scientific research in East Karelia, which was occupied by Finnish troops during the Continuation War. The committee had nine members: seven professors from different disciplines, with ethnologist Dr Kustaa Vilkuna as secretary and Captain Reino Castrén, Doctor of Engineering, as a representative from the Headquarters of the Military Government of East Karelia (*Itä-Karjalan Sotilashallintoesikunta*). The committee was initially chaired by Kaarlo Linkola, a professor of botany. After he died in 1942, Väinö Auer, a professor of geography, became the chairman. (FLSssekc, 15 December 1941; Laine 1993, 106–115.) Both Linkola and Auer were senior members of the Academic Karelian Society (Laine 1993, 107–108).

The agenda of the State Scientific East Karelia Committee was underlined rather than concealed, and the research funding awarded was highly strategic and politically driven:

> The Ministry of Education has deemed it necessary to set up a committee for the coherent planning and guidance of scientific research activities in East Karelia. […] In addition, the commission should direct the research under discussion in such a way that, as far as possible, the aim is to create an overall picture of the new areas, which would make it absolutely clear that they belong to Finland. (FLSboard, 29 January 1942)

Immediately after its establishment, the committee sent letters to numerous scientific societies and other organisations inquiring about their plans for conducting studies in occupied East Karelia. Many societies, either alone or together with other societies in the same field, started to draw up plans. Scientific societies representing national disciplines like archaeology, ethnology, and folklore studies recognised the role and importance of their fields as builders of a Greater Finland movement and as supporters of political ambitions related to East Karelia. One example of this sentiment is a joint proposal by the Finnish Literature Society, the Finno-Ugric Society

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(*Suomalais-Ugrilainen Seura*), the Kalevala Society (*Kalevalaseura*), the Dictionary Foundation (*Sanakirjasäätiö*) and the Local Names Committee of the Scientific Societies (*Tieteellisten seurain paikannimitoimikunta*), in which they underline the significance of their field of study:

> National research in the field of the humanities, represented here by the above-mentioned societies and other associations, is the field of research which best clarifies the absolute national and historical affinity of the new regions with the former Finland. (FLSssekc, 28 February 1942)

No mention is made of the Greater Finland ideology or East Karelia in the minutes and application documents until after the war had begun in 1941. Yet, the quick reaction of the societies to the research plans comes as no surprise, as discussions had already clearly taken place before the State Scientific East Karelia Committee was set up – as the above quote, for example, suggests. A group of scholars had proposed cooperation efforts and devised large-scale research plans for ethnological research in East Karelia as early as the summer of 1941. The archive of the Finnish Antiquarian Society contains a letter dated 4 August 1941, just a little over a month after the start of the Continuation War, suggesting a joint expedition to East Karelia:

> As East Karelia comes more and more firmly and surely under the control of the Finnish troops and thus under the control of the Finnish state, it becomes necessary to save those scientific, cultural, and national values, the care of which is within the scope of your duties, the above-mentioned institutions and free societies. Twenty years of foreign domination in East Karelia have badly corrupted the original national culture, destroyed its spiritual strength, and also destroyed and decayed a large part of its material evidence. What remains, even if partially damaged, must be salvaged before the destruction is completed by the ravages of time and war. […] The task of the expedition is a preliminary pioneering work. The aim is to mount a rescue operation as quickly as possible, so that the last vestiges of material can be brought to bear in support of the rise of Greater Finland. Helsinki 4/VIII 1941. Sakari Pälsi, Väinö Salminen, and Kustaa Vilkuna. (FAS Es5, 4 August 1941)

With the support of the State Scientific East Karelia Committee, researchers from various disciplines in the natural sciences and humanities, such as botany, architecture, forestry, geography, geology, archaeology, and ethnology, went on expeditions to East Karelia in 1942–1944. It can be argued that the committee was the first Finnish multidisciplinary research programme, combining research from many different fields. The committee coordinated research worth a total of 1.1 million marks, enough for the researchers to work for approximately 1000 weeks combined during 1942–1944. The number of researchers funded was 125, out of which 45 were from the humanities or architecture. As many as 60 (possibly even 80–90) weeks were used for conducting research on buildings, including ethnological and architectural research. (Laine 1993, 119, 196.)

Eight ethnologists were funded over a period of three years by the Scientific State Committee on East Karelia: rather unusually for the time, five of them – Helmi Helminen, Tyyni Vahter, Hilkka Vilppula, Sylvi Sääski, and Sirkka Valjakka – were women. The main areas of interest were buildings, crafts, and domestic economy.

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Ethnologists worked in total for 30 weeks in East Karelia. Funding for 33 weeks of additional research went unused in 1944 because of the rapid evacuation of East Karelia in anticipation of a major offensive by the Soviet Union, which started already in June 1944. For example, Helmi Helminen had just arrived in the area in the early summer of 1944 when the order to evacuate was given (FNM Helminen's personalia).

The Headquarters of the Military Government of East Karelia (*Itä-Karjalan Sotilashallintoesikunta*) had a great deal of control over how many researchers were accepted into the area and the topics that they could study. Especially during the first year of the State Scientific East Karelia Commission's operations, in the summer of 1942, the rules were strict: only 20 researchers were granted a pass, and the topics were limited. Acceptable research topics were chosen for practical and strategic reasons; they were either necessary for the administration of East Karelia or they dealt with a topic that could not be postponed to a later date. Military officials also had concerns about the safety of the researchers. (Laine 1993, 120–122.) In the subsequent years, 1943 and 1944, the number of researchers increased to 40, and the topics were more freely chosen. Archaeological excavations, for example, could be done at that time, unlike in 1942. (FLSssekc letters, 18 May 1942; 21 April 1943; 17 May 1944.) The fact that ethnology was included on the short list of topics in 1942 (see points 6 and 7 below) is an indication of its importance in the construction of a Greater Finland.

> In view of the constraints of the situation, the opportunity may now be prepared to carry out only those investigations which are important to the administration of East Karelia or which cannot be postponed until a later date without irreparable damage. In view of the above considerations, the Headquarters of the Military Government of East Karelia can at this stage only agree to the following areas of investigation being carried out next summer: 1) plant geology and swamp studies for the benefit of agriculture and forestry; […] 2) studies on agricultural and forest pests; 3) studies in the field of fisheries; […] 4) studies on quaternary geological issues; 5) anthropological studies on the origin of the Russian-speaking population of Äänisniemi; 6) collection of folklore and ethnological knowledge in the border villages of Viena; and 7) photography of buildings of East Karelian and special features of folk life. (FLSssekc, letter from the East Karelia Military Administration Command to the Committee, 18 May 1942)

The State Scientific East Karelia Committee's application process was a mixture of individual applications from researchers, decisions taken by the committee itself, and collective decisions made by various societies and other organisations. The latter approach seems to have been the more common way to choose grant recipients, partly according to who was available and partly according to what was possible to do because of the circumstances of the war. For example, exemption from military service was often requested – more or less successfully – for researchers in the army for the duration of their scientific research period. Sometimes ethnologists (for example, Sylvi Sääski in 1943) had applied to one research area but were sent to another against their wishes. (FLSssekc, letter, 3 May 1943.) With only a few exceptions, no applications written by researchers themselves have survived from the time of the Continuation War. The researchers' own motives for conducting research in the occupied territories are therefore not so evident in the material. However, fieldwork reports and diaries sometimes reveal the burning enthusiasm that some researchers had for their work.

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For instance, in the summer of 1943, ethnologist Sirkka Valjakka had received a research grant for two months, but she ended up working for almost three months, the full amount of time allotted by her work permit for studies in East Karelia. When concluding her fieldwork report, she wrote the following:

> Vepsian folk knowledge is in great danger of being forgotten, of being lost. Moving around in the area of Lake Soutjärvi, it seems that this is one of the last chances to recover important information. One would hope that even three months of work would have saved at least something valuable. Äänislinna 27.10.-43 Sirkka Valjakka. (FLSssekc, 27 October 1943)

The funding for the research coordinated by the State Scientific East Karelia Committee came partly from the Ministry of Education and the Finnish Cultural Foundation and partly from the societies that initiated the research expeditions. For example, during the course of the Continuation War, five grants were awarded by the Finnish Literature Society for research in occupied East Karelia in 1941, as well as all of the society's 13 grants awarded during 1942–1944.

The Finnish Antiquarian Society coordinated its research plans with the Archaeological Commission (*Muinaistieteellinen toimikunta*, the predecessor to the Finnish Heritage Agency), which was responsible for the National Museum, before sending them to the Scientific State Committee on East Karelia. In 1942, the Finnish Antiquarian Society proposed awarding four grants for the summer of 1942, one of them for ethnological research. The ethnological project involved studying and drawing folk buildings in the Ludian areas. The importance of buildings as research objects was probably due not only to the tradition of building research and its role in the search for Finnish cultural traits, but because in villages emptied of occupants by the war, they were the most readily available research object. Buildings were also in danger of being destroyed near the front lines. The total cost of the expeditions was calculated at 22,500 marks, of which the society was prepared to pay 10,000, hoping to receive the rest from the committee. (FAS Cd3, Plan for 1942 expeditions to East Karelia, 23 February 1942; Laine 1993, 115–120.) On 25 February 1943, the Finnish Antiquarian Society's board made the following decision:

> 2§ It was decided to apply to the Finnish Cultural Foundation for a grant to carry out the artefact research work planned for next summer in the East Karelia region in accordance with the programme, as shown in the attached annex [annex missing]. The total amount of the grant requested is 70,000 marks, divided into 25,000 marks for archaeological work, 30,000 marks for ethnological work, and 15,000 marks for cultural historical work.

Attached to the minutes of the board meeting of 23 March 1944 is a handwritten travel plan for ethnological work done as part of an expedition to East Karelia. The plan was to send two researchers and a sketch artist to photograph and sketch buildings and one researcher to study women's handicrafts. The Finnish Antiquarian Society also awarded some grants outside the State Scientific East Karelia Committee framework. For example, MA Toini-Inkeri Kaukonen received 4500 marks for ethnological note-taking work among Ingrian refugees (FAS Cd3, 8 June 1943).

In the early stages of the war, ambitious plans were put forward for the occupied territories, which were certainly of interest in the field of ethnology. Tenho Pimiä (2009)

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has described various unrealised plans for East Karelia. One example is a proposal for an East Karelian research institute, put forward in 1941, with the aim of storing and organising material for the military administration of the region as a whole and for the scientific research done there. The institute would also have drawn up more general plans for further research on East Karelia, since the instability of local conditions meant that research could not be carried out freely. (Pimiä 2009, 230–233.) Provincial museums were planned for the Viena and Aunus areas, and a central museum in Uhtua. If implemented, such plans would have significantly increased resources and employment in the field of ethnology.

The State Scientific East Karelia Committee ceased its activities in 1944. After the war, in 1945, the scientific societies resumed their normal activities. The Finnish Antiquarian Society awarded four grants, one for archaeology and three for ethnological work, at a board meeting on 31 May 1945. One application was left on the table. Interestingly, all the grant recipients were non-academic researchers: craft teacher A.M. Paavola received 5000 marks for drawing folk funerary monuments in the Jyväskylä region, and craft teachers Sofia Rini and Sylvi Ollila each received 7000 marks for conducting an inventory of textiles in South Ostrobothnia.

While the Finnish Literature Society's Ethnological Committee discussed the awarding of grants on 24 April 1945, apparently few persons or groups had applied for one. A student nation from the university received 2500 marks for the participation of one student in an expedition to the Sahalahti area. The Director of the Folklore Archives suggested that a grant be offered to MA Helmi Helminen, who had worked in East Karelia and 'had proved to be a very skilful and diligent collector', for additional collection work to be carried out during the summer of 1945. The work would primarily focus on the remaining Ingrians in the country; thus, it serves as an indication that research on Finno-Ugric peoples was to be carried out for as long as possible. The committee proposed awarding Helminen a grant of 10,000 marks, for which she was expected to work for two months. At the May meeting, it proposed awarding a grant of 5000 marks to Maria Virolainen, a student, to collect folk poetry and ethnological material for one month from the remaining Ingrians. The committee also decided to set aside another 5000 marks for a grant 'in case a suitable candidate emerges'. (FLSec, 29 May 1945.) Later, in 1945, three grants were awarded to researchers working among Karelian refugees, mainly Ingrians.

Due to the outcome of the war, many political challenges and sensitivities emerged concerning the material collected on East Karelia, and thus not all of it could be published. For example, the Finnish Antiquarian Society was preparing an anthology called *Muinaista ja vanhaa Itä-Karjalaa* (1944, 'Ancient and Old East Karelia'), but only a printer's proof version was ever published. 'Due to the changed situation', the book project was ultimately buried (FAS Cd3, 31 October 1944; 3 May 1945). However, some researchers continued to work on the material that they had collected from East Karelia. For example, E.A. Virtanen (Anttila 1992, 169–172), who had received grants from the State Scientific East Karelia Committee (FLAssekc, 30 March 1942; 10 April 1942; 29 April 1943), obtained his doctorate in 1950 based on research conducted on the fishing rights and companies of the East Karelians (Virtanen 1950).

The debate surrounding the funding of ethnological research in the first half of the 1940s and the decisions made clearly show the extent to which politics influenced research. The role of scientific societies as truth-spots was politically exploited during

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the Continuation War, when societies were involved in the Greater Finland project and granted research funding for it. The societies saw this funding stream as an opportunity to strengthen their own activities and pursue lines of research that had long been impossible. The interests of those in academia aligned with the broader nationalist project (Pimiä 2012, 399). Although they defined the research questions in a very narrow and strategic manner from a present-day perspective, such a strategy was also in line with the research tradition, the task at hand (namely, participating in the common war effort), and the ideological climate of the time. The knowledge produced by the societies was valuable because of the legitimacy it brought them. Using research to better define East Karelia's Finnishness was thought to give credibility and weight to Finland's goals even at an international level.

Conclusions: Harnessing truth-spots

By studying the funding of ethnological research – by following the money – in the 1930s and during the war, it is possible to gain insights not only into the interests and development of ethnology in Finland but also into the use of ethnological knowledge in society. To achieve the status of knowledge, claims must be produced in the right place, and they must be validated by the right public (Livingstone 2003, 23). In this chapter, I have used archival materials on the funding of ethnological research to analyse the role of scientific societies as truth-spots for ethnological knowledge in Finland in the 1930s and early 1940s.

The concept of truth-spots can help shed light on the bigger picture, especially considering how scientific societies were viewed at the time and how they positioned themselves in terms of the production and use of ethnological knowledge during a period of political tension. Scientific societies such as the Finnish Literature Society and Finnish Antiquarian Society were respected institutions at the time. They produced and published ethnological knowledge that was valued and needed in society. The key scholars of the period, as well as a number of rising talents, were involved in society activities, as were a large number of volunteers from all over the country. The Finnish Cultural Foundation, though only founded in 1939, was also highly regarded, as evidenced by the large number of donors who contributed to its fundraising campaign. The research material reveals that the scientific societies and the researchers they sent into the field felt that they were, both in times of peace and war, producing reliable and valid ethnological knowledge, which was welcomed by society as important and legitimate knowledge. The scientific societies strengthened their role as truth-spots in a critical social situation, since funding for politically motivated research was channelled through them. The interests of the societies coincided with those of society overall.

The research material does not reveal much, though, about the ethnologists' personal thoughts regarding the political nature of the research or about their motivations and relationship in terms of the Greater Finland ideology. However, the concept of truth-spots can help clarify the thinking of the ethnologists and their contemporaries. In addition to laboratories, museums, or hospitals (or scientific societies), a truth-spot can also be a geographical location, that is, a place that lends credibility and legitimacy to claims and beliefs (Gieryn 2018, 1–3; see also Livingstone 2003). East Karelia was – and in some ways still is – a truth-spot, lending legitimacy to claims and beliefs

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related to the long and distinguished history of Finland and Finnishness (see, e.g., Fingerroos 2010; Sihvo 2017). During the war years, (East) Karelia, which had long been a truth-spot for knowledge about Finnishness, took on a new meaning as a truth-spot legitimising a social, nationalist agenda.

To become a truth-spot, a geographical place needs three key components: location, materiality, and narration. Thomas F. Gieryn's example of the Oracle of Delphi as a truth-spot can be used as a point of comparison. The oracle's remote and barren location was believed by the ancients to be the centre of the world. Visitors to the oracle could receive an answer to their question from the god Apollo. Materiality was represented, for example, by the treasuries and temples built on the site by those grateful for Apollo's prophecies, which fed the visitors' faith. The stories, interpretations, and imaginings associated with the oracle gave the place its meaning and value. (Gieryn 2018, 1–19.)

When looking at East Karelia, its location on both sides of the border between Finland and (Soviet) Russia, as well as the geographical remoteness and rural character of the region, highlighted its originality and credibility as the 'cradle of Finnishness' (see, e.g., *Muinaista ja vanhaa* 1944, 148–149). Its materiality was represented, for example, by the ethnological material and the ancient poems, runosongs, central to the national epic *Kalevala* (1835; 1849), collected in East Karelia. Ethnologists played a crucial role in legitimising the claims and beliefs both by adding to the materiality of the region and through their narration of it.

Ethnological material from East Karelia was recorded mainly through collecting artefacts, conducting interviews, taking notes, photography, and making drawings – all valid and trusted fieldwork methods. Fieldwork offered legitimacy to such discussions: what is collected from or (eye)witnessed in the field does not lie (Gieryn 2018, 41–42; Myllyntausta 2023, 177). The 'temples and treasuries' of Finnishness were erected in museums (see, e.g., Talvio 2016) and disseminated in literature. Stories and interpretations were central to nation-building and the defining of Finnishness, as well as to the construction of the Greater Finland ideology before and during the Continuation War. Although the political aspects of conducting research in East Karelia were by no means hidden during the war, it seems that they did not diminish East Karelia's significance as a national truth-spot. The study of East Karelia and the collecting of ethnological knowledge and material, the act of preserving of a disappearing heritage for future generations, were important tasks at the time from both scientific and national standpoints.

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Changing Paradigms

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The Making of Paradigms in Nordic Folklore Studies and Ethnology during the Cold War

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Introduction: The Nordic Region and the Making of Folk Culture Research

Although often framed as a military and diplomatic confrontation, the Cold War was also a conflict of ideas and ideologies (Barnhisel and Turner 2010; Fields 2020). The Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden) provide an interesting case for the study of the Cold War outcome in the academic context. In the post-war era, Nordic folklorists and ethnologists started to actively cooperate to discuss the theories and methods used in their disciplines. Two prominent organisations were established: namely, the Nordic Institute of Folklore (NIF) in 1959 and the Nordic Work Group of Ethnology and Folklore Students (NEFA) in 1963. Both associations were set up and began to flourish at a time when there was great rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union and their respective allies.

Scholarly disciplines are never placeless. The concept *geography of science* implies the idea that scientific knowledge bears signs of particular locations and their historical, political, and social traditions and contexts.[1] In addition to its conceptual relevance, especially in the Nordic context, the *place of scientific thinking* can be viewed as an emic term used by scholars in the field of folklore studies and ethnology, which attached great importance to regions, countries, and continents. Interestingly, the early theories or methods often approached folk culture from the point of view of its historical and geographic distribution. Approaches such as the migration of folklore and the transfer of oral traditions were paradigmatic in early twentieth-century folklore research in Finland, Denmark, and Sweden (e.g. von Sydow 1948, 45–48). Furthermore, ethnographic mapping used to be a specific method to display the distribution of particular items of folk culture (e.g. Ahlbäck 1945; Vuorela 1976). In many ways, the object of a study was thus theoreticised in terms of the importance of regions, places, geographical routes, and, at times, topography.

In spite of their different geopolitical stances, the Nordic scholars' mutual cooperation became a success story during the Cold War era. Within ethnological sciences, the Nordic Institute of Folklore (NIF) provided seminars and conferences for folklorists and ethnologists from different university departments and folklore archives. The institute was administered by professional folklorists, and in its heyday

1. I would like to thank Dani Schrire for introducing the concept of geography of science in his talk, 'A Sail through International Waters of Nordic "National Sciences"', held at the University of Helsinki on 2 September 2019. I would also like to thank Pertti Anttonen for his critical comments on my paper.

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during the 1980s it had five people working full-time in the office.[2] The position of the director was subject to rotation among the five countries.[3] For its 39 years of existence, the NIF organised dozens of seminars, conferences, and research projects. Moreover, it published books and newsletters. Unlike the NIF, members of the Nordic Work Group of Ethnology and Folklore students (NEFA, abbreviated from *Nordisk Etnologisk Folkloristisk Arbetsgrupp*) mostly consisted of masters-level students of folklore and ethnology from the Nordic universities. Besides having fun, the emphasis lay in informal meetings around a chosen research topic.

How did these two institutions promote and construct the idea of a common Nordic folk culture scholarship in the post-war era? What were they aiming to achieve? In order to understand how and why Nordic folklorists and ethnologists had a need to get together and share their ideas, I use the concept *geography of science*, which is based on the idea that the location of scientific endeavours matters in knowledge production (Burke 2012; Naylor 2005; Livingstone 1995; 2003). The NIF's and NEFA's attempt to make Nordic folklore studies and ethnology into a scholarly distinctive 'brand' must be put into its historical context. The idea of Nordic as something more than just geography started to bloom during the Cold War years, and my point of departure is that both the NIF and the NEFA actively took part in the making of the specific identity among the scholars in the region. In this chapter, I present the fieldwork seminar of the NEFA and the terminology project of the NIF by locating them in a certain site and geographical area during the period of 1963–1978. Since I am focusing on the NIF and NEFA, which brought together both folklorists and ethnologists, I do not take a stance on either of the fields. However, because almost all of the Finnish counterparts during the period of inquiry were folklorists, my emphasis is slightly on folklore studies.

The Nordics, Nordicness and the studies of folk in the Nordic region

The Nordics are made up of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and the three autonomous territories of the Faroe Islands and Greenland (Denmark) and Åland (Finland).[4] These countries have been considered to form a distinctive region by their linguistic ties but also through a history of political unions and the tradition of inter-governmental cooperation across national boundaries. Besides their geographical proximity, Nordic countries have shared cultural features, such as the strong role of the state and the weak position of the family in societal affairs, or the strong but secularised position of Lutheran religion in society, to name a few. Depending on the context, the term 'Nordics' may be grounded in geography, joint politics, history, or even a particular genre of art attempting to unite countries, which on closer investigation may appear in fact to be quite different (Hilson 2019).

2. List of paid NIF employees (1996).
3. The directors were Laurits Bødker from Denmark (1959–1966), Brynjulf Alver from Norway (1966–1968), Bengt Holbek from Denmark (1968–1971), Lauri Honko from Finland (1972–1990), and Reimund Kvideland from Norway (1991–1997).
4. The term 'Scandinavia' is still used as a synonym for 'Nordic' in English. Some insist that Scandinavia refers just to Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, and does not include Finland or Iceland. However, nowadays the term 'Nordic' is becoming increasingly common (e.g. Hilson 2019).

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During the Cold War years, the Nordic states took different positions on the East–West conflict. Denmark, Iceland, and Norway were among the founding members of NATO. Sweden was the only Nordic country that remained neutral during the Cold War, whereas Finland was obliged to form the Finno-Soviet Treaty of 1948 (YYA), pledging neutrality and friendship with the Soviet Union. In spite of their different geopolitical stances, or perhaps because of them, the Nordic states actively started to collaborate from the early 1950s onward. The Nordic Council that brought together members of parliament from each Nordic country was established in 1952. The major achievements of Nordic cooperation were the passport-free travel area ('Schengen before Schengen') in 1952, a free Nordic labour market in 1954, and reciprocal social security arrangements in 1955 (Forsberg 2013, 1163).

What was common in the Nordic states was awareness of their small size. In 1965, for example, the total number of inhabitants in the region was twenty million.[5] Due to their geographical position and shared understanding of a balanced attitude towards the superpowers, the Nordics started to explicitly establish an intermediary role between the two blocs throughout the Cold War. Without doubt, the collaboration helped to construct the idea that the Nordics were an integral part of Europe but simultaneously distinct from it (Strang et al. 2021, 28). Though politically independent, all five countries shared the belief that they had much in common historically, economically, and culturally.

In addition to freedom of movement, science became a strategic instrument of influence in international politics during the Cold War. Rather than hard politics, humanistic scholarship across the national Nordic boundaries represented a form of soft power. In other words, instead of playing alone, the Nordics formed a differentiated area, which also justified scientific cooperation. Within the study of folk culture, communication between Nordic scholars had been established already in 1907 when three folklorists – Kaarle Krohn from Finland, Axel Olrik from Denmark, and Carl von Sydow from Sweden – founded the *Folklore Fellows*. At that time, Nordic folklore studies also had a central role internationally. Due to intellectual exchanges, many of the classical theories were developed in the region, including the comparative method of folk poetry by Krohn, the epic laws of narratives by Olrik, and the concept of *oicotype* by von Sydow. Besides these theories based on textual comparison, Nordic scholars were pioneers in the study of folk culture as an academic discipline. For example, the first folklore courses were introduced as early as 1863 at the University of Copenhagen, and the first professorships of folklore were established in Oslo in 1886 and in Helsinki in 1898 (Kvideland and Sehmsdorf 1989).

Two major wars, along with the deaths of these leading figures, interrupted active communication. After the Second World War, however, collaboration gradually revived. For example, the *ARV: Nordic Yearbook of Folklore* began to be published in 1945 and the Nordic Institute of Folklore (NIF) was established in 1959 (Rogan 2013, 96). On a broader scale, cooperation was facilitated by the fact that the study of folk cultures in the Nordic region emphasised their national significance and the desire of smaller nations to establish a distinct cultural identity (Lehtipuro 1983, 208). The question of

5. According to sample demographic statistics of 1965, there were around 4.5 million inhabitants in both Finland and Denmark, 3.7 million in Norway, 7.5 million in Sweden, and 200,000 in Iceland. See the Nordic Statistics Database 2023.

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national identity and its expression in folklore resulted in endeavours to document rural folk culture, which in turn resulted in large collections of archival material in Oslo, Helsinki, Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Reykjavík.

Instead of choosing a side during the Cold War, Nordic scholars turned to their neighbours. For Finns, who organised the fieldwork seminar of 1965 and had the NIF's director position and office in 1972–1990, neutrality meant being between a rock and a hard place. This in-between position became the core of national self-understanding in the decades after the Second World War (Aunesluoma and Rainio-Niemi 2017). It also resulted in a nearly absolute practice of silence, the use of indirect expressions, and reading between the lines (Salminen 1999). Throughout the Cold War and until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Finns were silent about the Soviet Union and its problems. Self-censorship concerned all kinds of public expressions, from media to publications and public debates (Hentilä 2016; Stark 2021). In Finnish humanities, for example, researchers did not directly touch upon Soviet Estonia or the Soviet Jewish population, both forbidden topics in Soviet rhetoric.

The approach of Sweden was different. Since the end of the Second World War, tens of thousands of Baltic people had escaped from Soviet occupation to reach Sweden. The Swedish attitude towards the refugees behind the Iron Curtain was liberal (Stöcker 2012, 14), and thus the articulation of opinions and expressing of arguments were free even by Western standards. This did not mean, however, that exile folklorists and ethnologists were able to build an eminent career in Sweden. As Barbro Klein has pointed out, the academic works of the Baltic researchers living in exile in Sweden were not included in introductory textbooks or anthologies of Swedish ethnology and folklore studies (Klein 2017, 100–101; see also Metslaid in this book). Thus, the perception of Swedish society's openness was not unambiguous at the practical level. It is notable that each Nordic state had its own distinct contours and context within its society during the Cold War.

The NIF, NEFA, and concept of geography of science

In this chapter, geography of science has basically two meanings. First, it refers to the history of folklore studies and ethnology in the Nordic countries. Ethnological knowledge production in the late 1960s and still in the early 1970s was inextricably intertwined with earlier practices, where the scope of a study was tied to the relevance of geographical distribution of folk items. In this scholarly mindset, geography was undeniably an important factor in explaining folk culture. Consequently, when the Nordic folklorists and ethnologists started to ask new research questions and set agendas, the underlying assumption was the idea of the region's presumed particularity. Secondly, geography of science can be understood in the context of Cold War geopolitics. The Nordic countries were small players vis-à-vis the superpowers, and all of them, especially Finland due to its location, feared the Soviet Union. Folklore studies and ethnology as disciplines became implicated in this geopolitical turn, and in this regard, geography played a significant role in the Nordic countries.

Geographic region was central in the NIF from the beginning: at first in terms of Scandinavia, and when Finnish researchers joined the NIF, 'the Nordics'. The NIF emphasised the Nordic states as forming a regionally based school of thought in

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folklore studies. Its founding document stated that the NIF's core interest was in Nordic folk poetry, primarily fairy tales and legends, as well as the sub-genres that had type and motif kinship with these traditional groups, in addition to other categories of folk poetry, for example, riddles, proverbs, and rhymes (Nordisk Udredningsserie 1960, 2, 38). Because of this wide category of interests, it was easy for the NIF to attract oral lore researchers, who, apart from Sweden, had their own subject field in their national academia. Unlike elsewhere in the Nordics (e.g. Kolsrud 1967), ethnology in Sweden focused on Swedish regional traditions and customs and had a closer proximity to anthropology and the social sciences (e.g. Daun 1972; Anttonen 2024, 195). Later, particularly under the leadership of Lauri Honko, as demonstrated by Pertti Anttonen, the scope of the NIF expanded to include folk culture in both its verbal and social forms (Anttonen 2024, 192–193, 200). Although Swedish scholarship was not formally labelled as folklore studies, Swedish ethnologists actively participated in the activities of the NIF from the outset, likely due to Sweden's undisputed central position within the Nordic region.

As umbrella organisations serving as coordinating agencies for folklore studies and (Swedish) ethnology in the Nordic region, the NIF and NEFA provided intellectual resources and identity to researchers, archivists, and students. The Nordic Institute of Folklore was funded by the governments of the five Nordic countries via the Nordic Council of Ministers. The NIF was first located in Copenhagen, Denmark, and from 1972 onward until the end of its existence in 1997 in Turku, Finland. The site of science in that matter was located in Finland, which embedded the NIF's work also as 'a view from Finland', that is, in a local context. For the first two decades, the NIF especially promoted academic folklore studies and its academic profession. Its activities included regular conferences and publishing three types of publications on a regular basis.[6]

In addition to the research-focused NIF, students established their own organisation in Oslo in 1963. One of the reasons behind the idea of the NEFA – that is, the Nordic Working Group on Ethnology and Folklore Students – was to protest against the separation of material and spiritual folk culture in different departments in academia (Kouri et al. 2013). Moreover, the NEFA's goal was to promote more active contacts between the practitioners of both disciplines in the region and to provide a platform for active research, teaching, and debate. The NEFA consisted of a board with representatives from each Nordic department of ethnology or folklore studies.[7] Not all the original members were students in the strict sense of the word, since many of them had been in the field for some time (McCall 1973, 65). Unlike the NIF, the NEFA was explicitly an organisation for both folklorists and ethnologists and it did not function as a locatable place. Instead, all the NEFAs throughout the Nordic universities tended to be independently responsible for social events and student activities. What was important was that it organised official meetings and workshops across the Nordic

6. The *NIF Newsletter* was published 3–4 times a year, concentrating on what was happening in the different Nordic departments at the time. The *NIF Publication* series was a series of topical books, published at irregular intervals. The *NIF Rapporter* presented the results of the ongoing NIF projects.
7. The first NEFA board members were Åse Astrup (Norway), Juha Pentikäinen (Finland), Åke Daun (Sweden), Alan Hjorth Rasmussen (Denmark), Reimund Kvideland (Norway), Goran Rosander (Sweden), Lars Erik Larsson (Sweden), Nils Storå (Finland), and Vibeke Wille (Denmark).

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region and published the journal *Nord Nytt*: *nordisk tidsskrift for etnologi og folkloristic*, which was published in 1963–2009.

Both the NIF and NEFA were established in the post-war era, in which social democratic parties had a strong influence on Nordic societies. Not only did these parties fundamentally shape the emerging welfare states and many of their institutions and organisations, but they also left their distinct mark on cultural life, the education system, and applied social research (Östling et al. 2020, 4). In Sweden, the concept of *folkhem* (literally 'people's home') became a metaphor for the Swedish welfare state, but it was – and still is – used and analysed in a broader sense throughout the Nordic region (Götz 2019).

Although folklorists and ethnologists were not integrated into political and social planning in the same strict sense as sociologists, one can argue that they adopted the idea of *folkhem* for their disciplinary premises. As Åke Daun (1996, 183) has concluded in his review on Swedish ethnology, during the 1970s ethnologists and folklorists provided 'background information' for decision-making: how people used to arrange their lives, and what they did and how they interacted in the family, in the neighbourhood, and at the workplace. More importantly, they focused on what ordinary people said about all this, and how they expressed themselves. According to Fredrik Skott, *folkhem* influenced the idea of collective progress in Sweden but also contributed to the idea of a folk tradition that should be highlighted and protected. From this perspective, questioning the idea of *folkhem* was almost seen as an anti-national act (Skott 2008, 86). In Finland, the term *yhtenäiskulttuuri* ('common culture') was frequently used to indicate the shared elements of Finnish common culture. Prominent scholars, such as Matti Kuusi, were often seen on television explaining the aspects of common culture. Increasingly, the site of science was also publicity. Moreover, Finnish folklorists and ethnologists actively took part in education policy programs where they listed 'the most important objects of a study in each field of national sciences'.[8] In many ways, scholars of folk culture engaged in promoting the idea of a good national culture.

The national self-perception of being neutral, alongside with the ideological war between the East and West, had an impact on how global power politics and ideological struggles influenced knowledge production. Cooperation with other Nordic countries provided a solution: scholars did not have to take a stand on the Cold War. In this process, the NIF was a perfect match for Finns, and without doubt, it also was highly beneficial for Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, and Icelandic scholars, too. In the early years of the NIF, academic life in all the Nordic states was dominated by a few departments of ethnology or folkloristics in well-established universities. Influenced by American models, however, new pedagogical and scientific ideas started to gain ground, and power relations within academia gradually changed. Social sciences, behavioural sciences, natural sciences, and engineering advanced their positions, while the humanities started to lose their importance (Östling et al. 2020, 11–12; Honko 1983, 14). In this changing academic climate, many folklorists and ethnologists actively turned to the social sciences, especially anthropology and sociology, which offered new kinds of tools for research of folklore and traditions in a more holistic framework. One of the outcomes in this process was the importance of fieldwork, which can be seen as a paradigm shift.

8. *Kansallisten tieteiden kehittämisohjelma* 1966–80.

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Fieldwork as a paradigm shift

In the early 1960s, folklore studies in the Nordic countries could be classified as 'literary folklore studies' (e.g. Zumwalt 1988, 99), in which research material consisted solely of archived folklore texts. Although students occasionally collected items of folk culture in the field, this type of collecting primarily focused on previously known items or specific genres of oral tradition. The most common method involved an academic interviewer asking a member of the 'folk' to recall or recite various forms of folklore, such as myths, charms, and proverbs, from memory. Notes were handwritten and concentrated on clearly defined genres of folklore (Stark 2014, 48–49). In the early 1960s, students and young scholars felt that fieldwork required both more practical and theoretical attention. Empiricism and the use of fragmented, often biased archive material were criticised.

In fact, the idea of fieldwork methods led to the creation of the NEFA in 1963. The initiative was undertaken by a young Finnish student of folklore, Juha Pentikäinen, who had done some experimental fieldwork with religious sects in Finland. His teacher at the time, Lauri Honko, was then a young PhD who had started to record belief narratives with a microphone and tape recorder and analysed his interviews by using psychological theories (Kouri et al. 2013). Moreover, Honko had made a research visit to the US (University of California at Berkeley), where he was introduced to new ideas regarding the study of folk cultures. Apart from Honko and Pentikäinen, Finnish researchers had not used in-depth interviews as a method of data collection. In the United States, as Honko discovered during his visit, Kenneth Goldstein was studying fieldwork as a method for his PhD, which he later published as *A Guide for Field-Workers in Folklore* in 1964. This sparked an interest that the NEFA seminar organisers immediately took into consideration. As the notes of the NEFA's team asked, 'Is Mr Goldstein right in demanding that it is crucial for the future of folklore studies to include fieldwork practices and techniques in the university curriculum?'[9]

After the decision to hold the fieldwork seminar in Finland, the Finnish team started to plan the event. It was to take place either in one of Finland's Swedish-speaking municipalities or in a town which had both Finnish and Swedish speakers. Because Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish people could understand each other's languages without great difficulty, a Swedish-speaking group was necessary for the encounters between students and the local community. Vöyri (Vörå in Swedish), a small municipality on the west coast of Finland, was selected as the location. The Vörå/Vöyri inhabitants were mostly Swedish speakers, whose livelihoods were still based on agriculture and fishing. The duration of the seminar was nearly two weeks in June 1965.

At the time the NEFA fieldwork seminar was carried out, interviewing as a qualitative research method was new. Therefore, the fieldwork seminar represented a whole new concept of acquiring ethnological knowledge. Besides interviews, the seminar aimed at comparing different types of learning about traditions, that is, reviewing how transcriptions and sound recordings differed from one another and how they shaped the sources. Moreover, the organisers wanted to discuss the dichotomy of oral versus literary traditions.

9. The minutes on 2 February 1965, are titled "Pohjoismainen kenttätyöseminaari Vaasan kesäyliopistossa 8.–19.6.1965".

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Interestingly, the seminar was exclusive: the participants were chosen by professors from each country. The leaders of the working group were Finnish folklorists and Swedish ethnologists. Altogether eleven Finns, nine Swedes, three Danes (one of them Faroese), and three Norwegians took part in this fieldwork course. The Finnish organisers pondered what the other Nordic participants probably expected to learn in the seminar: 'Our Nordic friends may arrive here because they think Finland is a forerunner in collecting folk culture (?) or to see an interesting hinterland of Scandinavia where old customs and tradition are still alive (?).'[10] The question marks at the end of the sentences indicate uncertainty.

Before the seminar, participants were requested to name the types of folk culture they preferred to study as well as questions they wished to discuss at the workshop gatherings. For example, Mats Hellspong, who later became a professor of ethnology at Stockholm University, included sociological and historical methods in ethnology, collecting techniques, ethnological questionnaires, and 'case studies' in his list, among other things. Due to the great range of interests originating from the disciplinary division between ethnology and folklore studies, participants were divided into six sub-groups. Three of them concentrated on folklore. The material culture groups were divided into three groups: built heritage, crafts and craftsmen, and clothing. The schedule followed daily routines: fieldwork interviews were carried out in the daytime and discussions in the evenings. Without doubt, the seminar scheme resembled a childhood summer camp with a structured timetable and program. Comprising twelve fieldwork days, the NEFA seminar resulted in sixty hours of interviews and 650 photographs. The fieldwork method as a procedure for knowledge production challenged previous historical and archive-based paradigms in both folklore studies and ethnology. However, the shift was not only a Nordic discovery; widening of the scope of folk culture was occurring in Western scholarship more broadly. The most explicit sign of this was Goldstein's guidebook for field workers, mentioned above, although only a few participants had read it before the Vöyri/Vörå seminar, and it was unfamiliar to most of the students who began planning the fieldwork seminar in 1963.

The interest in fieldwork bore practical fruit relatively slowly – at least in Finland. Still a decade later, there were very few folklorists or ethnologists who had published studies based solely on a fieldwork method (Lehtipuro 1976, 14). In an article published in 1976, Lauri Honko listed fieldwork studies, which he grouped into autobiographical, theoretical, and ideological categories (Honko 1976, 34–35). By this time, theories and methods of fieldwork created in the United States had influenced many scholars, and the hot topic in international anthropology, which later in the 1980s came to Nordic scholarship, was the level of the personal approach in fieldwork. Honko pointed out that 'we' (meaning 'Nordic folklorists and ethnologists') should develop our own way to conduct fieldwork. In the Nordic countries, folklore studies and ethnology focused on domestic folk culture and did not carry the burden of colonial history, as was the case in many Western countries. What Honko meant by the Nordic way of doing fieldwork (Honko 1976, 38) remains unclear.

What then was the contribution of Nordic scholars for folklore studies and ethnology in international terms? In the history of American folklore studies, John Michael Vlach summarised that the 'Scandinavian understanding of the subject matter as the total

10. Ibid.

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way of life of a group of people' started to have an impact on folklorists in the US from the late 1960s onward. Actually, the study of material culture in the United States dates back to the early 19th century.[11] However, this research was primarily confined to museums, where staff had limited interaction with students. Since American folklorists holding professorships at universities had already studied oral traditions, customs, and beliefs, the major impact of the concept of folklife was the inclusion of tangible culture. According to Vlach, because the term 'folklore' proved too inelastic to comfortably cover both verbal and material traditions, the focus of American folklore studies began including both material culture as well as verbal and spiritual expressions (Vlach 1988, 18). This case underscores the fact that universities and the research conducted in them have more influence in shaping paradigms than, for example, museums or archives, which have historically worked more with the general public.

Fieldwork as the new paradigmatic methodology enabled the expansion of the scope of research. The tangible aspects of culture – physical objects, resources, and spaces – were more profoundly understood as part of folk culture. To put it boldly, the Nordic understanding of how folk culture should be conceptualised influenced American folklore studies. Without doubt, one reason for this was the Nordic research collaboration within ethnological sciences, and combining Danish, Finnish, Icelandic, and Nordic folklore studies with Swedish ethnology.

The Nordic terminology of folklore in 1970–1978

In 1970, Nordic folklorists initiated a Nordic project that aimed to produce a common terminology. Although the explicit purpose for the terminology was to create a reader for students of folklore studies (and ethnology), the implicit goal was to strengthen theoretical competence in Nordic academia in relation to the United States, which had become the epicentre of the blooming field of folklore studies. The terminology project was not the first of its kind in the Nordic context. A decade earlier, Swedish and Danish researchers had published a two-volume dictionary of ethnological terms (Hultkrantz 1960; Bødker 1965). This project had been initiated by UNESCO, first by the Frenchman Arnold van Gennep and then by a Swede, Sigurd Erixon, both famous scholars in the field (Rogan 2013, 132). In addition, a special terminology of riddles had been published by the NIF in 1964 by a team of Norwegian, Danish, and Finnish folklorists (Alver et al. 1964).

The NIF terminology team consisted of seven men: Brynjulf Alver, Bengt Holbek, Lauri Honko, Bengt af Klintberg, Reimund Kvideland, Juha Pentikäinen, and Iørn Piø. The idea was that the concepts should be practical and 'non-encyclopaedic',[12] and that there should be a consensus about the terms and their definitions among

11. Overall, ethnology has its own history and connotations in the US. The American Ethnological Society (AES) was founded in 1842, and from 1972 onward, it has published the journal *American Ethnologist*. As a field of study, it initially focused on North American Indian cultures and later expanded to broader questions in anthropology (Helm 1984). Besides the AES, the Bureau of Ethnology was established in 1879 by the US Congress as a research unit of the Smithsonian. It also concentrated on North American Indian cultures (Smithsonian 2024).
12. The note summarised Brynjulf Alver's letter on 13 May 1970.

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Nordic researchers. Finally, according to the preliminary plan, the outcome would be a collection of terms that both students and researchers could use without difficulties. The team used English, and the language used in the publication was English. This choice indicated that the terminology was aimed at a wider audience.

At first the board of editors decided to choose the 160 most important concepts in the field (for examples of the terms, see Picture 1). The aim was not only to define a term but also include an article on the chosen term, with links to sub-terms. The main emphasis was on the operational value. The plan was that after the preliminary editing round, Lauri Honko would take the terminology to the United States and request American folklorists to comment on whether the concepts 'were eligible and accurate for the international use'. The board thus purposefully wanted to pay attention to their American colleagues. The timetable was optimistic: the goal was to finish 80% of the terms within eight months. Authors were advised to produce a page on each term. They were given instructions regarding the structure of entries: the text should consist of intellectual historical background and a bibliography (1/10), the actual definition (3/10), examples, if necessary (2/10), applicability for folklore studies (3/10), and other references (1/10). Each author was expected to write 15 entries.[13] According to the initial plan, the terminology would also consist of an introduction explaining the nature of the project and its principal questions. Authors were encouraged to write their terms in English, but if they wished to work more efficiently in a Scandinavian language, they were allowed to do so and the texts would be translated into English.

The work was initiated by a team of editors.[14] The project headquarters were located at the University of Turku, Finland, but the discussions were held in special gatherings in different Nordic countries. From early on, there were problems and challenges. Some authors felt that the original list of 160 terms was not at all adequate, and choosing one term but not another was too limiting and even biased. In 1976, the list of chosen terms had been sent to 63 reviewers chosen by Lauri Honko and the NIF board. The first round of reviews was implemented anonymously. In his letter to the reviewers, Honko expressed a wish that they should read the articles 'from the point of view of the present methodological situation of folkloristics'. Moreover, he advised the reviewers to take the freedom to point out 'all obsolete or inadequate features'.[15] Honko promised that the editors would take the reviews into account and that the reviewers would be mentioned in the preface of the publication. Finally, he stated that the aim was to produce a normative terminology – not a cumulative one – in which a student could find a handy concept, like an instrument in academic debates.

From early on, Lauri Honko was the *primus motor* of this NIF project. He wanted to get feedback especially from American folklorists. The original list of reviewers included 11 American, 9 Swedish, 7 Finnish, 7 Norwegian, 5 Danish, 4 German-speaking (German and Swiss), 3 Hungarian, and 3 Soviet scholars, as well as one from both Israel and Italy.[16] The large number of American reviewers highlights Honko and

13. Lauri Honko's letter to the NIF board on 26 February 1972.
14. Alver had 22 terms, Holbek 9, Honko 49, af Klintberg 8, Kvideland 10, Pentikäinen 30, and Piø 1.
15. Lauri Honko's letter to the reviewers in May 1976.
16. The American reviewers were Roger Abrahams, Richard Bauman, Dan Ben-Amos, Harold Brunwald, Linda Dégh, Richard Dorson, Alan Dundes, Robert Georges, Herbert Halpert,

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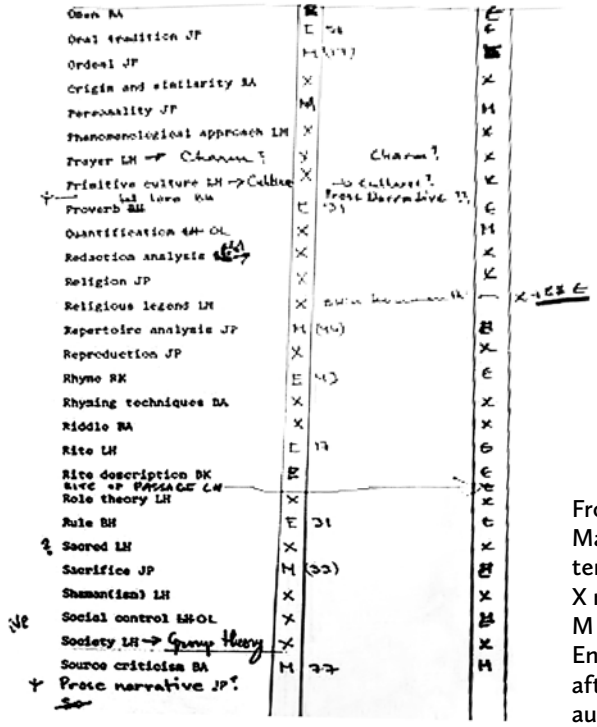
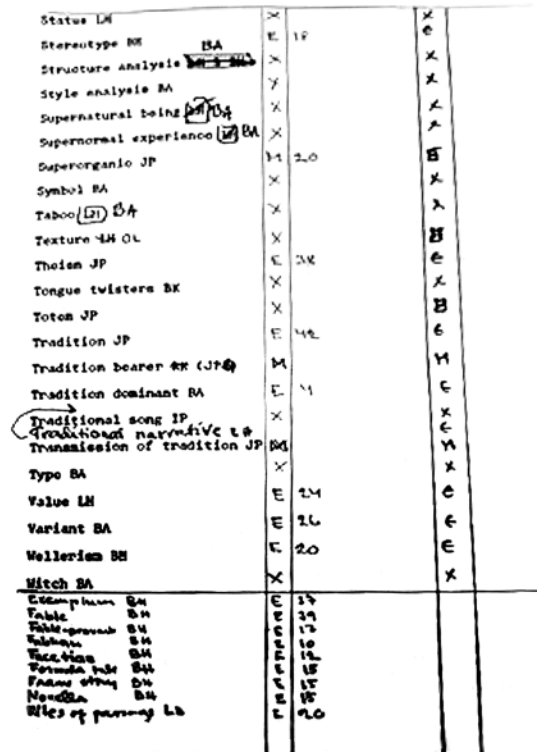


From omen to prose narrative. Markings made in the NIF's terminology project in 1978. X meant a missing manuscript; M was for manuscript and E for English translation. The initials after each term referred to an author." Photo: Eija Stark.



From the word status to witch, a list that was later expanded to include exemplum and rites of passage. Markings made in the NIF's terminology project in 1978. Photo: Eija Stark.

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Alver's wish to include their US colleagues and perhaps impress key players of the field there. In terms of the number of discussants, it is notable how the pre-war dominance of German-speaking scholarship had lost its power.[17] The role of the Soviet folklorists was relatively minimal, probably representing a balancing element. It is noteworthy that none of the Soviets were from the Baltic area.[18] Unlike the absence of Estonians, who historically have had strong expertise in ethnological sciences, the Hungarians' relative share was considerable.[19]

Given Lauri Honko's central role and the location of the NIF's office in Finland, the selection of reviewers reflected a distinct Finnish perspective. Although Finnish society was publicly sympathetic to the Soviet Union, American ideas were, unofficially, more closely followed. This was especially true for Honko, who, despite conducting fieldwork in the Soviet Union, looked to the West for theoretical inspiration. In choosing the reviewers, the *place* where scientific knowledge was produced did matter. The Hungarians' strong representation can thus be interpreted in terms of the prevailing idea of Finnish and Hungarian languages being linguistically related. The same did not go for Estonians who, during the Cold War years in Finland, were silenced in the public debate.

The ambitious terminology project faced additional challenges and problems. After the NIF authors' team had finished their articles, the reviewers started their work in 1976–1977. They were asked to write their comments in the manuscript with a pencil or type it on a separate sheet in the language of their choice. Although the use of many languages increased the editorial burden, the hardest thing was to decide how to take all the comments into account. Some gave their feedback in a short letter while others sent the entire manuscript back with their remarks in the margins. Many suggested more terms to be included, which indicated that ethnological sciences 'exhibited distinctly regional features' (Livingstone 2003, 134). When taking the list beyond the Nordic region, to the level of the continent and the whole world, it appeared as a product that was arbitrary.

The reviews can be divided into three groups. One included critical comment on the chosen terms and their relevance for the discipline(s). Why was a certain term included but not another? Richard Bauman, for example, wrote that terms that had great significance, such as context, performance, structure, and style, were not covered in the draft version. Jan Harold Brunwald wondered why the term 'folklife (material culture)' did not have its own heading. He did note, however, that its inclusion would have opened a whole new area to be covered. Although Lauri Honko explicitly intended to include ethnology in the NIF, in practice this did not occur, at least not in this project. After all, the terminology focused on folklore and the editorial team consisted of folklore specialists.

Wayland Hand, and W. Edson Richmond. The Israeli reviewer was Heda Jason; the Italian was Alessandro Falassi. Later, when the project had been ongoing for some years, the total number number of reviewers grew (to include nine Finnish scholars and an Icelandic one, Hallfredur Örn Eiríksson).

17. The German-speaking reviewers were Hermann Bausinger, Ina-Maria Greverus, Lutz Röhrich, and Max Lüthi.
18. The Soviet reviewers were Eino Kiuru, Eliazar Meletinskij, and Kiril Čistov.
19. The Hungarian reviewers were Tekla Dömötör, Gyula Ortutay, and Vilmos Voigt.

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The second type of critique addressed the absent points of view on a given concept. The Finnish folklorist Matti Kuusi wrote that Bengt Holbek's article on proverbs did not take into account East European phraseological studies and in a biased manner relied too much on Archer Taylor's research. In his review, Kuusi suggested that the author should add more recent studies on proverbs by Finnish scholars. The third type of critique dealt with studies that had been ignored in the entries. Surprisingly often, the uncited studies seemed to have a kind of area relevance, as was the case with Matti Kuusi's comments. Some reviewers suggested publications to be cited because of their national relevance, and others asked the editors to include their own publications in the bibliography.

The NIF's terminology project never came to an end, because funding ran out. 'Too many cooks spoil the broth' was the more accurate reason, however. The project had two leaders, Honko and Alver, but in practice it was coordinated by a secretary or, at times, two secretaries, who did not have a PhD degree or strong experience with academic writing or editing. Numerous people were involved in the making and re-making of the concepts. In 1978, Bengt Holbek expressed his doubts in a straightforward manner:

> I have gradually lost faith in the whole project. Every time I have thought about it, I have felt a kind of uncertainty about it, which has gradually taken firm form as a critique of the theoretical foundation of the work itself. I simply no longer believe that it is possible to give reasonable, unequivocal definitions of folkloric genres at the level where we have worked so far, for the reason that we are talking about historical, changeable formats that do not need to manifest themselves as uniform in different geographical or cultural environments.[20]

What Holbek was articulating was a certain generalism into which the project had transformed over the years.

In retrospect, the idea of a Nordic terminology written collectively was too challenging. In the end, the project did not have much to do with the Nordic perspective, as Holbek pointed out. Wayland Hand, who was at the time the recently retired director of UCLA's Center for the Study of Comparative Folklore and Mythology, wrote to the editors:

> Congratulations on your effort to systematise a discipline that is becoming even more centrifugal in scholarship and methodology. Folklore is certainly not as simple as our illustrious forebears had thought, but neither is it as complex and arcane as many of the modern practitioners would lead one to infer.[21]

Although the final publication never came out, the process itself generated relatively active discussion behind the scenes, outside of curricula and teaching.

20. "Jeg efterhånden har mistet tiltroen til hele terminologi-projektet. Hver gang jeg har tænkt på det, har jeg felt en slags usikkerhed ved det, som efterhånden har antaget fast form som en kritik af selve arbejdets teoretiske grundvold. jeg tror helt enkelt ikke længere på, at det er muligt at give fornuftige, entydige definitioner af folkloristiske genrer på det niveau, hvor vi hidtil har arbejdet, af den grund at der er tale om historiske, foranderlige størrelser, som ikke behöver at gestalte sig ensartet i forskellige geografisk/kulturelle miljöer." Holbek's letter to NIF secretary Gun Herranen on 11 April 1978.
21. A letter to Lauri Honko on 23 February 1977.

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The terminology project slowly faded away. Perhaps geography challenged scientific practices, as the way in which they were made, received and negotiated expanded too widely. The number of archived papers started to decrease from 1978 onward. Whereas the fieldwork seminar of 1965 marked the methodological paradigm shift that had a long-lasting effect in the study of folklore and ethnology, the attempt to define the core concepts in the Nordic discipline never got wind beneath its wings. The terminology project has not been mentioned in later publications of the NIF. On the contrary, the NIF put its effort into other activities, such as founding special working groups, for example, for ballad and folksong research and children's lore. Without doubt, the NIF genuinely contributed to the field in the Nordic countries, since it published not only newsletters but also studies conducted by Nordic folklorists and ethnologists. The NIF's project regarding common terms is also a reminder that there has always been more research, and discussions about it, than what we find in the final publications.

Conclusion: The Nordic region as a site of folk culture scholarship shaped by the East-West Conflict

The NEFA and the NIF were both established during the Cold War, which was waged especially on political, cultural, economic, and propaganda fronts, having only limited recourse to weapons. Besides scientific institutions, Nordic rhetoric began to appear in dozens of other organisations, from economic ones to political ones. Historically, the study of Nordic folk culture had had a strong position in the universities across the region, but during the Cold War years, folklore studies and ethnology consolidated their academic status in terms of scholarly associations as well as the number of professorships in new and recently founded universities from the 1960s onward. This kind of atmosphere fostered novel ideas, which cooperation among Nordic researchers enabled. These innovations would not have been achievable in isolation; they necessitated the integration of diverse locations and the people involved in them.

Both the NEFA and the NIF played crucial roles in promoting and constructing a common Nordic folk culture scholarship during the Cold War era. They did so not only by fostering academic collaboration across the region but also by embedding their work within the broader geopolitical context of East-West tensions. Their efforts aimed to strengthen and distinguish Nordic academic identity and unity, creating a platform for intellectual exchange that extended beyond national borders. Ultimately, these institutions sought to advance a shared cultural understanding and scholarly framework capable of withstanding the pressures of the bipolar global order.

Fieldwork as a new method among Nordic folklorists and ethnologists found its start in the NEFA's seminar in 1965. The initiative and the practical organising of the seminar were mainly conducted by a young, new generation of researchers, who broke away from traditional archive-based practices in folklore studies and ethnology. How Nordic this attempt was, however, is a question which should be addressed the other way round. Would each Nordic folklore studies and ethnology institution have discovered the method of fieldwork by themselves? Probably not, since they were all relatively small, and many of the leading figures at the time represented generations that can be described as conservative nationalists. The Nordic collaboration was not

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only a new generational outburst but also offered a domain to develop novel ideas without worrying too much about the national academic establishments.

The new paradigm found the scope of its object, folk culture, in tandem with a wider understanding of human nature and social communities. Although this paradigm shift occurred broadly in the West, it is not an exaggeration to say that the NEFA's fieldwork seminar kicked off something very new. In the United States, where folklore studies were strengthening their intellectual position at that time, fieldwork as the method for folklorists took its special shape. The NEFA team was aware of Kenneth Goldstein's book project on fieldwork methods, but they did their planning on their own and before Goldstein's book was published. All in all, folk culture was no longer a comparative study of texts in archives but a study of contexts. These precursors knew they were involved in the making of a paradigm shift, not only in their national research traditions but also in the Nordics and more widely in Western folklore studies and ethnology. A result of the fieldwork seminar was the publication of the book *Fältarbetet: Synpunkter på etno-folkloristisk fältforskning* ('Fieldwork: Perspectives on Ethno-folkloristic Field Research') in 1968, which represented a landmark in the discipline(s) in the Nordic countries.

The NIF began its project for a common Nordic terminology in folklore studies in 1970, but unlike the NEFA fieldwork seminar and its aftermath, the work was not resolved, and it did not come to an end. There were various reasons for this. The project management was not satisfactory. The terms were restricted only to 160. There were seven authors on the team and dozens of reviewers. Over the years, there were almost a hundred people involved in the project. Instructions for the authors forbade using examples, although these were originally allowed if necessary. In the end, the terms were defined in a general way without observing the special aspects of Nordic manifestations of a given folklore item. A great proportion of reviewers were American, although the project emphasised Nordic expertise. The attempt to publish a common Nordic terminology gradually waned by the end of the 1970s, and officially the project ran out of funding. Many of the core players put their efforts into other projects organised by the NIF.

After the terminology project, the NIF continued to operate for twenty years until its dissolution in 1997, when the Nordic Council of Ministries that had economically supported the NIF dramatically reduced its funding. The NIF's longest-serving director, Lauri Honko, lamented how the fall of the Berlin Wall and the consequent reshaping of Europe drastically changed foreign politics in the Nordic countries. In his view, the Nordic approach to folklore studies and ethnology had made a significant impact on international folkloristics, both inside and outside the Nordic region, but now, with the dawn of the new order of Europe, the NIF 'was found to be not as indispensable as it had been during the previous two decades' (Honko 1997). Honko was unable to also see that the NIF was a child of its own time.

In the Cold War era, Nordic cooperation intensified greatly as a reaction against bipolar East–West threats. One can argue that throughout its existence, the Nordic Institute of Folklore's activities were embedded in the Cold War mindset, not just at the time of its termination. The Nordic Working Group on Ethnology and Folklore Students, by contrast, still continues to work today, although its organisational structure is different. Besides Nordic university students, Estonian folklore and ethnology students at the University of Tartu have established Tartu NEFA. At certain points, sites

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and areas of scientific practices continue to play a role in formulating assumptions, hypotheses, and theories in folklore studies and ethnology. However, while the focus during the Cold War was on the Nordic countries, it has since expanded, following the end of the Cold War, to encompass the Nordic-Baltic region.

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The Loss of Innocence

Folklore, Folklore Studies, and Society in Italy, 1948–1978

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Introduction: History, current affairs, and memory

The historical past is something of an obsession in Italian cultural and political life, not only because of the country's rich artistic heritage and ubiquitous monuments, or the passion that feeds the historical re-enactments scene, widespread over the entire country. Rather, it is the recent past that should be the object of the contemporary historian's attention, as it haunts the houses of parliament, the press, and broadcast news.

The twentieth-century past, beginning with the twenty-year fascist period, is often in the limelight because of the inexhaustible revanchism (Eco 2018; Filippi 2019; Canfora 2024) of those nostalgic elements, which seize every occasion to attempt to reverse the judgment of history and to water down responsibilities, to dilute memories, and even to deny those values of the popular Resistance that led to the birth of the new, democratic, and republican Italy under the flag of a fairly advanced and distinctly modern constitution. A veritable folklore has emerged from under this revisionist gaze on the fascist past (Heywood 2019; 2020): from anniversary parades in honour of Mussolini's birthday to wine that is bottled and sold with his image on the label. Folklore is also evoked, improperly but unfortunately often, by some judges who choose to absolve neofascist actions as merely symbolic and innocent folkloristic performances. In this way, chronicles (i.e. news reports) and history remain entangled; the past century cannot be consigned to history and is condemned to live on with an ongoing present relevance.

The Republic has also been settling another sticky aspect of the past, an accumulation of dramatic events, scars that even today contribute to the highest debt of the Italian state that is owed to its citizens – that debt of truth represented by a long list of unsolved juridical cases, starting quite soon after the rebirth of the State and continuing down to the present (Cento Bull 2007, 82). 'I know, but I haven't the proof', is how Pier Paolo Pasolini (1974) worded his feelings regarding the bombs, outrages, and attempted coups[1] that he had been witnessing a few months before being

1. The eversive activity began with some attempted coups d'état (e.g. the Piano Solo in 1964, the Golpe Borghese in 1970), but the 'strategy of tension' came with the bomb at the Banca dell'Agricoltura in Piazza Fontana in Milan in 1969 (17 people dead) and continued with the train attack at Gioia Tauro in 1970 (6 people killed), the bomb at the Milan police station in 1973 (3 dead), the bomb in Piazza della Loggia in Bescia in 1974 (8 dead), and the bomb on the Italicus train in 1974 (12 dead). The list would grow even after Pasolini's death, with

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assassinated in 1975. This unsolved case can be added to a list that continued to grow: the Moro kidnapping and killing (1978), the bomb at Bologna railway station, the Itavia plane brought down by a missile (1980), the discovery of a subversive Masonic lodge (1982), and another bombed train (1984) leading up to the season of Mafia massacres (1992–1993) that ended with the Berlusconi peace (Ginsborg 1989 [2003]; 1998). This one was a real turning point regarding the relationship between the present and the fascist past, between white-collar crime and global finance, between the Mafia and politics that is the subject of present-day parliamentary chronicles.

The Italian state's debt of truth ballooned under Berlusconi's long and hectic political hegemony; with his jokes, his irreverent performances, and his predatory sexual promiscuity, political folklore also grew, just as the credibility of and respect for state institutions were crumbling. The Boomer generation, to which I belong, thus reached adulthood, witnessing such a back and forth between history and news or chronicles that memory too may be considered a fruitful source, a gaze that tracks continuities among facts, embodying them in a generational perspective, lived history, and living testimonies. Such is my positioning as regards the topic of the present chapter,[2] which aims to focus on the first half of such a timeline, jumping from one date, 18 April, 1948, down to 9 May, 1978, marking the first three decades of Italy's recovered dignity and innocence, both quickly lost and still now desperately searched for.

This rapid overview of events has an unseen unifying thread: the weave of this chapter concerns variations in the status, nature, or role of folklore as a discipline passing from an age of assumed innocence to a stage of research and militancy, through the situation of the postwar '50s and a development of conflictual folklore. I then examine a phase which saw an academic recovery, leading to a complex modernity, down to the end of what Pasolini termed 'the Bread Age'. I weave in events and protagonists to illustrate the phases which I have witnessed or experienced.

An evolving folklore of 'innocence'

I take as a starting point the radical changes that occurred during the events, both tragic and heroic, between July 1943 and April 1945. They ended with a short season of political unity, marked by a general consensus to vote for the Republic (the first general election to take place without either census or gender bias) and the election of a Constituent Assembly, where all the political groups who had been protagonists

the massacre of Bologna in 1980 (85 deaths) and the Train 904 bombing in 1984 (16 deaths) (Zavoli 1992). The following season, known as the "lead years" saw a harsh confrontation between left extremist and neo-fascist groups, that flew into the terrorist aggression to the State by the Brigate Rosse (Luzzatto 2023), always in a lack of transparency and with state's organs under the influence of Masonic lodge as P2 (Tobagi 2023; Dondi, Iuso, Pellegrini 2024).

2. The passion for history is also spread throughout anthropological and folklore scholarship, partly because of the legacy of historicist hegemony, partly answering to the need to consolidate the disciplinary field within the Academy, an Academy that until a few decades ago was particularly restricted and exclusive. Theories, methods, debates, schools, and authors have been thoroughly analysed by Giuseppe Cocchiara, Alberto M. Cirese, Vinigi Grottanelli, Pietro Clemente, Enzo Vinicio Alliegro, and Fabio Dei – all of whom will be quoted later in this admittedly limited and brief survey, which is nonetheless indebted to each one of them.

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of the Resistance were represented. After this novelty and an aspiration to cut away the fascist past (Dimpflmeier 2023; Morace 2023), a need for appeasement began to seep through the various forces, ending with an amnesty for those who had borne responsibilities within the fascist regime's administration and leadership. This reconciling tendency soon turned into a general tendency towards forgiving and forgetting, which ascribed every sin to the evil German ally (Focardi 2005). Forgetting and absolving meant that all the main sectors of the State, from local town hall clerks to full professors and judges, were posts filled with the same names as 'before' (Woller 1997; Canosa 1999; Montroni 2016). This happened also in the academic field of folklore (though a very marginal one, within the humanities), whose representatives in the new democratic order and the university had previously been fervent fascists and had held important posts during the regime (Mugnaini 2023).

The fascist regime had incorporated the main traits of this rather weak discipline, relegated by the Academy to the margins of the mainstream because of strong opposition from the dominant *storicismo idealistico*, hegemonised by philology and permeated by late Romantic and nationalistic ideals (Angioni 1972; Cirese 1972; 1973; Clemente 1983). Through tools of governance such as the *Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro*, a governmental top-down hierarchic structure encompassing and governing all grassroot leisure time organizations and expressions, the fascist regime from the very start had embraced and encouraged manifestations of local pride (Cavazza 1987) and local civic or religious traditions, stressing the importance of the staticity of each social strata position, blessing rural habits and supporting urban festivals (such as the Palio of Siena) and even promoting new ones (historic football in Florence, Saracen jousting in Arezzo, and the Palio race in Asti, among others). But as Cavazza (1997) has demonstrated, as its imperialistic aims progressed, the regime switched to an anti-regionalist policy, so as to assert the undisputed supremacy of the goals of the nation, celebrating the national language (Klein 1986; 1989; Della Valle and Gandolfo 2014) against dialects, and calling on local folklore institutions to pay due homage to the State and its ally (Cavazza 1987; Savelli 2014).

So, under the newly unfurled banners of democracy, the revival of folklore thus had to reckon with discontinuity both at the level of grassroots institutions and at the level of scholars and interpreters. The restoration of folklore studies' 'virginity' began soon enough. The chief compromised scholar, Raffaele Corso, was able to reopen his journal, restoring its previous title *Folklore* – the same one he had previously deleted in obedience to the norms of national language purification – and publishing a fairly complete collection of partisan songs (Mugnaini 2023). Raffaele Corso, who was in charge of 'Ethnography' at Naples Istituto Orientale, survived his compromise with the regime by remaining for almost all of the first post-war period as the factotum of anthropology in the academic context, managing to promote to the chair Giuseppe Cocchiara in Palermo, Carmelina Naselli in Catania, Gianfranco D'Aronco in Padua, and Paolo Toschi in Rome. All of them found shelter under the innocence of the philological approach or, in the latter case, by drawing on late-Frazerian theory when daring to touch on more complex subjects such as carnivals, feasts, and theatrical performances (Toschi, 1955).

On the ground, at grassroots level, the concept of *folk* (now 'The People', recognised and celebrated as a Protagonist, having experienced the novel possibility of being

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a political subject) was undergoing a radical change. Folklore became what this new 'people' – now 'the masses' or 'citizens' – could express and demand from the institutions of the State, from politics, and from all the other traditionally dominant and hegemonic social subjects.

It is important to bear in mind that what had happened at the dawn of the Kingdom of Italy in the late 19th century was now going to be repeated: massive movements of people changing the demographic face of the country and its towns (Cumoli 2013). This meant moving from barely productive mountain areas down to the plains, where the State was strongly pushing for the reconstruction of the industrial sector; from the south to the northern regions, all heading to the industrial districts; and from Italy abroad, once again towards the Americas (Franzina 1979; 1995), Australia, South Africa, and other European countries. For example, a special agreement between Belgium and Italy brought hundreds of thousands of southern former peasants to work as miners in Belgian coal fields, so that Italy could count on this crucial energy resource (Gabaccia 2000; Bevilacqua, De Clementi and Franzina 2001; Cumoli 2009; Ricciardi 2016).

The *folk* who remained, in the words of Ernesto de Martino, 'outside history' (Levi 1945; de Martino 1949) were now moving, though in different directions: on one side towards modernity as offered by capitalism and the market, which implied leaving behind their original place and condition; on the other side to modernity as promised by the revolutionary programs of the Left (the *Partito Comunista Italiano* in first place) (Spriano 1975; Kertzer 1980; Shore 1990; Li Causi 1993), which meant political engagement for changes in the conditions of the rural masses. In practice, the latter entailed redistribution of large estates or improving the conditions of sharecropping in view of a future, more equal society. Another possibility was traditional continuity. Those who remained as shepherds, breeders, farmers, sharecroppers, sailors, charcoal burners, lumbermen, and artisans – or those who were unsure or lacking the resources to implement change – could count on two very solid pillars of support: the anti-communist and paternalistic pivot of the national government, starting already in 1948, and the Church. Let's unpack all this.

Folklore: Research and militancy

The post-Resistance season of unity ended with Prime Minister De Gasperi's trip to the USA to demand 'bread and coal', after which the Communist and Socialist parties were kicked out of the government. A general election was held in 1948, on April 18th, after a harsh campaign that saw a clash between the *Democrazia Cristiana party* (DC), supporter of and supported by the USA and the *Fronte Popolare*, in which the communist and socialist parties were allied for a political alternative, leaning towards the Soviet Union and other communist countries' models. The Church was crucial in the victory that assigned the government to the DC. The campaign was full of utopistic promises on one side and traditional certainties on the other: Virgins on pilgrimage, night processions, reminders to Almighty God against Stalin's appeal, women's honour – all were invoked as a defence against the free-love immorality of communism. Every single monastery and every parish were mobilised by the most

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traditionalist of Popes, the hieratic Pius XII,[3] to win the historical battle of faith against fanatism and secularisation (Romano and Scabello 1975; Ottaviano and Soddu 2000; Novelli 2008).

Once the election was won, the political wind blew in the direction of a traditional life, innocent and pure, to be defended, if possible, against contamination by working-class ideology. Miraculous virgins continued to appear or to weep all throughout the 1950s. Though residual, in the smog of capitalist industrial development, folk traditions continued to offer subject matter to the scholars. Apart from those already named, five more are worthy of mention: Pier Paolo Pasolini, Italo Calvino, Alan Lomax, Diego Carpitella, and Ernesto de Martino.

The first two must be quoted as authors of two 'monumental' works, two editorial events that were emblematic – the second more than the first – of the new Italy's cultural production. An anthology of popular poetry, drawing on the immense repertoires inherited from the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century folklorists, was edited by Pier Paolo Pasolini (1955), respecting the original local dialect of the sources. The second, consisting of Italian folk tales, was published by Italo Calvino (1956), who plunged into collections garnered from every corner and from every local dialect, and in addition to the selection, then rewrote them in his literary style and language, thus giving Italians an extraordinary tool for remembering – or for learning something of the national oral tradition, a compendium of different regional contributions that the literary rewriting made accessible and enjoyable (Frigessi 1988).

Alan Lomax, meanwhile, had come from abroad. He loved to describe his trip to Europe as an attempt to escape the risks of McCarthyism that had been sending people to prison for their ideas. Once in Italy, Alan Lomax found in the *Accademia di Santa Cecilia* or in the RAI, in the State television, and in the young Diego Carpitella the necessary support for travelling research (Lomax 2008), from south to north and to south again, between 1953 and 1954, accumulating an impressive body of documentation and leaving the seeds of research into singing and music performance that would later flow into the constitution of – not being a merely formal separation – a separate discipline, that of ethnomusicology, founded in 1973 by Diego Carpitella (1973; 1975; Adamo 2000).

Diego Carpitella had started his professional activity earlier, when in 1952 he joined Ernesto de Martino, the more influential author, in an active bridging between the fascist and the democratic age, between idealistic historicism and Gramsci's Marxist reading, leaving an enduring footprint on Italian anthropological studies, still alive and still fruitful.[4]

Ernesto de Martino (died early in 1965) had shared, with many others, a juvenile admiration for the fascist regime, but his fidelity to the resilient antifascism of Croce

3. Pius XII participated in the electoral campaign in effigy as the protagonist of a film that was screened wherever possible (Ferrantin and Trionfini 2018), demonstrating how important the influence of cinema would later be – as a true protagonist of Italian cultural change either within the Catholic-communist conflict (Mosconi 2018) or, later, within secularisation and consumerism-oriented modernisation (De Berti 2000).
4. The legacy of Diego Carpitella had also influenced the opening of visual anthropology as a proper language and epistemic frame to understand music and performative practices, and Etnomusicologia is now a thriving and autonomous academic sector (Giannattasio 1991; Agamennone, Facci, Giannattasio and Giuriati 1991).

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and his circle brought him to oppose it until he became active in the Resistance (Di Donato 1989; Charuty 2010; Alliegro 2017). As the author of an important idealistic critique of social anthropology based on historicist principles (de Martino 1941), he set out a theory of magic that cut away from Croce's view (de Martino 1948) and opened up a path based on the concept of a 'presence' – at once existential and concrete, psychological, cultural, and philosophical – that was endangered by life conditions amongst ethnological societies as well as amongst the poor daily workers of Apulia. The reading of Carlo Levi's novel *Christ Stopped at Eboli* (1945) and Gramsci's *Prison Notebook* (1948–1951), salvaged after Gramsci's death and published as soon as it became possible, led him to realise the urgency of a militant choice in favour of the rural working masses of Southern regions, who were geographically close to him and also to the Neapolitan capital of 'high culture', but actually 'outside history' and far distant, as if he and the testimonials he encountered were coming from different planets (de Martino 1976, 406). The task of the intellectual was thus to redescend the historic lines to uncover the moment and the causes that had produced the exclusion of those masses, so as to bring them again within the humanistic horizon (de Martino 1962), adopting an anti-relativistic perspective that would be labelled, later after his death, 'critical ethnocentrism'. Already in 1949, an article appeared in a national journal, *Società*, provoking not just a lively debate, as it was politically explicit in contrast to the purported neutrality of the social sciences (dear to the ethnological school), but also a discussion of the primacy of blue-collar culture, values, and role in the revolutionary process (Clemente, Meoni and Squillacciotti 1975).

For Ernesto de Martino, doing research was a way to contribute to the rescue of marginalised people and at the same time a way to reflect critically on the fundamentals of Western political thought, including the communist utopia. His first 'ethnological journey' started in 1952, and in ten years he produced three relevant monographs: on traditional mourning (de Martino 1958), on magic belief and practices (de Martino 1959), and on the mythic-ritual construction of the Taranta, a kind of possession traditionally cured through dance and devotion to St Paul (de Martino 1961). By inaugurating a very different way of doing ethnography, which was closer and more empathetic, de Martino fuelled debates and left an important legacy of thought, albeit without recognising 'folklore' as his own perspective.

Amongst his monumental philosophical and political reflections, from within the fascist prison system Antonio Gramsci had left pages on popular culture, traditions, common sense, and their study under the title of 'Observations on folklore' (Gramsci 1950), where *folklore* was intended as a real 'worldview', the *Weltanschauung* of subaltern social strata, to be taken seriously and interpreted in the light of its relationship with hegemonic culture, and within the political relationship of domination. Gramsci took folklore out of the traditional way of thinking of it as a historic remnant (a 'contemporary prehistoric remnant') and introduced it as an autonomous domain, to be considered and understood in a relativistic way. As the product of a history of political domination, folklore included subalternity (the acceptance of inferiority as a natural condition) as well as protest and visions of rescue. 'Progressive' folklore was, therefore, that part of the subaltern culture that had envisioned by itself the causes of life's hardships, that had foreseen a possible way out and could find a previously unheard alliance in intellectual support. Far removed from any populistic appreciation, and confident in the possibility of bringing the peasants and the marginal together in

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the liberation of the working classes, Gramsci had drawn the lines for the rebirth of folklore studies. De Martino followed his view but soon preferred to concentrate on the inheritance of the subaltern rather than celebrate 'progressive' folk cultural traits.

The Italian South then came under scrutiny: political initiatives and even anthropological missions were documenting and interrogating the problems of the South. Matera (Caserta 1996), today a UNESCO world cultural heritage site (Mirizzi 2005), was then a terrible example of backwardness. The noted American socio-anthropologist Edward Banfield had declared that this backwardness was a result of a lack of collective trust; southern people owed their backwardness mostly to their 'amoral familism', chains holding them back from potential modernisation (Banfield 1958). De Martino countered such readings and provided a number of examples as evidence of progressive agency, such as the youngest mayor of Tricarico, the socialist poet Rocco Scotellaro (Mirizzi 2016), who was at once witness to and protagonist of progressive action, trying to change and document peasant conditions and hopes.

Academic folklore studies and Ernesto de Martino remained distant, and reciprocally diffident. The grassroots of folklore were potentially divided between progressive and conservative, or 'traditional', traditions, but it is important to add another plane to this scenery: that of the free researchers, blending intellectual passion and political activism. From the south-central region of Molise, for instance, a journal emerged, *La Lapa* ('The Bee'), that concentrated political and methodological debate on folklore themes. The account of the first version of *Bella Ciao* appeared there (Cirese 1953, 20),[5] just to give one example and also a heated discussion about the legitimacy of an autonomous academic field of folklore as such. *La Lapa* was a brief (1953–1955) but brilliant hotbed, founded by a school teacher and poet, Eugenio Cirese, together with his son, Alberto Mario, then a voluntary assistant to the Ethnology chair in Rome (La Lapa 1991; Fanelli 2008).

Folklore and the terrible 1950s

The 1950s were a decade of renewed international contacts and consolidation of a field of study that oscillated between the history of religions, philology, and ethnology (cultural anthropology would come only at the end of the decade) under the growing influence of Gramsci's thinking. Commenting on the debate in the three years of life of the young magazine *La Lapa*, Pietro Clemente caught a sign of intense 'intellectual workings', aiming to find a focus, both theoretical and methodological, characterising a discipline that began to find citizenship in the university and that also resumed the necessary international contacts (Clemente 1991). Still, its practitioners were unable to recover 'the irreversible laceration of the relationship between their own cognitive subjectivity and the object ("people") of their studies', which even dated back to the war years (Dei 2020, 16) and to the end of fascist instrumentalisation.

The 1950s were the site of a cluster of long-active fault-lines, which would go on to produce effects on popular life. On the political level, anti-communism marked most of the decade, until it even brought back former fascists to the government, often violently repressing strikes and demonstrations that shook the industrial districts as

5. The author simply signed this as 'c'.

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well as the rural areas in protests against the authoritarian turn, gerrymandering plots (the so-called *legge truffa*), and struggles against the cost of living (Ginsborg 1989; 1998). Women became particularly involved in the 'movement for Peace' against the 'Cold War', which risked becoming a new nuclear war (Gabrielli 2005).

Modernisation seemed to accelerate. Electricity, running water, indoor lavatories – all slowly but surely became widespread amongst rural dwellers. After the advent of the Vespa and other motor scooters, the Fiat 600 arrived, enabling daily commuting for both work and leisure (Cardini 2006). A law strongly wanted by Lina Merlin, which had been in parliament since the Constituent Assembly (Gabrielli 2016), closed the brothels (Bellassai 2006). On the political level, the 'Centre' was drawn to the Right and the neofascists returned.

However, the most relevant innovation of this time was the inauguration of the age of state television. Radio had been a powerful tool for the fascist regime's propaganda (broadcasting Mussolini's speeches and slogans) (on the spread of counter-information during the war, for example, via the clandestine broadcasting of *Radio Londra*, see Isola 1998; 1999). The democratic state also used the radio for news, education, special programs for rural people, Holy Mass and the Pope's prayers, and, of course, music and songs. The first edition of the Sanremo Music Festival was broadcast in 1951, influencing the popular musical landscape and reaching even the most remote hamlet (Campus 2015).

In 1954, the State RAI channel (Monteleone 1992; Garofalo 2018) started broadcasting television programs. One single channel, the *Programma Nazionale*, spread government-controlled news as well as the Holy Mass, but also theatre performances, educational programs for the illiterate (still rather numerous), music shows and games, and the Music Festival of Sanremo (from 1955). In 1957 was added a program entirely devoted to advertisements, to promote products and brands through short sketches; jingles, sayings and slogans entered the discourse, pouring out narratives just as their products were flooding the lives of some Italians, or colonising the dreams of those who could not afford them (Arvidsson 2003; Canova 2004). Television sets – initially and for quite a long time, products for the elite – were increasingly to be found in bars, restaurants, local clubs, and even cinemas, ensuring a collective view of the most beloved programs.

The TV set was assigned the most important place in the modern Italian home. As they reached the lower social strata, the sets were honoured with and protected by hand-sewn curtains. The cultural industry had already found its way down to the people: ideals, ideologies, habits, and modes were on offer in the movies, a real battlefield for cultural and political wars. Women became the object of special attention by the print media: magazines and *fotoromanzi* – dramatised love photo novellas (Anelli, Gabbrielli, Morgavi and Piperno 1979; Abruzzese 1989; Detti 1990) – were both mirroring and changing women's imagination and desires. When television finally came (Casalini 2010), much later than in many other countries, it started to influence Italian daily life, reproducing and proposing, provoking and censoring, creating and destroying, relentlessly, from its inception to the Berlusconi era.

The end of the '50s, however, offered some signs of change that would only ripen later. These included the election of John XXIII, the innovator pope who launched the modernisation of the Church; the entrance into the government of the socialist party; and the construction of the Autostrada del Sole, begun in 1957, which progressively

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sliced through the 'boot' from Milan to Rome and down to Naples, uniting valleys with bridges, piercing mountains with tunnels, dividing fields, woods, and properties, running alongside villages and making available to the (still few) fortunate car owners the spectacle of rural Italy. This is the moment in which Italian folk culture experienced the 'expansion' that Hermann Bausinger (1990) located in the age of technology. Before, the fascist regime had organised folk parades; now, modernity allowed individuals to put together the puzzle of a changing country.

Conflictual folklore

The 1960s were central to global modernisation, and every country registered a confluence between internal movements or dynamics and global influencing events. In this presentation of the Italian case, those will be taken as a given.

The decade started with the first general census, which recorded the overtaking of agricultural workers by industry workers: Italy was finally one of the industrial nations. The over-traditional and confessional governments were no longer adequate to the new identity, and some important changes were at hand. The political turmoil of the previous years, however, reached a boiling point with the repressive policies of the umpteenth government to be supported by the votes of the neofascist *Movimento Sociale Italiano* (MSI), the ill-famed Governo Tambroni. Ignited by the decision of the MSI to hold its national congress in Genoa, a city awarded a gold medal for its role in the Resistance, the resulting protests spread all over the country, with political and economic claims as common cause. On 5–7 July 1960, from Licata in Sicily to Reggio Emilia, the repressive police unit, the *celere*, broke up the demonstrations and killed one person in Sicily, five in Reggio Emilia. This dramatic event is also worth remembering, in following our thread, for the song that was promptly created by Fausto Amodei and soon incorporated into the already vast repertoire of political songs and lyrics in use at that time during political events, be they protests or festivals (Bermani 2003; Fanelli 2017).

Music and songs became the component of folklore that would take the stage, overshadowing almost all else. The previous decade's political dynamics had polarised the intellectuals into positions for or against the reactionary and conservative government policies; now an impressive list of journals, conferences, and newspaper debates would show how poets, musicians, painters, theatre personalities, movie directors and actors, from Pier Paolo Pasolini to Franco Fortini, from Dario Fo to Vittorio Gassman, just to mention the most well-known, were active in committees and organisations. They stood together with others who were less famous but closer to what was *folk*, that is, popular culture as an expression of an intimate and ontological conflict against bourgeois high culture. The most advanced sector of Italian culture was intimately linked to the most engaged scholars and interpreters of *folk*, seeing in popular culture a tool for the construction of a different political future.

So, in the early 1960s, interest in folklore emerged from a scene of independent and politically driven initiatives. More than academic research, it was able to influence ongoing events, either as regards political conflicts or cultural and artistic experimentation. The same Fausto Amodei, for instance, was part of the group that founded the *Cantacronache* band in Turin, being joined by other young musicians, such

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as Luciano Berio, Sergio Liberovici, and Michele Straniero, as well as by Italo Calvino and Franco Fortini, amongst others (Bermani 2003; Fanelli 2017). There, research and creativity were fused in the effort of giving 'a working-class future' a proper and new culture. Later, other groups emerged, for instance, under the push of Gianni Bosio (Fanelli 2009), a 'cultural organiser', who quite independently from obedience to any political party animated the scene of left-wing editorial and musical production. In 1962, Gianni Bosio and Roberto Leydi gave birth to the *Nuovo Canzoniere Italiano* (Bermani 1997), and after a decade of theoretical political elaboration, they dove into fieldwork. Gianni Bosio discovered the power of the *magnetofono*, then a heavy tape recorder, which had the power to give back a 'voice' (Bosio 1975). The power of *folk* voices overtook the weight of the words that the early gatherers and scholars had generously transcribed. Together with the voices, the music, rhythms, vocal techniques, and timbres sounded as a resource, either for testifying to the creativity of *folk* or for overstepping the boundaries of the Italian music national treasures, which now appeared as stale class privilege.

The hallmark date for this decade is 1964, June 21st, when the seventh edition of the Festival of the Two Worlds was held in the beautiful town of Spoleto in the province of Perugia. This creation of Giancarlo Menotti celebrated the link between the new Italy and the USA, hosting a music show consisting in the performance of national traditional songs and music, presented by Franco Fortini, selected by Roberto Leydi, and directed by Filippo.

Work songs, love songs, and war songs are listed on the program entitled *Bella Ciao*, then decidedly less famous than today. *Bella Ciao*, representing the partisans' heritage (Bermani 2020; Flores 2020), was then thought and offered as a derivation of a more ancient work song of women who worked in the rice fields. The title caught the attention of fascists and of the well-thinking public who filled the Italian-style Caio Melisso Theatre. The show went on until one of the singers decided to also sing the second stanza of a World War I antimilitarist song, which called army officers traitors against the poor soldiers. The audience in the stalls exploded in protest, and from the higher tier of boxes the performers' friends responded. It was a real incident (Marini 2005), followed by a trial for offenses against the national army, on one side, but on the other by the birth of a myth – *Bella Ciao* itself – making the fortune of folk singers and musicians such as Caterina Bueno or Giovanna Marini,[6] and by the memorable mark of the loss of the innocence of folklore. It had reached adulthood and could afford to take up the burden of an official cultural and political role in the life of Italian society.

6. Caterina Bueno (1943–2007) and Giovanna Marini (1937–2024) were protagonists of the folk music scene since the time of the folk revival, developing an intense activity of research and reproposal, and being socially and politically engaged (Plastino 2016); see also the biography movie *Caterina* (Corsi 2019). Giovanna Marini also activated a music and choir school in Rome and in Paris (University Paris VIII Saint Denis), and has given rise to an intense creative activity of contemporary music (compositions, theatre operas, and movie soundtracks (Macchiarella 2005). See also the biography movie *A sud della musica. La voce libera di Giovanna Marini* (Curi 2019).

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Folklore: The academic recovery

The ferment of such a complex decade as the 1950s had no place, though, among the concerns of academic scholarship. Paolo Toschi continued in the direction of the long-running journal, *Lares*, which he had restarted in 1944; he carefully kept away from engaging in 'theoretical elucubrations' or 'the ethical and political passions so alive on the Gramscian side' (Dei 2020, 17). Toschi was 'attentive to international contributions, which however [he] selected exclusively from the field of folklore in the stricter sense of the term', with 'no trace of structuralism, nor even of the entire Italian "debate on folklore"; starting from the reading of Gramsci' (Dei 2020, 19). His own works, too, reflected his late adhesion to a previous theoretical approach (the simplistic Frazerian approach to popular rituals and theatrical performances) in the face of rich and detailed documentation, according to the style of earlier folklore times. Carmelina Naselli continued to give historical-philological attention to ritual and poetry, being ever more cloistered in her regional reality. Giuseppe Cocchiara, conversely, addressed new topics: the myth of the noble savage (1948), the land of Cockaigne (1956), and the upside-down world (1963). He also offered two impressive histories of folklore studies, both European (Cocchiara 1952) and Italian (Cocchiara 1947); the former was widely translated and read (D'Amato 2010), while the latter was less successful.

However, as the 'negligent' attitude of *Lares* shows, academic folklore studies remained marginal both within the academic field and in the sociopolitical domain, where politically oriented scholars and artists were enjoying a real moment, just the beginning of the most relevant decade of our history.

What was too theoretical and overly politicised was at the same time weaving a quite new texture between renowned and unknown personalities, between the anonymity of folklore and the signature power of famous artists. High culture and low culture – as *Bella Ciao* in Spoleto had dramatically proved – could walk side by side in an attempt to build a new future. Nonetheless, 1961 was also the year of the second national competitive state exam for academic positions, recruiting three more scholars, (previously only called *libero docente*, being authorised to teach as temporary contract staff in a university) who were later hired by different universities as full tenured professors: Giuseppe Bonomo (a pupil of Giuseppe Cocchiara), and Giovan Battista Bronzini and Alberto Mario Cirese (pupils of Paolo Toschi) (Alliegro 2011).

We will now follow the third of these, who obtained tenure at Cagliari University, crossing the late career of Ernesto de Martino (soon to die in 1965). An expert in folk poetry, Cirese sailed far from his mentor's topics and approach. He could count on his time in France – discovering there the early structural anthropology of Lévi-Strauss (Cirese 2010)[7] as well as the *Musée de l'Homme* – but he was also well into hot

7. A long, different story of folk studies could start with Cirese's introduction of Lévi-Strauss into Italian debate: that of translation policies. Some foreign works enter early: Propp's *Historical Roots of the Wonder Tales* (1946) was translated in 1949, but his first work, *Morphology of the Tale* (1928), arrived only in 1966, within the blooming structuralist season (*Nuove ricerche semiotiche*, 1973). Many of the innovative authors (e.g. Hermann Bausinger, Linda Dégh) or the performance turn (*Towards New Perspectives in Folklore* by Americo Paredes and Richard Bauman, 1972), as well as some classics (*The Singer of Tales* by Albert Lord, 1960) remained

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intellectual debates and close to the freelance fieldworkers who were now protagonists of the so-called 'folk revival'. A Marxist, though never sympathising with the orthodoxy that reigned within the Communist Party, Cirese took inspiration from Gramsci's thought and philosophy, proposing a new perspective for the discipline that he saw as being part of a general anthropological view, called *demologia*, besides *etnologia*. He argued that both should investigate the so-called 'cultural unevennesses' (*dislivello*) that history had produced – within complex societies, for the first subdiscipline, or amongst them and the as-yet-underdeveloped societies or those suffering under colonial dominion, for the second (Cirese 1973).

The metaphor of unevenness operates on the basic concept of 'cultural differences', which does not imply merely neutral alternatives but must be conceived within a hierarchy, so that Maria Callas and Giovanna Daffini, the singer of *Bella Ciao*, are historically placed – the first as hegemonic and the second as subaltern. Demo-anthropology has a duty to identify the value of the latter, understanding the link between a cultural fact and its social, economic, and political conditions, so as to cooperate towards an expansion of general consciousness and change as regards a state of dominance. Drawing on Gramsci, the dominating relationship at the political level is transposed into the hegemony/subalternity dialectic at the cultural level. Cirese's proposal cut away from 'survival' theory and invited us to conceive of folklore as a field where the diachronic perspective – traditional historicism – had to be completed with a synchronic approach, where the present relationships and exchanges with the hegemonic culture were able to give way to a 'worldview' connotating the life of real social groups. Ending the late-Romantic concept of people as a national entity and to going ahead with Gramsci's definition of 'subaltern and instrumental social strata', such an opening up made possible the reunification of the immediate political goals of freelance folklorists and the systematic work of academic scholarship. Cirese's proposal was developed all through the 1960s and found its first final edition in 1971, followed by an update in 1973.

One important move is worthy of mention, thanks to Tullio Tentori, a functionary in the Ministry of Culture (then external to the university) who was an expert in Native American cultures. Having returned to Italy, with a Wenner Gren Foundation grant Tullio Tentori pushed a group of colleagues to open up the perspective for importing American cultural anthropological methods and authors, shifting away from the traditional historical-cultural approach which still characterised the ethnological school (Grottanelli 1977; Signorelli 2021). Amalia Signorelli, one of the signatories of the Memorandum (1959),[8] remembered that 'it seemed to us that the peasants of Portella della Ginestra [who were killed by the Sicilian independentist Mafia in 1947] and of the land occupations in Italy or the combatants of the Algerian war, or the

untranslated. The attention to international scholarship and translation has been improving neatly during the last decades (Clemente and Mugnaini 2001).

8. Also signing this manifesto in 1958 with Signorelli were Tullio Seppilli, Liliana Bonacini Seppilli, Romano Calisi, Guido Cantalamessa Carboni, and Tullio Tentori. The Memorandum was the arrival point of a long collective march, as Tullio Seppilli recalled in his narrative *curriculum vitae* (http://www.antropologiamedica.it/tullio-seppilli/, 14.06.2025 10 February 2025), which opened a new season. Tullio Seppilli would later be the founder of medical anthropology specialisation and its journal, *Antropologia Medica*, now open access: https://www.antropologiamedica.it/am/ (14.06.2025 10 February 2025).

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protagonists of the various violent and contradictory paths of decolonisation in Africa, posed research problems that were unmasterable within the schemas of the cycle of life from the cradle to the grave or of the diffusion of cultural traits in concentric circles', the diffusionism that has survived, for instance, within Catholic-driven ethnology (Signorelli 2021, 76). The main trait of the 'new' discipline was found in a systematic attention to linking the cultural level to economic facts and social structure, evidently drawing on a Marxist approach, that would characterise this American culturology in an Italian sauce. Catholic soil and Marxist seeds were then at work together, coherently with the turn that the Catholic Church was also experiencing. The new Pope, John XXIII, launched the Second Vatican Council. The times were indeed a-changin' (Dylan 1964).

Now the scene was brimming with various labels. Ethnology, marked by the former disgraced colonial enterprise, was still following historical-cultural methods, with minor attention paid to British social anthropology (Lanternari 1973; Clemente 1983); it was also a bridge to the study of internal survival traditions (with Raffaele Corso being its mentor and the self-proclaimed heir of the founding father, Giuseppe Pitré); Letteratura delle tradizioni popolari later on replaced by Storia delle tradizioni popolari, dealt mostly with oral poetry and narrative tradition, swinging from philology to a historical approach; Storia delle religioni, spanning from aboriginal cults to folk religious practices, covered the ritual and symbolic topic in general. Cultural Anthropology, oriented indifferently towards cultural and social dynamics either internal or international, was, the latest arrival and the bravest subject to knock on the academy's narrow doors, with its attention to immediate and urgent social problems. Tullio Seppilli, for instance, between Florence and Perugia, was able to join up the attention to folk heritage and to health policies with bodily and psychiatric questions, to the condition of women and the question of religion. Amalia Signorelli would remain faithful to the Southern regions, but now began studying migration, housing, politics and development, peripheric life, tradition and patronage (Signorelli, Trittico, Rossi 1977[9]).

Folklore: complex modernity

The academy was now – and even more so in the following decade – full of intertwining paths but also jealousies and reciprocal diffidence, often following the lines of ideological and political orientation (leftist vs Christian democratic or nostalgic), sometimes even internal to the Left (communist vs socialist, the latter being also divided between reformist and revolutionary leanings). Similar situations could be said to characterise the grassroots folk life, where patron saint festivals took place alongside the *Festa dell'Unità* ('Festival of Unity') – a widespread festival tradition inaugurated by the Communist Party – in some places in contraposition, elsewhere just adding to each other, together making up the scene of a multifaceted and alive popular and local life (Savelli 2010; Mugnaini 2023).

9. For a posthumous summary of her work, which developed under the banner of renewal and openness to the anthropology of the contemporary, see D'Aloisio 2018.

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At the central level, a governmental turn towards collaboration with the socialist party was intended to close down dialogue with the post-fascist (now neo-fascist) right and the so-called *Centro-sinistra* season of governments timidly heading towards a limited social-democratic welfare-state policy.

A concrete sign of such change was the opening of a second channel on State television. While the *Programma Nazionale* became the 'First' channel, maintaining the monopoly of official and religious communication (Holy Mass was broadcast every Sunday and feast day), the 'Second' channel offered more chances to enjoy sport, leisure, entertainment, and even some remarkable examples of journalism and reporting activities. That other institution always present in the national life, the Church, was passing through a radical, even if only partial, transformation implemented by the Second Vatican council, and also 'grassroots Catholicism' started to find some champions destined to be enduring.

Lorenzo Milani, from an agnostic and intellectual Florentine family, converted around 1943; he was ordained in 1947 and would become a protagonist of a hard, radical challenge against the Church's negligence of social inequality. Already during the 1950s he had been removed from an urban parish and sent to an isolated hamlet in the Florentine Appenines, where he set up a school for the remaining peasant children. The Barbiana school soon became a laboratory where personalities from every intellectual field were invited to visit, to answer the questions of those both neglected and at the same time privileged pupils. Don Lorenzo Milani himself grew as a figure of national relevance, also because of his position in favour of conscientious objection (against militarist and nationalistic discourses), praising the right to disobedience and proclaiming the obligation of Christians to respond to the needs of the poor.

His main fortune – posthumous but still alive and influential – was linked to the publication of *Lettera a una professoressa* ('Letters to a teacher'),[10] a collectively conceived diary produced by him and his pupils, which accused the State school of class discrimination and at the same time criticised the lack of esteem and superficial disdain that the school was reproducing regarding the culture, skills, and values of the peasantry as well as blue-collar workers and other exploited subjects. The fortune of Don Milani (Batini, Mayo and Surian 2014; Roghi 2017; Ruozzi and Canfora 2017) matured in a climate that would find his acme far from Italian squares and fields, between USA and Europe, including protests against the Vietnam War and the invasion of Prague.

The year 1968 is too well known and at the same time such a vast topic that it can be but mentioned here. Italy, too, saw streets stormed by workers and students; schools, universities, churches, and sections of the Italian Communist Party were shaken by debates and performances, revolving together around 'grassroots culture' and the political avantgarde. Its particularity, however, was the strength of the Communist Party – the most important of the West European scene – which governed half of the

10. *Lettere a una professoressa* was published as collective writings in 1967 right after the death of don Lorenzo Milani (School of Barbiana 1967). Regularly republished and commented on (Gesualdi 2007), it has enjoyed a rather international diffusion. The English translation by Nora Rossi and Tom Cole (1969) is now available online: https://archive.org/details/LetterToATeacher-English-SchoolOfBarbiana/page/n87/mode/2up (Accessed 23 February, 2025).

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nation at the administrative level. The radical challenge that the movement brought to the internal and international equilibrium was probably perceived as a danger, and on 12 December 1969, a bomb exploded in a Milan bank, the Bank of Agriculture, dear to rural entrepreneurs, opening the never-ending story of massacres going unpunished.

It was the beginning of the bloody decades, marked by terrorism, by tough State repression on one side but also by State responsibility in active red herrings and connivance when not conspiracy with the neo-fascist terrorist factions and forces. Political violence became a beaten track, either by the new extremist Left and revolutionary movements or by the neo-fascist groups, overtly supported by the administrators of the police and forces of repression (Costalli, Guariso, Justino and Ruggeri 2023).

Such was the social climate, mostly experienced in the important industrial towns (Milan and Turin) and the university cities (Rome, Naples, Bologna, and Trento). Through family links, which were active between migrant groups and their original villages or regions, even more isolated places were caught up in such events, so that no public folk performance or festival could escape from taking a position. On such a polarised horizon, the neutrality of tradition started to be attractive again as a possibility for survival, so that between the Festa dell'Unità and the patron saint festivals, new urban festivals came to the fore (Mugnaini 2023). In some cases, the new festivals drew on former fascist inventions; elsewhere they were brand new, adopting patterns already well-established and functioning, and took root in the self-redefinition of local communities.

Pro-loco associations, collectives of either communist or Catholic grassroots, or even both communist and Catholic, populated popular life, both urban and rural, sometimes in ephemeral ways, sometimes giving birth to real local cultural institutions and operating in the research, documentation, and defence of local or social knowledge and skills.

Again, social life was bringing issues to the attention of academic folklore, which despite Cirese's innovation was still attracted by a peasant heritage and by traditional forms, neglecting the mesh with mass culture, on one side, and with political challenges, on the other. Such, at least, is the convincing position of Fabio Dei (2018), who has summed up the reasons behind the academic folklore studies attention deficit. His epistemic paradigm, even if it soon became dominant within the Academy, remained more preached than adopted and actualised.

Alberto Cirese himself was swinging between personal political engagement and the practice of prudent scientific work that he loved to evoke, quoting a sentence borrowed from a socialist mayor friend who warned him: between philology and socialism, give priority to philology, then do the socialism (Fanelli 2007). In the writing of a disciplinary history that would attune the past (from Romantic roots, positivism, Croce's historicism, and then Gramsci's political turn) to his present systematic proposal – as to his personal research, he chose a formalist and structural approach to traditional topics (popular poetry) (Cirese 1988) – a way out from mere documentation, dialoguing with updated international schools and authors. On the level of the main national project, he conceived and led collective research on oral tradition that aimed to cover the national territory, promoting the contributions of many local collectors as well as many young collaborators, who were destined to later become actors on the academic and intellectual scene.

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From 1968 until 1972, forty or so young scholars hunted down oral narrative – spoken not sung – which was documented and still available in every region. Tape-recorded, as so convincingly demonstrated by Gianni Bosio (1975), it was delivered to the funding institution, *the Discoteca di Stato* (the official music and sonic archive in Rome). Alberto M. Cirese, Liliana Serafini, and Aurora Milillo then classified more than 11,000 recorded texts, according to the Italian classification system of D'Aronco and Lo Nigro but also making them available under the Aarne-Thompson Tale-Type index and partially under Thompson's Motif Index from 1975 on (Cirese, Serafini and Milillo 1975). This real monument, still rarely promoted or used, somehow reinforced the impression of a discipline which still tended to overlook complexity and was still attracted by residual traditional or marginal areas. Though for different reasons, the regional distribution of the records shows how the regions most affected by emigration were the most documented, together with tiny, mountainous Valle d'Aosta; the migration-destination regions (Piedmont, Emilia Romagna, and Lombardia) were more poorly attended to.

The decade flowed into the following one, still under the sign of a social life of conflictual dynamics and political instability. Governments lasting less than a year (from 1963 until 1979, 18 governments can be counted), albeit firmly Atlanticist (with NATO and the USA alliance), were sensitive to social conflict. Solidly in the hands of the same party (*Democrazia Cristiana*) and the same people, there were different governments but only five leaders, one of whom was a stable presence in every government since 1948, and leader five times.

However, despite this political dance, Italian society was changing rapidly, pushing the political institutions to acknowledge the delay that the State was accumulating in comparison with people's lives. The harsh confrontation between the unions and industrialists saw the approval in 1970 of the *Statuto dei lavoratori*, an advanced law in defence of the freedom of the unions and of workers' rights.

Political confrontations now multiplied, diversified into the women's movement, gay fronts, pacifists, either Catholic or lay. If the 1950s had seen the glorification of purity and virginity in the beatification of a poor raped girl, the mid-1960s saw a young Sicilian girl who, after being kidnapped and raped, publicly refused to accept the 'marriage of reparation'. Pier Paolo Pasolini travelled Italian beaches asking questions about love of every kind (see his 1963 movie *Comizi d'amore* ['Love Meetings']) and continued to create scandal with his novels and movies. In 1971, his movie adaptation of Boccaccio's *Decameron* showed how indecent but alive was the potential of one of Italian literature's classics but also how widespread and important was the discourse of sexuality within popular culture (Corso [1914] 2001), despite Catholic moral imperatives. In 1968, the penal code from the fascist regime was purged of the norm that absolved husbands or male relatives who killed a wife or female blood relative in order to save their honour. In 1970, a peculiar and short-lived parliamentary majority passed a divorce bill.

Modernity was even shaking up the private life of the Italians. The reaction of the confessional Right was furious: four years later, the entire electorate was invited to vote in a referendum. Grassroots groups and movements from both sides engaged in a fierce battle that divided clerical *democristiani* and neo-fascists from liberal, radical, socialist, and communist voters. A bitter electoral campaign, just as had happened in 1948, was conducted from every bell tower and every monastery, inviting the Christians to vote

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– and, of course, to vote 'yes' to the abrogation of the divorce law. Italians obeyed and went *en masse* to the polling stations: 87% of the voting public. But 60% disobeyed with their ballots and the law was saved. In the industrialised regions, 70% answered 'no', as well as in the communist-led regions such as Tuscany. Those debilitated by migration and persistent poverty answered 'yes' but with a tiny margin, even where, as in the traditional Catholic Veneto, almost nobody remained at home (93.6% of voters came out to vote). The margin between the obedient and the disobedient was a mere 55,000 votes.[11] Italy had disobeyed: the electoral ballot and the confessional were no longer aligned or allied.

Folklore: The end of the 'Bread Age'

Again, Pier Paolo Pasolini suggested to both churches, the Catholic Church and that other church, the Communist Party, that the result of the referendum showed also how a third, till-then unseen protagonist was the real winner of the awkward confrontation that the conservative front had imposed on the Italians. Market forces and consumerism were leading the scene; an irresistible and unresisted push towards homologation with new bourgeois trends began to cancel internal and social differences (Pasolini 1974a). That author of *Canzoniere Italiano* and singer of proletarian and marginalised persons, in a personal polemic with Italo Calvino, wrote that he was not nostalgic for any previous peasant Italy, nor did he think of it as a golden age:

> The men of this universe […] lived what [the novelist] Chilanti called "the age of bread". That is, they were consumers only of the bare necessities. And it was this, perhaps, that made their poor and precarious life one of extreme neediness. While it is clear that superfluous goods make life superfluous. (Pasolini 1974b)

Italians were undergoing an 'anthropological mutation'; the poet saw it in a clearer way than other specialists, and he would pay with his life, within a year, for having spoken the truth.

This anthropological mutation was taking place not only at the level of mass behaviours, with peasants and workers all longing to become merry consumers; it happened also at the level of law. In 1975, the bill on 'Family Law' abolished a husband's patriarchal rights over his wife and offspring (Barbagli, Castiglioni and Della Zuanna 2004). In 1976, schools were opened to the participation of parents, who could then lead school councils; participation and assembly were hot keywords, contrasting with more reactionary temptations which did not remain silent for long. If a Christmas Eve coup attempt planned by a former fascist commander failed, to a resounding silence from the press and government, in May 1974 a bomb exploded in Brescia, during a union rally; later on in August, there came another one, this time on a train. Neo-fascist organisations, with the support of 'deviant State bodies', were trying to halt history,

11. Data from Ministero dell'Interno, https://elezionistorico.interno.gov.it/index.php?tpel=F, 14.06.2025 10 February 2025.

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destroying whoever happened to be passing by. The market, that emerging subject according to Pasolini, did not remain still.

The academic situation had already changed since the report that Alberto M. Cirese wrote (Cirese 1971; Noyes 2017) for the first issue of *Ethnologia Europaea*: from the 12 chairs or courses, taught mostly by temporary research staff, now almost all the universities offered one of the variously denominated courses; faculties were growing in number to respond to the rapidly growing demand of the post-'68 students.

Folk music and song traditions were now (1973 was the first national conference) the object of a new matter, leaning in more to a technical, musicological, and historical approach than to a new social and political understanding, despite the initial steps of its founder, Diego Carpitella, who left 'Storia delle tradizioni popolari' and gave birth to 'Etnomusicologia' in 1976.

From Sicily, with the pupils of Cocchiara, Aurelio Rigoli, and Antonino Buttitta and Elsa Guggino (herself founder of a *folk* studio in Palermo), or Luigi Lombardi Satriani in Messina, then to Naples and finally in Rome, to Udine with Gianpaolo Gri, passing for Cagliari, with Enrica Delitala and the younger Giulio Angioni; in Bari where Giovanni Bronzini took the direction of Lares; in Perugia and Florence, with Tullio Seppilli, Florence, Carla Bianco, or Paola Tabet, and to Gian Luigi Bravo in Turin, Italian universities hosted a growing sector, where folklore was often taught as an object of research even if not always under its own proper flag.[12]

Si parva licet, even the historical university of Siena was granted three new faculties by the government: one in Economics, one in Pedagogy, and one in the Humanities, where Alberto Cirese was asked to move from Cagliari, becoming its first dean in 1974.

In the same year as the final version of Cirese's handbook *Cultura egemonica e culture subalterne* (1973), Luigi Lombardi Satriani from Messina published *Folklore e profitto* (1973), a vehement critique of how traditional heritage was delivered into the hands of capitalism. Lombardi Satriani started from a regional perspective and would remain particularly linked to his native region, stressing the presence of an ontological 'contesting folklore', hinting at Gramsci and de Martino, more than the relational and differential dialectic that Cirese had been pointing to. However, Lombardi Satriani's book was also the most explicit critique of the marketing of traditions by the cultural and mass industries (Lombardi Satriani 1973).

Media and mass culture

First: the television growing influence, from news, to theatre and music. Already during the 1960s, RAI had hosted some pearls of journalism: Sergio Zavoli's investigations into Franco Basaglia's critique of psychiatric hospitals as total institutions (Foot 2015) saw RAI cameras entering the San Clemente hospital in Venezia, from its confines bringing back the voices and images of humanity locked up inside.

12. *La Ricerca Folklorica*, a leading journal since 1980, in 2017 and 2018 devoted two numbers (nos 72 and 73, edited by Gianni Dore and the director Glauco Sanga) to 'Italian anthropology autobiography'; from these, it is possible to have a detailed image of the generation entering the academic and folklore research scene by the 1970s.

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Ranging from foreign classics (Chechov and Shakespeare) to national (Pirandello) and even apparently local works (De Filippo, with his Neapolitan language), theatre had been offered to growing audiences. After previously having to gather in a public hall or in the bars, they could now enjoy a TV set in almost every home. Shows and quiz games continued to influence language and modes of interaction.

Music also deserves to be focused on. In 1954, *Volare*, sung by Domenico Modugno, had become so successful that any possible alternative from the folk side was out of the question. Now the scene was more pluralist. Besides the great interpreters, also some *chansonniers* were active; Francesco Guccini or Fabrizio de Andrè, for instance, brought into the music scene new topics, new values, and gave a voice to protests and aspirations for change. The folk revival, which had come to the fore with *Bella Ciao*, continued to be present at every strike, every demonstration, and every Festa dell'Unità; it had even created its own 'market' area. Even television opened its arms, and in 1974, a special section of *Canzonissima*, a three-month-long song contest, was reserved to 'folk music'. Many of the protagonists of the folk music revival were seduced by the TV appeal and offered their different voices and outfits and faces to a kind of paternalistic gaze, disconcerting those intellectuals who had formerly welcomed their arrival. Official theatre, after the incident at Spoleto, had seen many other folk-based performances, starting with Dario Fo's *Ci ragiono e canto*. In 1976, Roberto de Simone, a musician from Naples who was already the founder of *Nuova Compagnia di Canto popolare*, brought to the Spoleto festival *La Gatta Cenerentola* a musical adapting the Cinderella story, drawing on versions gathered from oral tradition, melting together the political, humour, gender, sexual innuendo, and tragedy from the point of view of content, and folk music patterns with baroque madrigals and polyphony on the musical side. Since then, *La Gatta Cenerentola* has become a lasting proof of the way in which different historical languages and expressive resources may be fruitfully used, thanks also to new cultural market possibilities (Sapienza 2006).

Different dynamics were simultaneously operating. The concept of leisure time had arrived, and summer holidays (mostly from abroad) were changing the face of the coast (Berrino 2011), as well the celebration dates of the patron saints of those villages from which millions had migrated to the North. Now, all industries closed in August; it became the month when migrants went back as tourists, so that even the patron saints owed to accept the more convenient August dates for their celebration.

The local promoters of *folk*, under the influence of a distant but competent nostalgic gaze, could now count also on the growing number of faculties and universities. Grassroots movements gave birth to museums (Cirese 1977; Clemente and Rossi 1999; Clemente 2010; Bravo 2001) created by local lovers of the past, who were often nostalgic for the departed 'peasant civilisation' and supplied with the vast, overwhelming array of artefacts – working tools, home furnishings, craftmanship, hand-made garments, and *ex voto* pieces – even portraits of Mussolini, to remind visitors that he, too, should be considered a distant passion. Now a new turn in economics or in history (under the influence of the French *longue durée* or the Annales historical school), joined anthropology and demology in offering scientific support to local initiatives.

The institution of regions, in 1975 (predisposed since 1948 but hitherto not applied Constitutional principle), enabled the twenty new intermediate bodies to become active on the cultural level alongside all the others, thus facilitating a more intense dialogue between academy and periphery,

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To date, the most complete history of Italian academic anthropology is that of Enzo Vinicio Alliegro (2011), who trawled through a mass of State competition reports, essay summaries, and biographies. His volume – over 500 large pages – stops in 1975. In my personal chronology, the timeline would include at least two more dates: in 1975, in the newborn anthropological school in Siena, its representatives Pietro Clemente, Maria Luisa Meoni, and Massimo Squillacciotti published a collection of press articles and field notes by Ernesto de Martino, wrapping up and reopening the debate on folklore (Clemente, Meoni and Squillacciotti 1976) and its links with politics and hegemonic culture; still today, they provide fruitful and provocative readings. Pietro Clemente – who joined Siena, together with Pier Giorgio Solinas, having been invited by the dean Alberto M. Cirese – was kindly told to start teaching and researching 'Storia delle tradizioni popolari' with some author in mind. Giuliano Montaldi (who had been publishing the autobiographies of urban marginal people) (Montaldi and Alasia 1960; Montaldi 1961), don Lorenzo Milani, and Frantz Fanon, whose *The Wretched of the Earth* (Fanon [1961] 1963) had left a mark on his conscience, opened his view to embrace all the 'damned' and the 'dominated'.

Conclusion

Such is then my partial and personal perspective – oriented also by my fellowship with Pietro Clemente and with Alberto M. Cirese's mastery – on the main character of Italian folklore studies over the time period under consideration. Considering it from the perspective of today's ongoing and prevailing trends, what is evident is the lack of any nationalistic or romantic mood, and its lack of objectification and essentialisation that give them an enduring actuality. This is even more so when contrasted with the simplistic recent adhesion to the objectifying and essentialising Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) paradigm of today (Mugnaini 2016).[13]

Let me close with the end date of May 1978. This month seems to be a crucial turning point: on 13 May, the law abolishing the mental hospital was approved. Law 180, known as *Legge Basaglia*, owed its name to the psychiatrist who since the 1960s had begun to demolish the rationale of mental asylums, advocating for a different concept of mental illness and its treatment. On 22 May, the law decriminalising abortion was approved, notwithstanding the Vatican's lightnings. However, the political hallmark is the 9th of May. The president of the *Democrazia Cristiana*, Aldo Moro, who had been working towards collaboration with the Communist Party, was killed by the *Brigate Rosse*, a left-wing terrorist movement that had already shed the blood of judges, industrialists, journalists, and workers, such as Guido Rossa. With this 'attack on the heart of the State', the history of Italy was altered and in a contorted way headed for the present problematic situation. It struck my generation as a hallmark, a welt on our memories. Both history and the chronicling of current affairs hereafter find too much space taken up by memory, and that cannot be given the responsibility for generalisations. It was

13. The UNESCO ICH Convention (2003), which has had a significant impact on cultural policies and practices of valuing local cultures in Italy since its ratification in 2007, has been influenced by the different characteristics of the states that have adopted it (Bendix, Eggert and Peselmann 2017). For a critical approach, see Hafstein 2018.

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in 1978 that I and many others entered the Academy as the first member of the family, lineage, or village to dare the university. My generation's access to academia was also partly a result of the history of the university, and of those disciplines that were talking about the past – our past, as I hope I have been able to illustrate here.

Epilogue

The 1980s passed in a so-called 'retreat', a withdrawal from the squares into private living rooms and the satisfaction of consumption. With the collapse of the Berlin Wall, even the Left, which had severed ties with Soviet totalitarianism since the 1970s, felt co-responsible for the communist legacy, starting a process of rethinking that also involved social disciplines. Cultural anthropology and demo-anthropology (as Cirese had renamed folklore studies) began to look elsewhere as well. Within the Academy, interpretivism became fashionable; on the ground, folk's performing skills quietly underwent a reorientation towards aesthetic evaluation and spectacular consumption (festivalisation, in the sense of Valdimar Hafstein; see Hafstein 2018). Ethnographic fieldwork moved from the land towards the museums; the neutralisation of the discipline was making it fit perfectly with the twenty years of Berlusconi's deculturation, ready for the onset of the heritage era (Mugnaini 2016). The lost innocence seems to be within reach again – just avoid looking at the world of immigrants, at the new urban poor, at the growing needs of the elderly in society, at the unbalanced access to socialising resources, at the daily life of precarious workers, at the languages and the restricted codes of the youth, at the persisting global division between the hegemonic and academic culture and a new popular one, and at the movable but resisting and now globalised unevenness.

A law has been approved by Italian Parliament[14] that will include folklore in a strong national framework of identification procedures and preservation aims, focusing on how local history fits into national history and how the re-enactment of the local past shows the continuity of a national people (so the bill was discussed in the parliamentary process). Heritage is once again a matter of national pride. The State and regions will watch over it and fund it (poorly) with tourism spin-offs and other symbolic rewards, with a nationalistic identity policy in mind. Valdimar Hafstein questions heritage strong policies: 'when, that is under what conditions and which circumstances, is protection not a means of dispossession?' (Hafstein 2018, 49). Will the Gramscian approach of Italian folklore studies be replaced by the nationalistic celebration of Italian folk wealth? The preservation framework risks becoming a shaping structure, washing away the main theory now widely shared across national and disciplinary boundaries.

Let us hope that someone will resist.

14. Legge 7 ottobre 2024, n. 152 Disposizioni in materia di manifestazioni di rievocazione storica e delega al Governo per l'adozione di norme per la salvaguardia del patrimonio culturale immateriale. GU Serie Generale n. 244 del 17-10-2024 [Law 7 October 2024, n. 152 Provisions regarding historical re-enactment events and delegation to the Government for the adoption of rules for the protection of intangible cultural heritage. *Gazzetta Ufficiale*, General Series No 244, 2024-10-17]

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Abstract

Contested Knowledge. Political Dimensions of European Ethnology and Folklore Studies in Post-War Europe

The edited volume *Contested Knowledge. Political Dimensions of European Ethnology and Folklore Studies* explores how European Ethnology and Folklore Studies in post-war Europe were shaped by political agendas, ideological control, and the contested production of ethnographic knowledge. Comprising various case studies from both socialist and non-socialist contexts, the volume traces how scholars navigated authoritarian pressure, Cold War divisions, disciplinary reforms, and competing national narratives.

The volume offers a collection of case studies that reveal the mechanisms through which ethnological and folkloristic research was organized, appropriated, resisted, and transformed in shifting academic and political landscapes after the Second World War. It sheds light on the varying ways in which individual ethnologists from the Baltic countries negotiated the restrictions placed upon them by the Soviet Union, with some of them deciding to continue their research in exile, while others stayed and tried to create niches for themselves within the Soviet system. It also explores the roles of different nationalisms within ethological research after the Second World War. This terminology appears in the form of competing nationalisms as a concept of research or in the context of funding for ethnological research. The volume highlights the creation of new perspectives within research and in the context of the discipline's entanglements with day-to-day politics and history. The book offers historically grounded insights for researchers in European Ethnology, Folklore Studies, and the broader humanities seeking to understand the political uses, limits, and vulnerabilities of contested cultural knowledge.

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