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TIINA SEPP

Pilgrims' reflections on the Camino de Santiago and Glastonbury as expressions of vernacular religion: fieldworker's perspective

TARTU ÜLIKOOL · UNIVERSITAS TARTUENSIS · 1632

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UNIVERSITY OF TARTU
PRESS
1632

Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore, Faculty of Philosophy

This dissertation is accepted for the commencement of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Estonian and Comparative Folklore) on 19.03.2014 by the Institute of Cultural Research and Fine Arts, University of Tartu.

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Commencement: 28.04.2014 at 12:15 in the main building of the University of Tartu (Senate hall)

Acknowledgements
This research was supported by the European Social Fund's Doctoral Studies and Internationalisation Program DoRa and by National Scholarship Program Kristjan Jaak (carried out by Archimedes Foundation), the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (Centre of Excellence in Cultural Theory) and Estonian Science Foundation (grant no. 9190). It was also supported by the Estonian Research Council (Institutional Research Project IUT2–43). My heartfelt thanks also go to the Glastonbury Reception Centre (formerly the Glastonbury Pilgrim Reception Centre).

European Union
Regional Development Fund

Investing in your future

ISSN 1406–7366
ISBN 978–9949–32–524–5 (print)
ISBN 978–9949–32–525–2 (pdf)

University of Tartu Press
www.tyk.ee

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Article I Sepp, Tiina 2007. Pilgrims and Tourists on Road to Santiago to Compostela. *Journal of Indian Folkloristics.* Volume IX No.1/2. January-December 2007 (N.S.) Mysore: Zooni Publications, 1–7.

Article II Sepp, Tiina 2012. Stories of Santiago Pilgrims: Tradition through Creativity. – Marion Bowman and Ülo Valk (eds.). *Vernacular Religion in Everyday Life: Expressions of Belief*. Sheffield; Bristol, CT: Equinox Publishing, 301–327.

Article III Sepp, Tiina 2012. Interview as an Act of Seduction: Analysing Problems I Have Met During my Fieldwork on the Camino de Santiago and in Glastonbury. *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics*. Volume 6, Number 2. Estonian Literary museum; Estonian National Museum; University of Tartu, 29–48.

Article IV Sepp, Tiina 2014. Pilgrimage and Pilgrim Hierarchies in Vernacular Discourse: Comparative Notes from the Camino de Santiago and Glastonbury. *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics.* Volume 8, Number 2. (Forthcoming).

INTRODUCTION

As the title suggests, this dissertation has been completed through close collaboration between me and my informants. By looking at the wide range of belief narratives expressed by pilgrims, I study pilgrimage as a narrated journey, including miracles and supernatural encounters. One of the aims of this dissertation is to provide an insight into the phenomenon of contemporary pilgrimage while reflecting upon fieldwork experiences. It is based on my extensive fieldwork, conducted in two important destinations in the spiritual landscape of European vernacular religion: the Camino de Santiago in northern Spain and Glastonbury in southwest England. I have been doing fieldwork in Spain since 2003 and in Glastonbury since 2011.

My research has been carried out in the broad framework of vernacular religion, i.e. religion as it is experienced and practiced rather than religion as it is prescribed. The term 'vernacular religion' was introduced by Leonard Norman Primiano (1995) and it 'highlights the power of the individual and communities of individuals to create and re-create their own religion' (Primiano 2012: 383). The focus of study is people, not 'religion' or 'belief' as abstractions (Primiano 2012: 383). As Marion Bowman and Ülo Valk have noted, the goal of contemporary scholarship should not be to 'produce authoritarian theoretical statements but rather to observe and capture the flow of vernacular discourse and reflect on it' (Bowman and Valk 2012: 2).

In the background (and occasionally in the foreground) of the four articles – that form the core of this dissertation – is the researcher. With her markedly self-reflexive methodology, she attempts to give voice to as many different people as possible – many primary narratives have been reproduced – yet she is aware that, in the end, it is her own voice that is telling the story.

1 PREMISES OF RESEARCH

In the following sections, I will describe the circumstances that led me to start researching pilgrimage. I will give an overview of the two sites where I have carried out fieldwork and bring out the people who have most inspired me.

1-1 How I became a pilgrim and started researching pilgrimage

Many things in life happen by chance. It was by chance that I became a pilgrim and started to research pilgrimage. In 2003 I was studying religious anthropology at the Faculty of Theology, University of Tartu, and had to choose a subject for my MA thesis. At the same time I was learning Spanish and my teacher recommended walking the Camino de Santiago (the Way of Saint James) as a perfect way of travelling in Spain and practising the language. I decided to combine these two things: walk the Camino and at the same time collect material for my research.

Before setting out on my first pilgrimage, I had very limited knowledge about it. I had only one friend who had done it, Fernando, a Galician living in Estonia. Before I left he gave me a brief introduction to the Camino: we studied the map together; he told me to follow the waymarks of yellow arrows and scallop shells;[1] he said that I needed to acquire a *credencial* (pilgrim's passport) that gives me the right to sleep in pilgrims' refuges; and he gave me some general advice on how to best enjoy the Camino. Fernando was not religious, so he did not talk about the spiritual aspects of the pilgrimage; all he said was that at some point in their life many people just feel like doing the Camino. I started my first Camino almost as a *tabula rasa*: I knew very few things about the history of the Camino, I had no prejudices, no big expectations, and I was open to everything.

I set out in June 2003 and spent three weeks walking the Camino Francés (the French Camino) from Burgos to Santiago de Compostela. I walked about 20–25 kilometres every day, slept in pilgrims' refuges and talked to hundreds of pilgrims from various countries. I was very surprised by the kindness and openness of my fellow pilgrims: it was easy to start a conversation with complete strangers. This was not a 'South European thing' as some people have suggested because I had not experienced anything similar in other southern European countries or the non-Camino parts of Spain. In November 2004 I

[1] According to legend, one of St James' miracles was saving a drowning horseman who then resurfaced, covered in shells. The scallop shell is worn to identify one's status as a pilgrim and as such is a good marker of continuity from the medieval pilgrim tradition. It is worth noting that a medieval pilgrim usually received the shell on arriving in Santiago; most contemporary pilgrims acquire it at the beginning of their journey.

returned to the Camino, eager to experience the pilgrimage in winter and to interview the 'winter pilgrims'. One of the reasons for doing it in the winter was that on my first pilgrimage I had heard several Spanish pilgrims say that *en verano hay mucha gente y poco peregrinos; en invierno hay poca gente pero todos son peregrinos.*[2] I walked for one month, from Pamplona to Santiago. In May 2005 I went with a friend and we spent two weeks walking from Astorga to Santiago and then continued to Finisterre.

In 2007 I started my PhD studies at the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore, University of Tartu; the working title of my dissertation was *Belief narrative: Santiago pilgrims' stories about their encounters with the supernatural*. In November 2007 I spent one week walking the Camino in Portugal and in 2008 I made two field trips to Spain. The first one was in spring when I walked from Roncesvalles to Burgos and the second one was in October, to spend two weeks working as an *hospitalera* (a voluntary host) in a pilgrims' refuge in Granyon, La Rioja. I received pilgrims, cleaned and cooked for them, helped with the evening prayer and conducted interviews. In 2010 I spent four months in the city of Santiago de Compostela interviewing arriving pilgrims; during that time I also walked a bit of the Camino. In 2012 I spent two weeks as an *hospitalera* in a pilgrim refuge in Nàjera.

In the process of fieldwork the preliminary concept changed. In 2011 my work expanded, encompassing also Glastonbury. One of the reasons for that change was meeting with Marion Bowman, a distinguished scholar of the New Spirituality movement from the UK, who has been conducting fieldwork in Glastonbury on a variety of phenomena since the early 1990s (see Bowman 1993; 2008). She told me about the newly opened Glastonbury Pilgrim Reception Centre (the PRC)[3] and suggested that a field trip to Glastonbury could help me contextualise my previous pilgrimage scholarship and expose me to new nuances of pilgrimage studies and discourse. On my four field trips to Glastonbury between 2011 and 2014, I interviewed people working or volunteering at the PRC in addition to several other local people I met at various conferences, workshops, shrines and churches. I asked my interviewees about different aspects of Glastonbury pilgrimage, for example, what the words pilgrim and pilgrimage meant to them, what were their motives for pilgrimage, and also about their experiences of the supernatural. I found the contemporary religious pluralism in Glastonbury very intriguing and unlike anything I had witnessed before.

Why did I choose the Camino de Santiago and Glastonbury over other famous pilgrimage destinations, for example Lourdes, Fatima, or Tinos? It is predominantly because I was able to adopt an emic, insider's perspective on the

[2] In summer there are many people and few pilgrims, in winter there are few people but they are all pilgrims.

[3] In April 2014, the Glastonbury Pilgrim Reception Centre changed its name to the Glastonbury Reception Centre.

Camino and in Glastonbury. Interviewing my fellow pilgrims seemed natural because we were moving towards the same destination and were sharing similar experiences. Apart from the Camino and Glastonbury, I have been to various pilgrimage sites in India and I have also visited the Orthodox shrine in the Greek island of Tinos. I met pilgrims there but could not interview any of them. I felt like an outside observer, therefore participant observation and conducting interviews seemed inappropriate. This probably shows how important the emic perspective has been in my research.

I have gathered information for my dissertation through participant observation, open-ended interviews and informal conversations. I found that just 'hanging out' in the Glastonbury PRC was very useful because it was an ideal place for meeting pilgrims and visitors and talking to them. The same can be said about pilgrims' refuges on the Camino de Santiago, where I have spent innumerable hours as a pilgrim as well as an *hospitalera*. I have walked the Camino as a pilgrim, tourist, student of anthropology and student of folkloristics. I have often changed one identity for another. Similarly, it can be said that I have been moving between two worldviews: scientific and magical. Since my fieldwork consisted of becoming a pilgrim/spiritual seeker myself, my dissertation has been written by combining emic and etic perspectives (see Lett 1996). Throughout the work I have been alternatively wearing my pilgrim's hat and my folklorist's (or anthropologist's) hat. As my first article was based on anthropological research and the other three articles are the result of folkloristic studies and fieldwork, shifting from anthropology to folkloristics has above all meant focussing on narrative. Training as a folklorist has taught me to pay more attention to the importance of the different genres of the pieces that I have collected.

I think that my dissertation has benefitted from including Glastonbury, not only because of getting a very important comparative perspective, but having two sites of fieldwork has provided me with a better opportunity to 'step back' and distance myself from my informants' world. It has enabled me to see both the Camino de Santiago and Glastonbury pilgrimage more clearly. As the emic perspective is prominent in my research, then doing fieldwork in only one place would probably have brought with it a pronounced danger of being 'dragged in' or 'going native'. At this point it seems appropriate to say a few words about my religious background. I grew up in an atheist family in the aggressively atheist society of the Soviet Union and I have never belonged to any congregation. At present I would describe myself as an agnostic**.**

Before I undertook my first Camino, my supervisor Ülo Valk suggested that I could consider the option of writing my MA thesis in the form of a fieldwork diary. I found that idea too novel: I considered the form of a diary to be too subjective for a thesis. However, in the middle of my studies I came to realise that everything – my thesis, articles, books and conference papers – had to a considerable extent been about me. It is probably quite natural, as every hermeneutics is 'explicitly or implicitly, self-understanding by means of under-

standing others' (Ricoeur 1974: 17). In the final stage of my MA studies I started writing a travel book/diary about my first three walks on the Camino de Santiago, focussing on my fellow pilgrims and their stories. The book was entitled *Peregrina päevik* (*Peregrina's Diary)* and it was published in 2007 (Sepp 2007). Two years later I published a sequel: *Kas jääte ööseks? Hospitalera päevik* (*Are you going to stay over? Hospitalera's Diary)* (Sepp 2009). I enjoyed working simultaneously on two pieces of writing that were about the same subject but in different genres – academic dissertation and travel diary – and these two have hopefully complemented each other. For example, their mutual influence on one another can be seen in their respective styles: my diaries reflect the academic research I have done during my travels/field trips and I may subconsciously have written my dissertation with an additional aim of enticing the reader, of trying to keep them interested.

What would-be pilgrims read or hear about the Camino beforehand is very likely to influence their experiences. I became aware of this thanks to the feedback I received from an Estonian pilgrim Epp, who decided to walk the Camino after reading my first book *Peregrina päevik***.** After finishing the Camino, Epp sent me an email to thank me, saying that apart from inspiring her to walk the Camino, my book had also made her trustful, open and positive towards the journey. She told me that she had walked the Camino in the spirit of my book and felt 'like a flower, positive and full of joy'. She added that, after talking to some of her fellow pilgrims – who had read more negative and cautious texts which resulted in them carrying that attitude to the Camino – she felt especially happy about reading my book. The following quote from Bente Alver (1990: 160) illustrates my intentions:

> I consider that as folklorists, we have a special responsibility to publish our work in a form in which it is available to the people who have spent their time and energy together with us in pursuit of the material so necessary to our work, – the joint effort in creating the source. [...] For me, the close interplay implies the use of immediacy in the forms of expression, enabling us to act as true bearers of the complex messages we want to get across, messages so often concerned with hidden realities and hidden connections. This means the application of alternative forms, such as portraits, sketches, stories, letters, travel notes, diaries. And then, to a much higher degree the work may serve as sources of inspiration for the creators of works of art, motion pictures, novels, – even music!

Apart from academic literature I have read fiction and travel diaries written about the Camino and Glastonbury, e.g. *The Mists of Avalon* by Marion Zimmer Bradley (1983); *The Pilgrimage* by Paulo Coelho (1999); *Glastonbury: Avalon of the Heart* by Dion Fortune (2000); *The Camino: A Journey of the Spirit* by Shirley MacLaine (2000); *Travels with My Donkey: One Man and His Ass on a Pilgrimage to Santiago* by Tim Moore (2004), *Pilgrimage to Heresy* by Tracey Saunders (2007); and *I'm Off Then: Losing and Finding Myself on the Camino de Santiago* by Hape Kerkeling (2009). Reading these books has helped me to

understand the motives and expectations of people who get inspiration from them. It is also interesting to observe how pilgrims' stories are going back to them through publications that are based on academic research. For example, several stories retold in Nancy Louise Frey's *Pilgrim Stories* (1998) are very popular with pilgrims and some regard her book as a textbook. Something similar happened to Anu Korb during her fieldwork in Estonian settlements in Siberia. She writes: 'When my Siberian books reached the Siberians themselves, I made an astonishing discovery – some Siberians regarded the book as a textbook, and started to seriously use the spells, wisdom of folk medicine, advice on farming, etc. from that book.' (Korb 2005: 122)

1-2 Saint James and his Way

For over a thousand years there has been pilgrimage to the city of Santiago de Compostela in the north-west of Spain, where the remains of martyred apostle St James the Greater (in Spanish Santiago) are believed to rest. The Camino de Santiago, also known as the Way of St James, is one of the most important modern pilgrimage routes in the Western world and the largest Christian pilgrimage in Europe. Although the pilgrimage has a religious foundation based in Catholic doctrine, nowadays it is not walked for religious motives only: travelling the Camino can be a vacation, a physical adventure, therapy and much more. By walking, cycling or riding along the ancient pilgrimage route, people are replicating an ancient ritual; almost everybody carries their back-pack, scallop shell and pilgrim's passport which is stamped daily and gives them the right to stay in refuges (see Dunn and Davidson 2000; Frey 1998; Coffey, Davidson, Dunn 1996). As Maryjane Dunn and Linda Kay Davidson have noted:

> Although we live in a multi-national, multi-cultural, multi-religious world, there is something about the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela that has a lasting impact on more people and in more ways and in more countries than those Galician peasants who directed Bishop Theodomir's eyes to a pile of bones could ever have envisioned. (Dunn and Davidson 2000: XVI)

As an apostle of Christ, St James' shrine came to rank highly among other European shrines: Santiago de Compostela was the third most popular pilgrimage site of the Middle Ages, following Jerusalem and Rome. St James, the patron saint of Spain, is an interesting character and many legends have been created about him and his pilgrims. One that appears in most pilgrim guides is the following: James the Apostle came to evangelise the northern part of the Iberian Peninsula. After returning to Jerusalem, he was beheaded by King Herod, who then wanted to feed his dead body to dogs. James' two disciples stole his body and placed it in a stone boat, which miraculously sailed to the Galician coast. The saint's body was buried there, and everything about it was

forgotten until the year 813, when a hermit called Pelayo discovered the tomb thanks to guidance from a bright star. From his origins as a Galilean fisherman, James became a heroic knight, turning up in decisive battles against the Moors in the Christian reconquest of Spain.

When talking about the past and present popularity of the Camino de Santiago, the importance of the twelfth century manuscript of the *Liber Sancti Jacobi*[4] cannot be overemphasised. This book consists of five parts that deal with the history and liturgy of the cult of St James and also contain a version of the Roland and Charlemagne story. The best known part is probably Book V: the Pilgrim's Guide (attributed to a French cleric Aimery Picaud), which describes the journey to Santiago de Compostela. This book has been called a unique twelfth century travel guide.

As researchers (Coffey et al. 1996; Frey 1998) have noted, all except one of the twenty-two miracles attributed to St James in Book II of the *Liber Sancti Jacobi* occur away from the shrine, before or during the journey to Compostela; this can be seen as an indication of the importance of the road rather than the arrival since its founding. According to Coffey et al. (1996: XLVI), St James and his miracles are peripatetic: their predominant locus is the pilgrimage route rather than the shrine; this makes St James' miracles unlike those of many other saints. Almost from the beginning, much of the importance of St James's cult was derived from the process of pilgrimage rather than the shrine and relics themselves.

Versions of St James' miracles are ubiquitous: they are found in most European countries and have been recreated over a long period of time (Coffey et al. 1996: XLVI). Several parallels between the cult of the Virgin Mary and of St James have been noticed: almost all the information about them is based on non-Biblical materials; miracles attributed to St James are attributed to the Virgin and vice versa (Dunn and Davidson 2000: 99). Both St James and the Virgin play an important role in pilgrims' narratives. The following text is sometimes used by Spanish pilgrims to bless someone who is about to start the Camino: *Que Santi te proteja, La Reina de los peregrinos te acompanye, y el Jefe te lleva en la palma de su mano.*[5] St James is believed to take good care of his pilgrims and many have felt his help at critical moments (see Frey 1998). Nancy Frey has noted that 'the idea that Saint James comes in many, often unexpected, forms leads pilgrims to frequently attribute a seemingly miraculous or lucky encounter to the saint even if they do not consider themselves religious' (Frey 1998: 106). The route that is officially called the Camino de Santiago is also known by other names: *via de las estrellas* (the road of the

[4] Book of Saint James, also called *Codex Calixtinus* because its letter of introduction has been attributed to Pope Calixto II.

[5] May St James protect you, the Queen of the pilgrims accompany you and the Chief hold you in the palm of his hand.

stars) and v*ia lactea*, (the Milky Way), which is said to parallel the physical, terrestrial Camino in the night-time sky.

Even though the majority of the Santiago pilgrims are not (practicing) Catholics or even Christians, the official religion of the Camino is still undeniably Catholicism. However, even though the Church has made it clear that 'esoterics' and 'gnostics' are not pilgrims, it hesitates to put strict limits on the pilgrimage: 'A specific goal of the Church is to use the current popularity of the Camino to evangelize and convert European youth' (Frey 1998: 127). When writing about the twentieth-century reanimation of the Camino, Nancy Frey noted that the pilgrimage has not become reanimated as a strictly religious journey but has been interpreted as an ideal way to enjoy 'leisure with meaning' (Frey 1998: 254).

Because hundreds of thousands of people[6] from more than sixty different countries walk it every year, the Camino de Santiago has sometimes been called the *Calle Mayor de Europa* (Main Street of Europe). In 2003, when I was preparing for my first Camino, few Estonians had heard of it. Now the Camino seems to be quite popular. Andres Sööt made a documentary (2011) about his journey on the Camino; Maarika Traat's journey on foot from Tartu to Santiago de Compostela in May-December 2012 received plenty of media coverage;[7] newspapers and magazines occasionally publish interviews with people who have walked the Camino. Of course it is not only the Santiago pilgrimage that seems to be becoming increasingly more popular, other sacred sites such as Lourdes and Glastonbury also receive huge numbers of visitors every year.

The Camino de Santiago has served as an area of research for several historians, theologians, anthropologists and sociologists. To my knowledge, little research has been done on pilgrims' stories from a folkloristic perspective, and I have endeavoured to fill this gap.

1-3 Glastonbury

Glastonbury is a town of c. 9,000 inhabitants situated in the southwest of England. Marion Bowman has observed that whatever the prevailing myth or worldview, Glastonbury somehow claims a central place in it (Bowman 2007: 295).

Many people think of Glastonbury as the legendary Isle of Avalon where King Arthur is said to be buried. Glastonbury Tor – the hill believed by many to be imbued with sacred properties – is often described as the door to the underworld. Some argue that Glastonbury was venerated as a sacred place in

[6] Between 2011 and 2012 the number of pilgrims who registered with the Pilgrims' Office in Santiago rose by 5% from 183,366 to 192,488. In 2013 numbers have grown by 12%, with 215,856 pilgrims receiving a *Compostela.* For additional statistics, see http://www.catedraldesantiago.es/es/oficina-peregrino. Last accessed 20.03.2014.

[7] http://tartu2santiago.wordpress.com/about/ Last accessed 20.03.2014.

Britain before Christianity and was the site of the first Christian community, reputedly founded by Joseph of Arimathea.[8] According to legend, Joseph went to Glastonbury bringing with him two vessels, one containing the blood of Christ and the other his sweat, both of which were buried on Chalice Hill. There are also legends about Jesus himself visiting Glastonbury as a child; some people claim that he was also buried there (see Mannaz 2007). Glastonbury was an important pilgrimage destination in the Middle Ages but this ceased with the destruction of the Abbey at the Dissolution in 1539.[9] The Abbot Richard Whiting was dragged to the top of the Tor together with two monks, where they were ritually murdered.[10]

According to Marion Bowman (2007), Glastonbury is not one place but many; it is a place of parallel pasts and presents. While there is a popularly perceived chronology of events (patriarchy replacing matriarchy, Christianity replacing Paganism), there is also 'a horizontal structure of simultaneity whereby different pasts are being revived to take their place in the present, at the same time in the same location' (Bowman 2007: 292–293). For many people Glastonbury is an ancient cultic centre of Goddess worship and a Druidic centre of learning; Glastonbury is considered to be the heart chakra of the world and a place with special energies (see Prince and Riches 2000, Bowman 2008).

Geoffrey Ashe has quoted the words of Aelred Watkin: 'You have only to tell some crazy tale at Glastonbury and in ten years' time it'll be an ancient Somerset legend' (Ashe 1983: 17). Today, Glastonbury attracts huge numbers of spiritual seekers. According to Adam Stout (2012: 266), they may disagree on every other aspect of belief, but they all agree that Glastonbury is in some way different. Stout suggests that Glastonbury's biggest miracle is that it has managed to stay special to such contradictory creeds since the Reformation (ibid.).

I have heard from many people that in Glastonbury the veil between this world and the 'other world' is very thin, and that Glastonbury has some very strong energies.[11] On my first arrival in Glastonbury in summer 2011, some people suggested that I should 'take a break' from Glastonbury as often as possible, otherwise Glastonbury might become too intense. One woman, who has been involved in esoteric communities for about thirty years, told me to be careful because the place would 'suck me in and eventually destroy'.

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[8] Joseph of Arimathea is the man who provided a tomb for Jesus after crucifixion. According to another version of the Glastonbury legend, Joseph brought with him the chalice used at the Last Supper.

[9] For the history of the Glastonbury Abbey, see Carley (1988).

[10] They were beatified in 1895 and the martyrdom was commemorated by the first post-Reformation self- identified Roman Catholic pilgrimage to Glastonbury in the same year (Bowman 2014; Dunning 2006).

[11] When no specific reference is given for a quotation, it comes from my fieldwork notes or recordings.

Today Glastonbury can be seen as one of the most popular and multivalent pilgrimage sites in the UK, it is an example *par excellence* of a contemporary pilgrimage centre (Bowman 2012: 12, 21). Because a variety of people go to Glastonbury with assorted interests, a spectrum of pilgrimage activity can be seen there, for example, traditional Western Christian models, interfaith pilgrimage, Goddess pilgrimage, Celtic calendar-related activity, earth energy-inspired journeying, virtual pilgrimage (Bowman 2008: 241). For many people who see Glastonbury as a pilgrimage centre, it is not only about religion but rather about its unworldly quality, about finding something 'undefined'. According to Victor and Edith Turner's classification, Glastonbury falls into the group of pilgrimages which bear evident traces of syncretism with older religious beliefs and symbols (Turner and Turner 1978: 18).

Since I first went to Glastonbury, I heard people talk about the Company of Avalon: a group of souls who are believed to have lived as monks at different times during the life of the Abbey. The first person who allegedly communicated with them was Frederick Bligh Bond,[12] an architect and archaeologist, who was appointed as director of excavations in the early 1900s. He was unusually successful in his work because during automatic writing he was allegedly told by the long-dead monks where to dig and what to look for. During my field trips to Glastonbury I have talked to people who say they still communicate with these monks and are helped by them.

According to the information on the Glastonbury PRC website, more than seventy faiths and paths are upheld in Glastonbury. Glastonbury is believed to be a special place by many of its residents as well as visitors and as such it has attracted considerable vernacular (for example, Mannaz 2007) as well as academic research (for example, Bowman 1993; Prince and Riches 2000; Hopkinson-Ball 2007).

I can only confirm the observation made by Marion Bowman (2009) about 'things moving fast in Glastonbury'. Bowman writes:

> Glastonbury has been described as 'a spiritual laboratory', 'a university town without a university', constantly attracting new spiritual students experimenting with and sampling a variety of ideas, beliefs, praxis, experiences and lifestyles, all of which can be found in and around there. Things move fast in Glastonbury, so one can see things develop, change or disappear. Interest in and discussion about aliens and UFO sightings were present but waning when I first started visiting Glastonbury, for example, to be superseded by intense speculation about crop circles (many of which appeared in the Glastonbury area) but which is in turn now receding. (Bowman 2009: 4)

[12] For the biography of Bond, see Hopkinson-Ball 2007.

1-4 My informants

While I am immensely grateful to all the informants, both on the Camino de Santiago and in Glastonbury, there are four people without whom this dissertation would not have become what it is. These people are Barry, John, Morgana and Roger. The second article is predominantly about the stories told by Belgian pilgrim Roger, and it was he who inspired me to write the third article, as well. British pilgrim and itinerant artist John is one of the protagonists of my third article and he has also been an inspiration for some of my conference papers, for example, *Alternative Pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela*, given at the 16th Congress of the ISFNR in Vilnius in 2013. Barry Taylor and Morgana West, the co-founders of the Glastonbury PRC, are the most extensively quoted people in the third and fourth articles.

Nearly all of my fellow pilgrims and other people I have met during my field trips have been curious about my research and were willing to help by sharing their stories and experiences with me. I was glad that some of them said they enjoyed being interviewed. One Santiago pilgrim said: 'When you keep walking for several weeks, it's really good to meet someone who asks you why you're doing this.'

1-5 Alan Dundes

It was thanks to reading Alan Dundes' *Life is Like a Chicken Coop Ladder: A Study of the German National Character through Folklore* (1984) that I decided to study folklore. Reading (and re-reading) Alan Dundes' works I have always been struck by his psychological insights as well as his bold and skilful use of humour. The abovementioned book in particular showed me that folklore research can be fascinating and that folklorists are not always obsessed with 'endless debates about classification or definition', but instead study how people think.

The main ideas that I have got from reading Dundes' works are his notion of 'oral literary criticism', his use of irony, provocation, and psychoanalysis. He introduced the concept of 'oral literary criticism' to draw attention to the importance of tradition-bearers' own insights (Dundes 1975). Following his advice, I always ask my informants to interpret not only their own stories but sometimes also those that I have heard from other pilgrims and even my own personal experience story. After reading *From Game to War and Other Psychoanalytic Essays on Folklore* by Dundes (1997), I became enthusiastic and tried to apply Freudian approach to the Camino de Santiago. For example, there are two objects that most pilgrims carry with them, a pilgrim's staff and a scallop shell. A staff can be seen to symbolise the masculine, a scallop shell the feminine. I can say that Alan Dundes' theories and methodology have had a considerable influence on my approach.

2 THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE DISSERTATION

I am now going to give an overview of the key concepts I have used and the theoretical and methodological approaches that have most influenced me while writing this dissertation.

2-1 Vernacular religion

My research has been carried out in the framework of vernacular religion. My focus is on how people's ideas, beliefs and worldviews are expressed through oral narratives. In his influential article *The Philology of the Vernacular*, Richard Bauman emphasises the sociological aspect of folklore studies and draws attention to the social stratification of culture (Bauman 2008: 32). The stratum that is usually at or near the bottom is termed folk, common, popular, or vernacular and Bauman argues that of these terms 'vernacular' is the least ideologically encumbered (ibid.). He writes:

> The *vernacular* is a communicative modality characterized by (1) communicative resources and practices that are acquired informally, in communities of practice, rather than by formal instruction; (2) communicative relations that are immediate, grounded in the interaction order and the lifeworld; and (3) horizons of distribution and circulation that are spatially bounded, by locality or region. (Bauman 2008: 32)

'Vernacular religion' is a term introduced by Leonard Norman Primiano (1995), who suggested this instead of 'folk religion'. In 1974, Don Yoder defined folk religion as 'the totality of all those views and practices of religion that exist among the people apart from and alongside the strictly theological and liturgical forms of the official religion' (Yoder 1974: 14). Primiano defines vernacular religion as 'religion as it is lived: as human beings encounter, understand, interpret and practice it' (Primiano 1995: 44).

What makes the concept of 'vernacular religion' especially valuable, is that it 'highlights the power of the individual and communities of individuals to create and re-create their own religion' (Primiano 2012: 383). The focus of study is human interaction, not 'religion' or 'belief' as abstractions (ibid: 384). I find the concept of 'vernacular religion' suitable for my research mainly because it has been difficult for me to understand why for some scholars church dogmas are elevated above the expressions of religion by 'simple folk'. Scholars of vernacular religion are interested in the phenomena that result from belief and regard them with equal weight, whether institutionally 'authorised' beliefs or personal interpretations of institutional views.

I find it surprising that this hierarchy of 'high' and 'low' religion still exists (at least to some extent) in scholarship in the twenty-first century and I believe

that this needs to be contested.[13] Pascal Boyer speaks about a dinner in a Cambridge college, where during a discussion about Fang people's beliefs a prominent Catholic scholar said that what makes anthropology so fascinating and difficult, is 'having to explain how people can believe in such nonsense' (Boyer 2001: 297). Boyer argues that the question about how people can believe all this should apply to all kind of beliefs: 'The Fang too were quite amazed when first told that three persons *really* were one person while being three persons, or that all misfortune in this vale of tears stemmed from two ancestors eating exotic fruit in a garden' (ibid.).

I like to study religion as it is lived and prefer not to think in the categories of high (official) and low (folk) religion. I will give voice to the pilgrims as well as church authorities, bearing in mind that the 'expressive field of folklore is always heteroglot' (Valk 2012a: 366). Valk writes: 'Dominant discourses, with claims to hegemonic authority and expressing ultimate truths, generate counter arguments, become targets of attacks and are refuted.' (ibid.) I look into the difference between the official discourse of the shrine of Santiago and the creative practices of pilgrims, describing how different interpretations compete with each other. For me, the religious beliefs of priests and scholars are on the same level with those of all the people I have interviewed on the Camino and in Glastonbury. None of them carry more weight or should be taken more seriously than others: they are all expressions of vernacular religion and of equal importance for my research. I must admit that my own attitude to these two 'sides' can vary. I would never ridicule or speak sarcastically about the beliefs or stories of my interviewees. At the same time, while doing interviews and hearing the authoritarian opinion, I often feel the need to challenge the condescending attitude shown by those in power, those representing what used to be called high, institutional religion.

2-2 Pilgrimage studies

Pilgrimage studies form an essential part of the theoretical framework of this dissertation. There has been extensive research on pilgrimage; therefore I will only elaborate on the researchers who have had the greatest impact on my work. The scholars whose works influenced me most in the first phase of my research were Victor and Edith Turner (1978) and Nancy Frey (1998); in the final 'Glastonbury' stage, Marion Bowman (2004, 2007, 2008, 2012) and John Eade and Michael Sallnow (2000). American anthropologist Nancy Louise Frey's *Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago* (1998), which is based on her doctoral dissertation, is a highly influential book on the subject of Santiago pilgrimage. She spent several years doing fieldwork on the Camino and

[13] For discussion about religion versus vernacular beliefs, see Bowman and Valk (2012: 3–7).

conducted in-depth interviews covering a wide array of topics; her book has become a most valuable aid to would-be pilgrims as well as people doing academic research on the pilgrimage.

Marion Bowman has conducted fieldwork in Glastonbury since the 1990s; she has published extensively on several Glastonbury-related topics and made a major contribution to the study of contemporary pilgrimage in general and of Glastonbury in particular. I have benefitted most from Bowman's analysis of the processions of the Glastonbury Christian pilgrimages as 'a means of Christianity reasserting its claim on Glastonbury' and of the Goddess Procession as '"claiming space," as a way of saying that "this belongs to Her"' (Bowman 2004: 279, 282).[14] Bowman's (2008) insights into the different levels of designation of the pilgrim[15] – self-designation, designation by others, designation according to different theological positioning or different scholarly models – have also been very relevant to my own research.

According to Antón M. Pazos, pilgrimage is 'one of the most widespread and deeply rooted religious impulses' (Pazos 2012: 1). He comments that, while pilgrimage centres can be found in all religions and pilgrimage forms an essential element of religion itself, the term 'pilgrimage' may also be applied metaphorically to any journey undertaken as an act of homage (ibid.). The definition of pilgrimage has been hotly disputed by several scholars (see Margry 2008; Gothóni 2010). Tore Ahlbäck (2010)[16] has defined pilgrimage as 'a journey undertaken by individuals or a group to a place, which for the single individual or the individuals in the group is of great importance because of something they have learnt and experienced in the culture and religion which they have grown up within' (Ahlbäck 2010: 5). Hugh McLeod argues that the three essential aspects of pilgrimage are a concept of the sacred, a belief that the sacred is to be encountered most readily in certain places, and the journey to these places (McLeod 2012: 188).

McLeod distinguishes between pilgrimages where the destination is all-important and the journey and mode of travel are of minor significance, and those where this order of priorities is reversed (McLeod 2012: 188). Making this distinction is particularly relevant for my research because of the two places where I have carried out fieldwork. Glastonbury falls into the first category: it does not matter in the least how one travels there; all that counts for most people is experiencing the powerful energy of the place. The Camino de Santiago is an example *par excellence* of the second type: an overwhelming

[14] Here Bowman quotes Kathy Jones, the leader of the Goddess Movement.

[15] According to Bowman, in Glastonbury some visitors self-identify as pilgrims, some residents self-identify as pilgrims, and some designate all who come to Glastonbury as seekers or (in some cases) pilgrims.

[16] In the Call for Papers for the symposium *Pilgrimages Today*, arranged by the Donner Institute for Research in Religious and Cultural History, held on 19-21 August 2009 in Turku.

majority of Santiago pilgrims say that the journey is more important than the arrival.

2-2-1 Medieval pilgrimage

Pilgrimage was one of the major aspects of medieval society. The fundamental importance of the holy shrine as the destination of pilgrimage was that it was believed – usually through the report of miracles occurring there – to bridge the gap between the 'banality and suffering of the physical world and the serenity and purity of the spiritual world' (Hopper 2002: 121). The Church absorbed pilgrimages into its system of salvation and absolved sinners if they visited a distant holy shrine. Kings and lords developed the taste for pilgrimage and the main pilgrim routes became 'conduits of cultural transmission' (Turner and Turner 1978: 26). Pilgrimage was given a major boost in 1095, when Urban II introduced the practice of indulgence.

Many modern pilgrims try to emulate the medieval pilgrim who is often seen as an ideal, 'authentic' pilgrim. Several shrines are seen as the rightful successor to and continuation of the medieval pilgrimage. For example in Glastonbury, both the Anglican Pilgrimage and the Catholic Pilgrimage claim continuity with the tradition of pilgrimage disrupted by the Reformation (Bowman 2004: 279). Describing the development of the Walsingham pilgrimage, Simon Coleman brings out the important role of mimesis as a form of revival of the past (Coleman 2009: 23). The main value of the Camino de Santiago is, for many pilgrims, in its long history. Nancy Louise Frey has written:

> In the medieval pilgrimage and pilgrim, modern pilgrims find a direct link to the past, an authenticity based on sacrifice, endurance, and austerity imagined to have been lived by the medieval pilgrim, and a community of souls united by the rhythm of their feet as the second millennium comes to a close. (Frey 1998: 15)

Many Santiago pilgrims are fascinated by the history of the Camino and several pilgrims have told me about the vivid flashbacks they have got from their former lives. Interestingly, most reincarnation stories I have heard from fellow pilgrims are related to war: people remember having fought in a medieval battle at that particular place or just walked there wearing old uniforms (Sepp 2012a: 317).

There are certain pilgrim rituals that are directly related to the medieval ones. One of them is touching or giving a hug to the statue of St James situated behind the main altar; this is the most popular ritual performed at the completion of the Santiago pilgrimage. The majority of pilgrims are probably unaware of the connection between the contemporary saint-hugging and medieval pilgrims' desire to see or touch the holy relics. Similarly to the medieval pilgrims who were eager to touch the remains of a saint, modern-day pilgrims give a hug to the apostle and whisper their thanks, wishes and prayers

into his ear. Another link between the present day and past pilgrimage is that many pilgrim refuges are run by the Church. Furthermore, they are often located in buildings dating from the Middle Ages, from when the Church's hospitality was very important for travellers, particularly when hermitages or monasteries were built in areas where there were no other habitations (see Ohler 2010: 82).

To get a better understanding of contemporary pilgrims' stories and motivations, I read not only about medieval pilgrimage but about the Middle Ages generally. Jacques le Goff (1988, 1994) and Benedicta Ward (1987) are some of the authors who have influenced my understanding of the mindset of the people in the Middle Ages and of the medieval imagination.

It is important to note that pilgrimage has always been viewed by the Church with some ambivalence: anxiety that pilgrimage might be undertaken by the 'wrong people and for the wrong reasons' was felt from early times (Webb 2002:72). Although the religiously motivated visits to the shrines (vows, seeking for a miracle, etc.) were approved of, the Church's control over pilgrimage was limited. The subversive potential of dislocation was understood and concerns about uncontrolled vagrancy have been there almost from the beginning. For instance, the 'evils found on route to the pilgrimage site and the sins of and strife among the pilgrims themselves' are also pointed out in one of the sermons in the *Liber Sancti Iacobi* (Coffey et al. 1996: XXVIII). The dubious piety and 'suspicious' motives of most of Chaucer's Canterbury pilgrims are well-known. All this is important for my research on contemporary pilgrims' narratives, because stories about mischievous medieval pilgrims may have generated and spread the stereotypes that make modern pilgrims more suspicious of some of their fellow pilgrims.

The Middle Ages, especially the thirteenth century, were also the time of the *exemplum*. A legacy of the Greeks and Romans, the *exemplum* was 'an historical anecdote employed in rhetoric of persuasion' (Le Goff 1988: 78). In the hands of Christian moralists it became 'an instrument of edification' (ibid.). In my analysis of legends told by a Belgian pilgrim Roger, I argue that Roger's stories seem to have sprung from a collection of the legends about St James, compiled and published by the Catholic Church and I compare his stories to medieval *exempla* (Sepp 2012a).

Anna Fedele (2013: 7) notes that it would be wrong to assume that pilgrimage and ritual have followed fixed patterns in the past and people have only recently started to creatively appropriate and change them. She emphasises that studies about vernacular Catholicism and Christian pilgrimage suggest that ritual and pilgrimage are heterogeneous and changing phenomena in the past as well as in the present Christian lived tradition (ibid.).

2-2-2 Contemporary pilgrimage

Pilgrimage did not lose its power over the imagination, even when and where the Reformation brought its actual practice to an end (Webb 2002: 154). After being suppressed for centuries, pilgrimage began to re-emerge in the nineteenth century. Similarly to medieval pilgrims, today people are also motivated by different desires and purposes. Hugh McLeod has pointed out that in modern societies new sources of the sacred are attracting new kinds of pilgrimage (for example, the politically inspired pilgrimage Mur de Fédéré in Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris); older places of pilgrimage are being rediscovered and reinterpreted (for example, Glastonbury in England); pilgrimages are 'improvised' as collective responses to tragedy (for example, pilgrimage to Anfield, Liverpool FC ground after the 1989 Hillsborough disaster); and pilgrimage also plays an important role in individual searches for meaning (for example, the Camino de Santiago) (McLeod 2012: 187–199).

According to Adrian Ivakhiv, New Age pilgrimage represents a multitude of desires: to heal the sores and imbalances of a society; to feel energies and open mysterious portals into the unknown; and to map out the alternative universes exposed by New Age theories and Gnostic insights (Ivakhiv 2007: 283). Analysing new forms of pilgrimage, Hugh McLeod brings out healing as one thing that has remained constant: pilgrimage is centrally concerned with healing, but the healing that people seek is now more often psychological than physical (McLeod 2012: 201). This observation has been confirmed numerous times during my fieldwork on the Camino: I have met many pilgrims who set out in order to find alleviation to the pain and suffering caused by the loss of someone close either through death, divorce, or similar. For example, one young woman who had been recently abandoned by her husband walked the Camino carrying her wedding dress in her backpack. When she arrived in Finisterre, she burnt the dress in the hope of leaving the past behind and moving on with her life (Sepp 2014). Some people call the Camino a 'therapy route' and there are doctors who recommend walking the Camino to their patients with mild depression or similar. Nancy Frey has referred to the use of the term 'the walking wounded' among the pilgrims (Frey 1998: 45, 262).

Based on my fieldwork, I suggest that nowadays the main reason for the growing popularity of both Glastonbury and the Camino de Santiago is the fact that they mean so many different things to different people. This is best expressed by the observation made by John Eade and Michael Sallnow:

> The power of a shrine, therefore, derives in large part from its character almost as a religious void, a ritual space capable of accommodating diverse meanings and practices – though of course the shrine staff might attempt, with varying degrees of success, to impose a single, official discourse. This, in the final analysis, is what confers upon a major shrine its essential, universalistic character: its capacity to absorb and reflect a multiplicity of religious discourses, to be able to offer a variety of clients what each of them desires. [...] The sacred

> centre, then, in this perspective, appears as a vessel into which pilgrims devoutly pour their hopes, prayers and aspirations. (Eade, Sallnow 2000:15)

Several scholars (Margry 2008: 13; Gothóni 2010) argue that the term 'pilgrimage' is in need of re-evaluation. In European vernacular religion the terms 'pilgrim' and 'pilgrimage' are rather ambiguous and it seems unlikely that a definition will be coined that everybody will agree with. I have noticed that the usage of the words 'pilgrim' and 'pilgrimage' sometimes reveals the tension between different discourses and religious systems. The notion of pilgrimage is debated not only in scholarly writing but in vernacular discourse, too. Some people would go as far as say that any significant journey can be described as pilgrimage; some others claim that pilgrimage made by (for example) Pagans is not a pilgrimage. By looking at different, competing narratives about pilgrimage in Glastonbury and on the Camino I have heard many discussions over the meaning of the words 'pilgrim' and 'pilgrimage'.

2-3 Narrative-based genres: Researching the supernatural

I think it is important to consider the influence of Camino literature on the pilgrims' experiences and on their repertoires. I view the Camino de Santiago as a narrated journey in the sense that it is being continuously created by the narratives people read and write, hear and speak about this pilgrimage route.

The narrative-based genres that most frequently occur in this dissertation are legend, personal experience narrative and memorate. I consider them as analytical tools in my context-centred approach fieldwork. It is worth pointing out that some of the genre terms used in this dissertation do not appear as analytical categories only, but also manifest their vernacular meanings. One of them is legend. According to Linda Dégh:

> The legend is a legend once it entertains debate about belief. Short or long, complete or rudimentary, local or global, supernatural, horrible, mysterious, or grotesque, about one's own or someone else's experience, the sounding of contrary opinions is what makes a legend a legend. (Dégh 2001: 97)

However, that is not the only usage of this term in my dissertation. In addition to its use as an analytical folkloristic term, 'legend' has a wide vernacular usage. I have written about a Belgian pilgrim, Roger, who told me several stories that he called 'Camino legends'. Since Roger called his stories Camino legends, I used the same word, even though it did not correspond to the folkloristic definition (Sepp 2012a).

Memorate – first-hand personal experience of a supernatural encounter and the subsequent interpretation – is another genre that is dealt with in this dissertation. The term was introduced by C.W. von Sydow, who defined it as

'first-person narrative about personal experiences'. In contemporary usage, memorates are legends that are told in the first person about the narrator's supernatural encounters (see Honko 1989; Bowman and Valk 2012). Several researchers (for example Honko 1989; Pentikäinen 1968) have pointed out that personal supernatural experiences seldom retain unique features after frequent retellings; instead they tend to borrow features from traditional genres. Ülo Valk has described how the linking of personal experience narratives with collective tradition renders them believable (Valk 2012: 184). He comments: 'If memorates include elements of shared beliefs, even strange and untraditional episodes become meaningful and comprehensible.' (ibid.) These observations were confirmed by several stories that I heard about the miraculous intervention of St James, who often came to help pilgrims.

According to Lauri Honko, memorates are a valuable source for the study of folk religion, because they reveal the situations in which supernatural tradition was actualised and began to influence behaviour (Honko 1989: 103). Some other narrative scholars who have influenced my approach are William Bascom (1984), Anna-Leena Siikala (1990), Annikki Kaivola-Bregenhøj (1996) and Tim Tangherlini (1998), who have drawn my attention to the crystallisation criteria in the narrative, the types of narratives, the flexibility of genre boundaries and various other aspects.

Legends and memorates revolve around people's supernatural experiences. In order to analyse stories about people's encounters with the supernatural, I think it is necessary to reflect on that concept. 'Supernatural' seems to be a rather ambiguous category that can be understood in several ways. Lauri Honko has noted that 'belief in spirits is not founded on speculation but on concrete personal experiences, reinforced by sensory perceptions' (Honko 1989: 103). He argues that in this respect spirits are empirical beings, and continues: 'On the basis of whether they can be seen or not, supernatural beings can be seen as empirical – spirits and the dead, for example – or etiological, like giants and mythical heroes' (ibid.).

In contemporary religious studies 'supernatural' is often defined in the cognitive sense: by taking counter-intuitiveness as a necessary criterion of the supernatural (see Pyysiäinen 2003). In her study about Mary Magdalene pilgrims, Anna Fedele uses the expression 'metaempirical being identified as Mary Magdalene' (Fedele 2013: 4).

It has sometimes been suggested that the word 'supernatural' has a negative connotation and should therefore be replaced by less value-laden words. In religious studies a distinction has sometimes been made between 'supernatural' and 'transcendent' where 'supernatural' refers to 'folk' beliefs and 'superstition' (also demonic); and 'transcendent' refers to the divine. I feel quite happy about the word 'supernatural' and most of the times it has been useful for me as an etic as well as an emic category. The question 'Have you experienced anything supernatural on the Camino?' has proved relevant when collecting and analysing the Santiago pilgrims' stories. When people heard that I collect

stories about people's encounters with the supernatural, the word 'supernatural' usually made perfect sense to them. They often asked me what stories I had heard from others and wanted to tell me about their own experiences. In Glastonbury, however, the word 'supernatural' seems to have a different meaning. Soon after arriving I realised that the discussion about 'supernatural experiences' sounded quite meaningless to most of my informants. Glastonbury is arguably characterised by utter unworldliness, it has often been described as a place where 'the veil is very thin'. This has led me to ask myself if it is possible that in Glastonbury the supernatural somehow becomes natural from vernacular points of view. Some people pointed it out that they do not use the word 'supernatural' in Glastonbury at all: they prefer to use the word 'spiritual'.

Researching the supernatural has raised the question about the importance of the researcher's own worldview. We can never be entirely objective about what we research; the best we can do is to make ourselves as aware as possible of our preconceptions. For example, if an anthropologist researching Catholic pilgrimage is a Catholic, is this an advantage or a drawback? Can a scholar whose father was a shaman (and who believes in the existence of spirits) do more insightful research on shamanism than someone from another culture? As I research belief narrative – I study how people describe their encounters with the supernatural – my informants often ask me questions about my own beliefs and experiences and want to hear my stories. I think that dialogic relationship with informants is conducive to the research and anyone giving an account of a belief system has to have some sympathy for the believer's worldview in order to appreciate its significance for them.

Kirsi Hänninen (2009) has written about the stigmatisation of the supernatural in Finnish first-person narratives. She points out that modernity promotes the idea of a subject who is capable of self-regulation, self-surveillance and self-control; having supernatural experiences shows a lack of these capabilities. She writes: 'It carries a set of stigmas which make it a dangerous thing to experience and tell about. Nevertheless, we hear personal experience stories about people encountering beings such as angels, extraterrestrials, guardian spirits and ghosts.' (Hänninen 2009: 3)

Hänninen says that the fear of being labelled in a negative way may prevent people talking about their experience (ibid.). I have raised the question about the advantages and disadvantages of using my own personal experience story and suggest that the main advantage (apart from getting fascinating analyses and belief statements from my informants) was that I was considerably decreasing the hierarchy between my informants and myself. The main disadvantage would probably be making myself vulnerable to ridicule (Sepp 2012b).

2-5 The role of fieldwork in folklore studies: Reflexivity

As my dissertation is based on fieldwork on the Camino de Santiago and in Glastonbury, I have dedicated plenty of time to reading about fieldwork methodology (particularly dialogic fieldwork methodology), reflexivity and research ethics. With the considerable increase of fieldwork in folklore studies, much attention has been paid to reflexivity and the 'consciousness of the role of the self in research'.[17] Toms Kencis writes: 'In general, reflexivity refers to circular relationships between cause and effect. A reflexive relationship is bidirectional; with both the cause and the effect affecting one another in a situation that renders both functions causes and effects.' (Kencis 2012: 40–41)

George E. Marcus has noted that after the so-called reflexive turn of the 1980s, virtually all ethnographies include 'meditations on their conditions of productions' (Faubion and Marcus 2009: 1). According to Nancy Frey, the metaphor of 'finding our feet' suggested by Clifford Geertz (1973) to describe the personal nature of ethnographic research, is particularly relevant to the study of pilgrimage (Frey 1998: 232).

Alver reminds us that the qualitative method with its requirements of empathy, closeness and subjectivity makes considerable ethical demands on the researcher (Alver 1990: 157–160). While doing fieldwork on the Camino de Santiago, I lived the life of a pilgrim and interviewed my fellow pilgrims: I was using an emic, insider's, perspective. Several anthropologists have argued that ambivalent feelings are always involved in fieldwork. As a place for fieldwork, the Camino de Santiago is special in several ways: people have left their home for weeks or even months; they are often vulnerable, lonely and insecure. This has led me to ask how big a role do emotions play in fieldwork and how can this influence the outcome? In my dissertation I analyse the role of a researcher's personality and gender in the fieldwork process and its possible influence on the outcome, emphasising the need to be aware of different power relationships.

On the one hand, given that the researcher's role is essential in folkloristic fieldwork, it is important to bear this in mind and provide some background information about oneself (the researcher). On the other hand, it is very easy to get entangled in self-reflexion and in some cases it may lead to 'endless navel-gazing' that will have little relevance to the actual research. This hazard was recently pointed out by Irina Sadovina in her paper *Researcher as Insider: Fostering the 'We' in Fieldwork*). Irina talked about her fieldwork in Hindu-based religious communities in St Petersburg, where she is an insider, and said:

[17] For the the history of the field of folklore with regard to the method of obtaining data or texts see Stoeltje, Fox and Olbrys 1999.

> My attempts to impose institutionalised researcher ethics don't always come through. For example, there's now a recurring joke that my friend Anna is campaigning for her right *not* to be anonymous and become famous, while I keep trying to convince her to let me protect her privacy. (Sadovina 2013)

My fieldwork methodology involves participant observation and conducting open-ended interviews. Several scholars have argued that the power relationship between fieldworker and informant holds rich and risky potential for control and even manipulation (see Alver 1992; Briggs 1986; Vasenkari 1999). Charles Briggs has critically analysed the nature of the interview as a communicative event. He contends that interview techniques contain hidden theoretical and ideological assumptions and are tied to relationships of power and control (Briggs 1986: 89). Control over the interaction lies in the hands of the interviewer because 'it is the interviewer who controls the process of turn-taking, introduces the topics, and decides whether the given response is adequate and then moves on to the next topic' (ibid.).

The main disadvantage of conducting interviews is that informants usually want to help the researcher as much as possible and this may have some undesired consequences. Elo-Hanna Seljamaa, who has carried out extensive fieldwork among the Russians living in Estonia, has commented that for her conducting interviews is not always the best fieldwork method, mainly because people often answer in the way that they think the researcher is expecting (Seljamaa 2012). This risk was also pointed out to me by one of my key informants, Roger, based on his own experience: 'The interviewee tells what he thinks the interviewer wants to hear, as he wishes to please her, assuming feeding "wanted" (but untrue) information is of more interest to her than the real information.' While I am well aware of these pitfalls, for me, the interview still remains the best fieldwork method. In the end it is the researcher who chooses how to interpret the interviews, and the hazards mentioned above should certainly be taken into account and expressed when writing up. In my opinion, this clearly shows the informants' role as collaborators rather than just providers of information. I have sometimes sent my draft articles to my key informants and considered their comments when finishing the article.

2-6 Liminality

One of the underlying ideas that bind together this dissertation is the concept of liminality. The word 'liminality' is derived from the Latin word *limen*, meaning 'threshold'. 'Liminality' is the term used by Arnold van Gennep to denote the second of three stages in a 'rite of passage' and it was further developed by

Victor Turner. It is a key concept of Victor Turner's (1979, 1989) and Victor and Edith Turner's (1978) analysis of pilgrimage.[18] Turner writes:

> This term, literally 'being-on-a-threshold', means a state or process which is betwixt-and-between the normal, day-to-day cultural and social states and processes of getting and spending, preserving law and order, and registering structural status. Since liminal time is not controlled by the clock it is a time of enchantment when anything might, even should, happen. Another way of putting it would be to say that the liminal in socio-cultural process is similar to the subjunctive mood in verbs – just as mundane socio-structural activities resemble the indicative mood. Liminality is full of potency and potentiality. It may also be full of experiment and play. There may be a play of ideas, a play of words, a play of symbols, a play of metaphors. In it, play's the thing. Scientific hypotheses and experiments and philosophical speculations are also forms of play, though their rules and controls are more rigorous and their relation to mundane 'indicative' reality more pointed than those of genres which proliferate in fantasy. One might say, without too much exaggeration, that liminal phenomena are at the level of culture what variability is at the level of nature. (Turner 1979: 94-95)

As Nigel Rapport and Joanna Overing have noted, Turner may be criticised for giving the religious underpinning and romantic overtones to the concept of liminality and overemphasising everyday life as structured, static and inhumane, and on 'sacred marginality' as humanistic, spontaneous and creative (Rapport and Overing 2000: 235). However, his ideas have proved very fruitful for many scholars in different areas, for example in the anthropological study of play, of performance, of literature, creativity, existential individuality, celebration, pilgrimage and deviant subcultures (ibid: 235–236).

Doing fieldwork in pilgrimage destinations has led me to perceive the liminality of not only a pilgrim, but also of a researcher. Constantly moving between two worlds – the rational world of academia and the (often) magical world of my informants – has placed me in the stage of liminality, not unlike pilgrims and neophytes at rites of initiation. Some fieldworkers have mentioned that it is not difficult to go inside the worldview of the informants but it is not always easy to leave it behind (see Alver 1990). Journalist Jessica Reed, who walked the Camino de Santiago and got 'a small betrayal of almost all her atheist principles', suggests that walking pilgrimages, or any other endurance feats, take such a physical and mental toll on the participant that 'when bizarre thoughts start popping up in our heads, we tend to take them very seriously' (Reed 2012).

In my first article 'liminality' refers to the second phase of pilgrimage. As Victor and Edith Turner have observed, pilgrimage is a liminal period, when the participants are removed from their everyday state (Turner and Turner 1978: 1-

[18] Turner extended the threefold model of rites of passage (proposed by Arnold van Gennep (1961) in 1909), according to which the three phases of rites of passage were separation, liminal stage and incorporation.

39, 249). During the liminal period, the characteristics of the *liminars* (the ritual subjects in this phase) are ambiguous because they pass through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state (ibid.). The liminal state has frequently been likened to death, to being in the womb, to invisibility, darkness, bisexuality and the wilderness (Turner 1979: 94–96). These transitional or liminal beings are thought to be beyond the boundaries of the normal social structure, its norms and values; they are in a 'no-man's land' that is inhabited by things and people that do not fit in ordinary categories. Therefore, in the liminal stage of pilgrimage, even people who are not least spiritually inclined sometimes have supernatural experiences.

According to Lynne S. McNeill, the presence of the supernatural is a common characteristic of the liminal stage, and vice versa, 'a major characteristic of all supernatural things is liminality, the state of being betwixt-and-between' (McNeill 2006: 9). McNeill argues that to be supernatural, to be 'above and beyond' the laws of nature, is to be liminal, 'trapped between the conceptual categories that are so integral to our perceptions of the natural world' (ibid.). McNeill writes:

> Liminality attracts liminality. This is perhaps best illustrated by the danger humans face from the supernatural when in a transitory phase of rites of passage. [...] During the time we spend in that middle ground, we are at a heightened risk of danger from the supernatural. We draw it to us by being similar to it [...] It is as though when we become liminal, we have stepped into the supernatural realm and opened ourselves to attack from creatures that hold permanent residency there and usually cannot reach us so easily. (McNeill 2006: 9)

It is not uncommon that in the liminal stage of fieldwork researchers experience things that defy rational explanation. Madis Arukask (2011**:** 19) has compared being on a field trip to the alteration of state of consciousness. When addressing problems arising during fieldwork, I have pointed out the liminality of the researcher. I suggest that while in the field we are in a state of liminality that Victor Turner described when talking about pilgrims and neophytes. I think it is important to create a broader understanding of the liminality of the researcher doing anthropological or folkloristic fieldwork (Sepp 2012b).

The concept of liminality has been used to refer to the discipline of folkloristics, as well. In his article *On the Future of American Folklore Studies: A Response*, Elliott Oring argues that if there is a folklore identity, it is a liminal one (Oring 1991: 80). According to Oring, this is not only because folklorists often study marginal or liminal individuals and groups (ibid.). He writes: 'The liminal identity proceeds directly from the liminal nature of folklore studies themselves. Folklore is liminal precisely because it has no theory or methodology that governs its perspective.' (Oring 1991: 80)

I agree with the idea about the liminality of folkloristics. As I studied linguistics and anthropology before folkloristics, I have noticed that researching, for example, belief narrative is rather different from studying

motives for pilgrimage and *communitas*. The former is more sensitive and requires greater attention to be paid to the exact words.

Some scholars (for example Alan Dundes 2005) have claimed that there are no grand theories in folkloristics.[19] He saw this as something negative and possibly leading to the demise of the discipline (Dundes 2005: 387–391). I suggest that the lack of grand theories and the liminality of folkloristics can be seen as something positive. Folklorists enjoy the freedom to be more open, creative and even playful than, for example, linguists. In my research I bring together two worldviews – rational and magical – and hopefully this is likely to enrich the outcome. Interdisciplinarity, dialogic fieldwork and drawing on vernacular theories are some of the guidelines of our discipline. If we think of the 'field' as a liminal space, then we as researchers can be viewed as bridge-builders between the two worlds. My key informant in Glastonbury, Barry Taylor, said that I am 'a bridge-builder between true spirituality and secular people (with scientific, materialistic approach)'.

[19] See also Haring (2008).

3 DESCRIPTION OF ARTICLES

I am now going to provide the summaries of and some background information about the four articles that form the core of this dissertation. I will introduce the main terminology used and the theoretical framework of each article. I will also bring out my main arguments and some additional comments. The articles are given in chronological order and thus reflect my development as a researcher. The first two articles are based on my fieldwork carried out on the Camino de Santiago, the third and fourth articles draw on fieldwork done on the Camino as well as Glastonbury.

The goal of the first article is to look into the pilgrim-tourist dichotomy, elaborate on the notion of *communitas* and give a brief overview of pilgrimage motives. It also describes the way I combined emic and etic approaches in my research and suggests a definition of a Santiago pilgrim.

In the second article, assorted beliefs, personal experience stories and Christian legends are expressed by pilgrims with different religious backgrounds. By looking at the wide range of belief narratives expressed by the Santiago pilgrims, I study the pilgrimage as a narrated story, including supernatural encounters. One of the recurrent themes is the construction of the image of the 'authentic' pilgrim. This article also includes self-reflexive consideration of my methodologies.

The main aim of the third article is to critically analyse my experiences of fieldwork and discuss the role of the researcher in the process of data collection, focussing on researching belief narrative in personal experience stories. Power relationships in an interview situation and combining emic and etic perspectives in researching are also analysed. It describes my own personal experience story and elaborates on the issue of the stigmatisation of the supernatural.

In the fourth article I continue researching power relationships that exist on the pilgrimage, describe how hierarchies of pilgrims are created and maintained, and reflect on the meaning of the words 'pilgrim' and 'pilgrimage'. The co-existence of the different belief systems of Christianity and New Age in addition to the conflicts and tension between them are explored. I also describe how different interpretations compete with each other and examine discourse concerning competing male and female energies.

3-1 Article I

Pilgrims and Tourists on Road to Santiago de Compostela

This article is based on a conference paper that I gave in Mysore, India in February 2006, and it summarises the research I did on my three field trips/pilgrimages to the Camino de Santiago during 2003–2005. My main aim was to examine the motives of the twenty-first century pilgrims and find out whether the Camino de Santiago was still a route of pilgrimage or had become

just a hiking trail. I also asked my fellow pilgrims to express their thoughts on the 'authentic pilgrim'.

The theoretical framework for this article is based on the works of Regina Bendix (2002), Nancy Frey (1998) and Victor Turner (1974; 1989).

When I asked my walking companions what distinguishes a pilgrim from a tourist, I got very different answers, ranging from 'Everybody who goes to Santiago is a pilgrim' to 'Everybody who goes to Santiago is a tourist'. This is similar to Victor and Edith Turner's observation that 'a tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist' (Turner and Turner 1978: 20). I asked my informants if they considered themselves pilgrims, and the overwhelming majority replied that they did. Some people said that they started the Camino as a tourist and arrived in Santiago as a pilgrim. Nancy Frey has suggested that in the modern pilgrimage, one can be an 'authentic pilgrim' without being religious: the metaphoric pilgrim seeks an inner way or alternatives to the modern society or the alienation of daily life (Frey: 1998). Some of my informants expressed the thought that being religious is an essential characteristic of an authentic pilgrim. Other factors they mentioned were doing the pilgrimage on foot, starting from home, walking alone, preferably 'off the season' and avoiding using modern technology, like mobile phones.

Victor Turner has compared pilgrimage with the second, 'liminal' phase of *rites de passage*. He suggests that during that period pilgrims tend to develop an intense comradeship and egalitarianism, whereas secular distinctions of rank and status disappear. Turner introduced the notion of *communitas*: relationships among people who are jointly undergoing ritual transition through which they experience an intense sense of intimacy and equality. Turner introduced the term *communitas* to refer to the fellowship of pilgrims (and neophytes). In my paper I widened it to encompass also the people living by the Camino (for example, the elderly villagers who sometimes approach pilgrims and ask them to pray for them in Santiago) and pilgrims who have died on the way. In retrospect, I could say that on the day when a Galician woman asked me to pray for her and repeated her name several times so that I would not forget it, I probably felt for the first time that I was a pilgrim (someone who experiences *communitas*). I had become a spiritual messenger[20] by agreeing to take her prayers to St James, even though I was not a believer.

Thanks to walking the Camino in different seasons I was able to compare the differences. I noticed that I had experienced *communitas* most intensely in the winter and it appeared that many of my interviewees who had walked the Camino in different seasons had had the same experience. I suggest that the main reason for that is that since in the winter there are fewer people, many refuges are closed and the walking conditions are generally harder, you would have to stick together.

[20] For discussion about a pilgrim as a spiritual messenger, see also Frey 1998: 66.

Drawing on Turner's theory and my own empirical material I tried to define a Santiago pilgrim. Using an etic approach to determine a group of people, I suggested that the main feature that distinguishes a pilgrim from a tourist is the fact that a pilgrim experiences *communitas*. I also used an emic perspective because in order to claim that a pilgrim is someone who has experienced *communitas*, one needs to have had this experience. I have walked the Camino as a tourist as well as a pilgrim. In May 2005 I felt like a holiday-maker enjoying a beautiful walk and admiring the nature and monuments. In November 2004 I experienced the state of liminality: I lived in a time of enchantment when anything seemed possible; I felt a strong sense of intimacy with my fellow pilgrims. Even though it was physically the same route, my own perception of it was completely different. (Sepp 2007: 4-5)

This article also gives a short overview of pilgrimage motives. Just like in the Middle Ages, people nowadays decide to undertake the Camino for several reasons, religious and non-religious. The motives of present-day pilgrims include the fulfilment of a vow, giving thanks to God, praying for someone's health, searching for God, also searching for the Self, wish to travel, looking for a partner, vagabonding, alternative to prison, raising money for charity and a few others (ibid: 5).

Last but not least, the article examines the influence of Paulo Coelho's novel *The Pilgrimage* (1987) on the expectations of would-be pilgrims. *The Pilgrimage* is written in the form of a diary and describes the author's Camino as a journey of esoteric initiation, a magical journey full of supernatural events. Some pilgrims have been disappointed because of the discrepancies between the novel and the real Camino; I have also heard people express fear of the demonic dogs described in the novel. Coelho's book has considerably contributed to the popularity of the Camino by adding an esoteric, New Age feel to it (ibid: 6).

I will now make a few additional comments. This article was published in 2007 and since then I have made many more field trips to the Camino as a pilgrim as well as worked as an *hospitalera* in the pilgrims' refuges. I have not witnessed any major changes, people still do the Camino for basically the same motives, they still debate over the real pilgrim issue, and *communitas* is still at least occasionally to be found there. In my following articles all these subjects keep appearing; I have also read other people's works analysing these topics that have been published since then. For example, Tommy Mendel (2010) has written a comparative article about foot-pilgrims to Santiago and backpackers, where he refers to the validity of Turner's *communitas* theory for his own research. He brings out two points: first, it is very easy for pilgrims to meet, re-meet and spend several days or weeks on the road with fellow travellers; and secondly, 'during the experience of this liminal and unconventional time of the journey a particular identity among like-minded people can develop, overlapping social strata and nationalities' (Mendel 2010: 294). However, Mendel argues that contrary to Turner's theory, hierarchical distinctions may occur, but they manifest on a different level to everyday life, for example in the

foot-pilgrim's or backpacker's 'road status' (ibid: 307). He writes: 'Road status is multifaceted, consisting of the number of journeys already undertaken, the duration of the trip, the distance of the route, the speed at which the route is covered, the hardship and the difficulty of the routing and the optimising of a minimal budget.' (Mendel 2010: 307)

I also refer to Mendel's observations in my fourth article.

In conclusion, what influenced me most in writing the first article (apart from my fieldwork experiences) was Victor Turner's theoretical model of pilgrimage. I am aware of the criticism that this model has received (see Eade and Sallnow 2000), the main argument of which is that Turner only used examples from Christian pilgrimage, and that *communitas* was not invariably formed. However, drawing on my own empirical material I can say that not only is *communitas* real; the notion of *communitas* was very helpful to describe the fellowship of pilgrims as I and my interviewees had experienced it, and to make the distinction between Camino-pilgrims and Camino-tourists. The concept of liminality also complied very well with my fieldwork experience.

The question 'Who is a real pilgrim?' quickly leads to the question about who has the right and authority to determine it. Interestingly, during my first field trips between 2003-2005 – when I conducted tens of interviews – no one challenged my questions (for example, 'Do you consider yourself to be a pilgrim?' 'What distinguishes a pilgrim from a tourist?') in any way. It was not until October 2008, when I was working as an *hospitalera* in Granyon that I encountered this problem. I was talking to a Catalan man about my research (not interviewing him) and he told me quite passionately that no one has the right to judge him and decide whether a poor drunk like himself is a real pilgrim or not. He said that he would rather be called a *penegrino*: a word formed from *pene* (penis) and *peregrino* (pilgrim) (Sepp 2014).

It is also important to note that recognising the impact of Paulo Coelho's and Shirley MacLaine's books on the pilgrims' expectations was the first step on my way to approaching the Camino as a narrated journey.

3-2 Article II

Stories of Santiago pilgrims: Tradition through creativity

In this article I analyse belief narratives expressed by Santiago pilgrims; the main focus is on stories told by a Belgian pilgrim, Roger. I view the Camino de Santiago as a narrated journey that is created by the narratives people read and write, hear and speak about this pilgrimage. It appears that what you read or hear about the Camino beforehand is going to considerably influence your experience. The majority of the material gathered for this article consists of memorates.

The first section of the article examines how a pilgrim's identity can be constructed through the stories they tell. I met Roger on the Camino just the day before I finished walking. He told me and a few others some stories that he called the Camino-legends: either Christian legends adapted from literature and transferred into the context of the Camino, or stories made up by himself. Soon afterwards he travelled to Estonia in order to tell me some more.

One of the key concepts used is this article is 'identity'. According to Roger Abrahams, for many psychiatrists, sociologists and folklorists, identity emerges from the stories one tells of oneself or one's community (Abrahams 2003: 201). The main factor in achieving one's identity is personal choice (ibid: 211). The pilgrimage to Santiago offers a good opportunity to acquire a pilgrim's identity, and one way to emphasise and strengthen one's identity as a pilgrim is telling stories about the Camino.

At the beginning of my research on the Camino, I was focussed on the concept of the 'authentic pilgrim'. When I thought I had exhausted that topic and would not go back to it again, I met Roger. While listening to his stories it soon became evident that nearly everything he said circled around identity: by telling his Camino-legends and jokes Roger was consciously building his identity as a true pilgrim as opposed to *turigrinos* (fake pilgrims). I saw in Roger a pilgrim whose identity was expressed through the stories he tells. Roger told me two kinds of stories: first those that he called Camino-legends, and also his memorates about supernatural events that had happened to him on the Camino. He was obviously enjoying himself while telling his legends; whereas while talking about his encounter with God his voice broke and he was keeping back tears (Sepp 2012a: 320). There was also a noticeable difference between the content of Roger's and other pilgrims' narratives. Roger's stories seem to bear certain similarities to medieval *exempla*. Most of the other pilgrims talked more about the mysterious energy and other phenomena that are more connected to a New Age worldview (ibid: 323).

In my article *Pilgrims and Tourists on Road to Santiago de Compostela* I suggested that a pilgrim is someone who experiences *communitas* as opposed to a tourist who walks the Camino to enjoy the nature, beautiful sights, etc. When offering this definition, I did not take into consideration my own personality. Overlooking this became obvious to me after meeting an elderly Dutch pilgrim who did not agree with my definition of the Santiago pilgrim as someone who experiences *communitas*. He said that for him there was no *communitas* on the Camino; what mattered to him was the opportunity to be free and at peace. He told me: 'You are creating the *communitas*. Without you it doesn't exist.' I had to agree with him, the researcher's personality certainly influences their work: if I were more introverted, I might have defined a pilgrim in a different way (Sepp 2012a: 303–304). This incident was one of several that led me to write my third article, where I analyse the problems of the researcher's own personality influencing the process of fieldwork.

The second section of this article deals with stories about miracles and supernatural encounters on the Camino. The 'protagonist' of the Camino for many (religious as well as non-religious) people is St James who is believed to look after his pilgrims and come to help when needed. In this article I recount some of the stories that people have told me about their supernatural encounters: for example, an atheist's story about his miraculous salvation by St James. I also pose the question of what triggers telling a personal experience story. As a continuation from my first article, I look into the influence of Camino literature – both academic research and fiction – on pilgrims' expectations, experiences and their 'repertoires'.

In this article I describe the conscious and unconscious creation of the Camino tradition. All my informants were contributing to the Camino tradition by telling their memorates, Camino legends and jokes. The difference between Roger and other informants was that by trying to make his legends seem a natural part of Camino heritage, Roger was consciously creating the Camino tradition. Whereas the others were telling personal experience stories, Roger seemed to be trying to recreate the past: 'a time when there were real pilgrims on the road to Santiago'. I suggest that we could see Roger as a preacher whose task is to remind us that the Camino de Santiago is, above all, a pilgrimage to venerate the remains of a Christian saint (Sepp 2012a: 325).

As an additional comment I would like to point out that I find some of the pilgrim stories that I have reproduced in my article really fascinating and have often retold them to pilgrims and other people. When my informants tell me their stories, I always ask for their permission to retell and analyse their stories, publish them and to quote them in conference papers. When requested, I have told stories heard from pilgrims to other pilgrims, who have then sometimes suggested different interpretations of the stories. This was the case with Roger's account of his supernatural encounter with God (Sepp 2012a: 312–313) and his subsequent interpretation. After I retold that story, people have sometimes offered interpretations that are different from the story-teller's own version. One Dutch pilgrim, who called himself an agnostic, reacted to the story very intensely. I met him when I was volunteering as an *hospitalera* in a pilgrims' refuge in Najera. We talked for hours and when he wanted to know more about my research and hear some of the stories pilgrims had told me, I told him Roger's story. The Dutch pilgrim did not say anything, at first, but the next morning he told me that because of that story he had been unable to sleep; he had had the most terrible nightmares. He said that he had realised that it had in fact been the devil who had helped that pilgrim on the bicycle. On a slightly different note, it seems that following Alan Dundes's advice to actively seek to elicit the meaning of folklore from the folk – 'oral literary criticism' – (Dundes 1975: 51) has made my role in spreading the Camino folklore quite remarkable.

3-3 Article III

Interview as an act of seduction: Analysing problems I have met during my fieldwork on the Camino de Santiago and in Glastonbury

In this article I analyse some of my fieldwork experiences and discuss the role of the researcher in the process of folkloristic fieldwork. I try to understand how the personality, gender, worldview and personal experiences of a researcher can influence their work. The focus of this article is on researching belief narrative in personal experience stories. Apart from discussing fieldwork-related problems, I also describe some expressions of vernacular religion and contemporary spirituality on the Camino de Santiago and in Glastonbury. Against the background of all the topics discussed in this article lies the liminality of the researcher: while in the field we are in a state of liminality.

This article analyses the role of a researcher's personality and gender in the fieldwork process and its possible influence on the outcome, emphasising the need to be aware of different power relationships. Several scholars (Alver 1992; Briggs 1986; Vasenkari 1999) have argued that the power relationship between fieldworker and informant holds rich and risky potential for control and even manipulation. I suggest that the power that the researcher already has may be enhanced if we add the dimension of gender (Sepp 2012b: 35). I have provided a case study of Roger, a pilgrim-storyteller whom I met on the Camino de Santiago and who after completing his pilgrimage travelled to Estonia to tell me some more stories. As a continuation from my first article, I look into combining emic and etic perspectives in research. The main questions I discuss are how combining emic and etic perspectives depends on the subject I am researching and if it is appropriate to use my own personal experience story – my encounter with the supernatural – to ask my informants to analyse and interpret it (Sepp 2012b: 37). I also discuss the problem of stigmatisation of the supernatural, drawing on Kirsi Hänninen's (2009) observations.

James Carley (1988), a Canadian archaeologist and one of the greatest experts on Glastonbury Abbey, has said that every pilgrim worthy of his scrip returns from Glastonbury with his own small miracle, his own private myth of the place. This holds truth for me as well. In this article I retell a story about my 'Glastonbury experience' – the mysterious appearance of red stains on my green scarf when I was sitting on the ground in the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey – and the different interpretations offered by my informants. The informants' backgrounds appear to have considerably determined the way they analysed my story. I pose the question of if it is acceptable for a researcher to talk publicly about his or her personal experience of the supernatural. I got inspiration and encouragement for this from Bente Gullveig Alver (1990) and Alan Dundes (1975). Alver (1990) has written about her own encounters with the supernatural while doing fieldwork in Africa. Dundes encouraged the collection of metafolklore as a kind of 'oral literary criticism' which would help elucidate the meaning of other folklore. This is what I was doing: getting belief

statements from my informants about my personal experience story. After publishing this article I have been asked many times by both academic and non-academic people what happened to my scarf afterwards and if I took it to the laboratory for investigation. Several people have expressed surprise and even disappointment that I had washed the scarf. One woman said: 'You as a researcher should definitely have had that scarf chemically analysed.' I asked her why. For me as a folklorist, what matters is the story and its interpretations.

This article also raises the issue of working with 'problematic informants'. I use inverted commas because the people I am writing about have not caused any problems for me; they were sometimes considered as inappropriate informants by other people.

There are two main arguments in this article. First, I emphasise how important it is to be aware of the role of a researcher's personality and background in the research process and to be self-reflexive. As researchers, we always try to get as much context and background information about our informants as possible. I feel similar when reading an academic article: I am interested in the author's background and worldview and also in their personal experiences because I believe that all this influences their work. However, what makes it difficult for the researcher to talk about his or her worldview and unusual experiences is the (possible) duality of their worldviews, the need to play different roles and use different identities. For example, when I return home from my field trips to Santiago de Compostela or Glastonbury, I take off my pilgrim's hat and put on the folklorist's one. We as researchers and fieldworkers will always have one foot in the academy and one foot out.

The second argument of my article is concerned with power in its different manifestations and the need for creating equality, as much as possible. I already mentioned the power exerted by the researcher. Another manifestation of power discussed in this article is that executed by people who have institutional power. Pilgrimage has always been viewed by the Church with some ambivalence (*communitas* versus institutions). As I saw during my stay in Santiago de Compostela, this is not only done by the Church, but other authorities of power (the police and a university teacher) as well. When I was on a field trip in Santiago de Compostela I witnessed more than once the realisation of an observation made by Ülo Valk: 'Uncontrolled folklore process often becomes disturbing to the institutions of power, because it undermines and erodes official truths, systematised worldviews and moral teachings imposed by them' (Valk 2012b: 25–26).

I will now add a few comments to show that since the publication of this article I have started to see certain things in a slightly different light. In this article I deal to a considerable extent with my own personality: my relationships with my informants, my own experience with the supernatural. While I was writing it I felt this all formed a major part of my research and I simply had to write it down. Soon after finishing the article, however, I felt that I had had my fair share of self-reflexion and analysing my own role in everything and felt an

urgent need to take one step back. I wrote in that article: 'I believe that gender, personality and intuition are some of the most important tools used in research. Gender does make a difference.' (Sepp 2012b: 37) If I could, I would now like to omit the word 'most' from that quote because even though these factors do play a role, it is probably not as important as I seem to have thought then. I have recently heard quite a few conference papers that are dealing with reflexivity and the ethical issues involved in fieldwork, and I must admit that there is a hazard of focussing too much on these matters and neglecting one's real focus of research. If they are intertwined with fieldwork material, then it is really fine and important, but if not, it may turn out to be just a waste of time. It sometimes seems rather artificial and irrelevant, just an intellectual game. I will illustrate my point of view with some excerpts from an email that my informant Roger sent to me after reading my third article (Sepp 2012b):

> The main reason why I came to visit you in Estonia was my willingness to help you with your paper and that willingness on my part was inspired by your personality and looks, my interest in anthropology and (very important!) the knowledge that I'd never get the chance to talk about my Camino experience as elaborately as I did with you, back home, in everyday life. People back home would just be interested for an hour, at most, while you were endlessly interested. Your interest in my story was a lucky coincidence, allowing me to think about everything, forcing me even to think about some things, so the question 'who is using who' is basically: we used each other. You used me as a willing informant-respondent and I used you as a willing listener who (basically) would let me talk as much as I would. Plus my keeping in touch and thus 'seducing' you was for me more a formal courtship. If referring to a medieval character, I'd like to think of myself on the Camino as a minstrel (or what do you call the wandering singer-storyteller?), especially when it came to you. But my eagerness to get to Estonia was far more inspired by being able to tell my story than by the chance to get romantically or sexually involved with you. Plus: the fact of using the other is not necessarily a bad thing. It's not a use as an object, a thing, but the use as people collaborate to achieve greater things together than they could on their own.

3-4 Article IV

Pilgrimage and Pilgrim Hierarchies in Vernacular Discourse: Comparative Notes from the Camino de Santiago and Glastonbury

This article starts with an overview of the Camino de Santiago and Glastonbury and brings out some of their similarities (for example, both places have links to the Celtic past and several people go there because they want to connect to their pre-Christian roots) and differences (for example, Glastonbury falls into the category of pilgrimages where the destination is all-important and the journey and mode of travel are of minor significance, and on the Camino this order of priorities is reversed). The theoretical framework for this article is based on

works by Leonard Primiano (1995, 2012), John Eade and Michael Sallnow (2000), Marion Bowman (2004) and Hugh McLeod (2012). Drawing on John Eade and Michael Sallnow's argument that pilgrimage must be seen as 'a realm of competing discourses' (Eade and Sallnow 2000: 5), I explore the competing narratives about Glastonbury and the Camino and reflect on the discussion about who 'owns' these places. I observe how the notions of 'pilgrim' and 'pilgrimage' are debated not only in scholarly writing but in vernacular discourse, too.

The section entitled 'Does the Camino de Santiago belong to the Catholics only?' begins with the description of the Santiago/Priscillian discussion. Some people claim that the remains attributed to St James do in fact belong to Priscillian, the bishop of Avila, who was accused of witchcraft and heresy and tortured and beheaded in 385. There has been extensive research on this subject (for example, Ferreiro 2000, Sánchez Dragó 2004). The idea of the remains belonging to a well-known heretic rather than the saint appeals to many. One pilgrim told me gloatingly: 'Just imagine that millions of people have walked the Camino to venerate Saint James, and in fact they have knelt in front of the man whom the church had beheaded for heresy.' During these Priscillian/ Santiago discussions Spanish pilgrims have sometimes told me that in fact the clergy know exactly who these bones belong to as it is all written down in the church records, but ordinary people will never be told about it. Many people see Santiago as something considerably bigger than a Catholic shrine; and the discussion about Priscillian illustrates the hostility of some people towards the Catholic dogmas. I have heard people accuse the Catholic Church for thinking that they own the Camino.

In the light of the abovementioned hostility, it is interesting to note that both religious and non-religious *peregrinos* (regardless of motivation) usually want to take part in the following activities and facilities on the Camino that are offered by the Catholic Church: attending the pilgrims' mass, enjoying Church hospitality and obtaining a *credencial* and a *compostela*. Even more, the most popular refuges on the Camino de Santiago seem to be those that are run by the Church. I suggest that one way of reconciling one's consciousness about being atheist and/or anti-Church outside the Camino and yet enjoying the benefits offered by the Church while doing the Camino is thinking of pilgrimage as an ancient ritual and in a way going back in time to the Middle Ages.

The section 'Glastonbury – Pilgrims without Pilgrimage?' describes my 'quest' for the Glastonbury pilgrimage. I pose the question of why many people say there is no well-defined pilgrimage in Glastonbury even though there is the Pilgrim Reception Centre, annual Anglican and Catholic pilgrimages and several other pilgrimage-like activities. During my fieldwork I got the impression that for many people the Christian pilgrimage is like a foreign body

in Glastonbury. However, while the Anglican pilgrimage has become smaller, Catholic pilgrimage has grown in the recent years.[21]

I have heard many discussions over the meaning of the word pilgrim and pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago as well as in Glastonbury. On the Camino, almost everybody wants to be called a pilgrim, no matter if they consider themselves religious, spiritual or neither. In Glastonbury, however, it is far from clear and there is an on-going debate about these words. The manager of the PRC, Morgana West told me in 2011 that some people feel uncertain about the PRC: 'Pagans think we are Christian, Christians think we are pagan.' Some other people volunteering at the PRC told me that they did not like the name of the PRC because of the strong Christian associations of the words pilgrim and pilgrimage.

'Glastonbury pilgrimage' seems to be rather heavily contested. No matter if we use it as a vernacular or analytical category, at the moment there is nothing in Glastonbury that is unanimously called a pilgrimage. I suggest that with the dwindling impact of Christian pilgrimage there is no longer a need for an 'alternative pilgrimage' or counter-pilgrimage that the procession of the Goddess Conference used to be (see Bowman 2004). As there are topical legends and topical jokes, we can also talk about the topicality of pilgrimage. When the Anglican pilgrimage was popular and well-attended, the Goddess Conference organisers started the Goddess Procession that could be seen as a counter-pilgrimage. Now that the Anglican pilgrimage is on the decline, the Goddess Conference no longer emphasise its resemblance to a pilgrimage. We can say that people in Glastonbury use pilgrimage as a vernacular tool when they need it and leave it when it becomes superfluous.

I suggest that during my fieldwork in Glastonbury, pilgrimage was becoming unfashionable. Not only was the annual Anglican Pilgrimage cancelled in 2011; the Glastonbury PRC is now being restructured. They have dropped the word Pilgrim from their name and will re-open in April 2014 as the Glastonbury Reception Centre that will also house 'a sanctuary space'. When I discussed this new development with Morgana West, she noted that the title 'Pilgrim' has been hotly debated over the years and that encouraging people to come to a wider awareness of 'pilgrim' and 'pilgrimage' has been quite challenging. She said:

> Whilst there are those comfortably identifying with it, a higher proportion of those visiting Glastonbury follow a contemporary spiritual path and feel it is something they are unable to connect with; perceiving it as being associated only with Christianity. The idea of secular pilgrimage is unknown to them and if stretched, their only other means of identification might be with the Muslim Hajj. On the opposite side of the coin, many of those of the Christian faith perceive our Centre as being of the New Age and by default, Pagan. [...]Our

[21] The people at the Roman Catholic Church maintain the shrine as successors of the Abbey and its Marian devotion (see Bowman 2004, 2014).

> new identity gives us a welcome opportunity to appeal to a wider sector of those on a spiritual journey.

In the next section I elaborate on the subject of 'problematic pilgrims' started in my previous articles. I talk about pilgrims who are marginalised, who are often seen as 'wrong-uns' mainly because they do things that are not expected from the average Santiago pilgrims and seem to be too close to vagabonds for the liking of some people.

I also give an overview of the different kinds of pilgrim hierarchies that exist on the Camino de Santiago. These are: a technical one (in several pilgrim hostels distinction is made between cyclists and foot pilgrims); a hierarchy created by pilgrims and *hospitaleros* themselves, who judge each other based on various factors, such as road experience, behaviour (for example, a real pilgrim is expected to be humble and live by the motto 'Tourist demands, pilgrim appreciates'); and, finally, a hierarchy imposed by outsiders from 'above', according to which proper Catholics have superior knowledge. I elaborate on the different kinds of rhetoric used: the one from above and the one from below. I give examples of the hierarchy established by outsiders. My Spanish contact (a university teacher) did not approve of some of my informants' beliefs and rituals because according to him they were not characteristic of proper Catholicism. By suggesting that I speak to proper pilgrims instead of the likes of my informant he was creating a hierarchy of pilgrims, differentiating between 'proper pilgrims' and the rest.

In this article I also examine discourse around competing male and female energies. I argue that talking about energy can be seen as another means of establishing power. Several people have told me that the divine female and the presence of strong female energy in Glastonbury is a natural reaction to the centuries-long male domination and oppression of women by the Church. Strong female energy in Glastonbury seems to refer to the ending of male domination and the 'revival' of Glastonbury's pre-Christian nature.

One of my main arguments is that as a scholar of vernacular religion I am interested in the phenomena that result from belief and regard them with equal weight, whether institutionally 'authorised' beliefs or so-called 'superstitions'. However, I am well aware that the hierarchy of discourses will probably always be there as it forms an inherent part of vernacular religion. There are power relationships and authority in every community, whether we like it or not.

CONCLUSION

During ten years of fieldwork, I have conducted interviews on two expansive topics: different aspects of pilgrimage (for example motives, pilgrim's identity and the experience of *communitas,* meaning of the words pilgrim and pilgrimage) and pilgrims' encounters with the supernatural. The connecting link between these topics is best expressed in a quotation by Victor and Edith Turner: 'All sites of pilgrimage have this in common: they are believed to be places where miracles once happened, still happen, and may happen again' (Turner and Turner 1978: 6). Throughout my fieldwork on the Camino de Santiago and in Glastonbury I have observed people's attitudes towards pilgrimage and their fellow pilgrims; I have participated in many discussions on the meaning of the words pilgrim and pilgrimage; I have seen how pilgrim hierarchies are being created and challenged. During the process of my research I have become increasingly more aware of the power relationships that exist on pilgrimage and the effect of the researcher's personality and worldview on the process of fieldwork.

When finishing my fourth article, I realised that the process of my research directly (and unintentionally) reflects the history of pilgrimage studies.[22] When I started doing fieldwork on the Camino, one of the first things that caught my attention was *communitas*. I had not read Victor Turner (1974, 1989) or *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* by Victor and Edith Turner (1978) yet and was not aware of their approach to pilgrimage as the liminal phase[23] during which *communitas* may occur. Even without knowing the theory, these were the first things that I noticed, and at the beginning of my research my focus was on *communitas* and the liminality of a pilgrim. I noticed in others (and experienced for myself) an 'intense sense of intimacy and equality with others' and a 'release from conformity to general norms'; I saw people from different levels of society and walks of life form strong bonds, free of the structures that usually separate them. It was only later that I started to pay more attention to the power relationships and pilgrim hierarchy: I began to see pilgrimage as 'a realm of competing discourses' as suggested by John Eade and Michael Sallnow (2000). My four articles demonstrate this development: the first article deals mostly with *communitas* and the fourth one with the power relationships that exist on pilgrimage. When we look at the history of pilgrimage studies, we can see that in the early days of anthropological study of pilgrimage, Victor Turner (1974) introduced the term *communitas* to denote the strong egalitarian bonds arising between people who are in the liminal stage of pilgrimage. According to the Turners, pilgrimage helps to eliminate the barriers between people of different class statuses. In *Contesting the Sacred*, John Eade and Michael Sallnow argue

[22] See Eade and Sallnow (2000), Hermkens, Jansen and Notermans (2009).

[23] 'Liminality' is the term used by Arnold van Gennep to denote the second of three stages in what he called a 'rite of passage'.

that pilgrimage must be seen not merely as a field of social relations but also as '*a realm of competing discourses'* (Eade and Sallnow 2000: 5). According to them, social distinctions are in fact reinforced in the pilgrimage.

I have noticed that the term 'pilgrimage' is often more popular with the researchers (besides others) than the participants themselves. I observed already on my first Camino the confusion of many people when I started to talk to them about *peregrinación/peregrinaje* (Spanish for pilgrimage). They often asked me for clarification: 'Oh, you mean the Camino?' *Hacer el Camino* (do the Camino) is the most common expression for the activity of walking or cycling the route to Santiago de Compostela. That said, people who start the Camino for a religious motive, are much more likely to use the word pilgrimage.

Looking at different, competing narratives about pilgrimage in Glastonbury, I have come to the conclusion that at the moment there is nothing in Glastonbury that is even more or less unanimously called a pilgrimage. There are annual Christian pilgrimages to Glastonbury,[24] but many people do not regard either Anglican or Catholic Glastonbury pilgrimage as a real pilgrimage. The fact that the Anglican pilgrimage was cancelled in 2011 due to the high cost of fuel seems to have damaged its reputation even further and has also provided material for several parodies. Many Christians as well as non-Christians told me they feel that the Christian pilgrimage is not part of the town: 'Glastonbury is just used as a site for it.' I suggest that the virtual abandonment of the concept of pilgrimage from, for example, the Goddess Movement is connected with the decline of the importance and high profile nature of the Anglican and Roman Catholic pilgrimages in Glastonbury: there is no longer a need for a 'counter-pilgrimage'.[25]

Similarly, the fact that the Glastonbury Pilgrim Reception Centre is being restructured and will re-open in April 2014 as the Glastonbury Reception Centre is highly significant. This new centre will also house a sanctuary in which all beliefs can come together within their own framework. One of the reasons for dropping 'Pilgrim' from their name was the confusion created by that word, above all its association with Christianity. As there are topical legends and jokes – narratives that appear immediately after some event and disappear when the event has lost its significance – based on my observations on Glastonbury pilgrimage scene I suggest we can also talk about the topicality of pilgrimage. We can say that people in Glastonbury use pilgrimage as a vernacular tool or even weapon when they need it and leave it when it becomes superfluous. This

[24] Marion Bowman has noted that both the Anglican Pilgrimage and the Catholic Pilgrimage refer to themselves as 'The Glastonbury Pilgrimage' (see Bowman 2004: 279).

[25] When analysing the Glastonbury Goddess movement a few years ago, Marion Bowman observed that in producing a 'mirror image of the Christian pilgrimage processions, with images of the Goddess, Goddess banners, processions, chanting and ritual, the Goddess community is physically encompassing Christian Glastonbury and spiritually reclaiming aspects of the Christian tradition there, such as devotion to the Virgin and St. Bridget' (Bowman 2008: 258).

is of course only one aspect of it; pilgrimage is still a living concept for some people.

Interestingly, while few people on the road to Santiago would say they are on pilgrimage, nearly everyone wants to be called a *peregrino* (Spanish for pilgrim) and not a *caminante* (walker, traveller) and definitely not a tourist. The discussion about the real Santiago pilgrim is as popular now as it was 10 years ago; the same can be said about pilgrim hierarchy. In statements like 'These people are not real pilgrims' and 'Their pilgrimage is not a true pilgrimage' the words pilgrim and pilgrimage are used to establish authority and create hierarchies of people and activities. Many people see pilgrimage as an intensely personal thing: a very serious personal quest for some, less serious for others, but personal nonetheless. However, there are all sorts of people who take themselves too seriously and try to establish a hierarchy, with themselves at the top, naturally.

On the Camino de Santiago there exist different kinds of hierarchies. There are hierarchies created by pilgrims and *hospitaleros* themselves, who judge each other based on different factors, and a hierarchy imposed by outsiders from 'above', according to which proper Catholic pilgrims have better informed, more valid, superior knowledge. I have (once) encountered similar attitude towards my research in Glastonbury. According to one historian, the people I have interviewed in Glastonbury cannot understand the term 'pilgrimage', 'probably for a lack of religious formation: it seems that many of them are really pagans'. I would not point out these incidents if they were not in contradiction with what forms the framework of my research: the framework of vernacular religion. Scholars of vernacular religion are interested in the phenomena that result from belief, regarding them with equal weight, whether institutionally 'authorised' beliefs like the Resurrection and Immaculate Conception, or personal interpretations of institutional views. I like the concept of 'vernacular religion' especially because it enables a democratic approach: it 'highlights the power of the individual and communities of individuals to create and re-create their own religion' (Primiano 2012: 383).

In Anna Fedele's (2013) book about Mary Magdalene pilgrims there is a chapter entitled *Pilgrims dealing with their Christian background,* where Fedele describes the tension between the pilgrims' attraction towards the power related to Christian churches and their rejection of some basic principles of Christian doctrine. I would like to paraphrase that title and talk about pilgrims dealing with the Camino Catholicism. From my fieldwork on the Camino it has emerged that many people have mixed feelings about Camino Catholicism and need to find a way to reconcile their consciousness about being anti-Church in 'real life' and enjoying the benefits offered by the Church while doing the Camino. For many people it is like going back in time to the Middle Ages: this is how some pilgrims have solved the dilemma of being either agnostic or atheist outside the Camino, yet attending a pilgrims' mass and sleeping in a church while on the Camino. I suggest that by participating in certain activities,

like taking other people's prayers to Santiago, or performing rituals like hugging the saint's statue in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, pilgrims become part of the Church even without realising it. However, some cynics have suggested that when I agreed to take an old woman's prayers to St James without being a believer myself, I was acting like a postman rather than 'a spiritual messenger' as I liked to think. I cannot say I completely disagree with them.

In my work, I emphasise the importance of creating a broader understanding of the liminality of the researcher doing anthropological or folkloristic fieldwork, the (possible) duality of their worldviews, the need to play different roles and use different identities. Researchers of belief narrative are usually moving between two worldviews: the supernaturalist and the scientific-sceptical. When going on a field trip, we may leave the scientific worldview behind and temporarily enter the realm of magic. Bente Gullveig Alver has suggested that a fieldworker working in a popular conceptual world may find commuting between the different realities difficult (Alver 1990). Doing fieldwork in pilgrimage destinations has led me to perceive the liminality of not only a pilgrim, but also of a researcher. Constantly moving between two worlds – the rational world of academia and the (often) magical world of my informants – has placed me in the stage of liminality. Several fieldworkers have mentioned that it is not difficult to go inside the worldview of the informants but it is not always easy to leave it behind. In the liminal stage of fieldwork researchers sometimes experience things that defy rational explanation. The perceived connection between liminality and the supernatural is well-known: liminality attracts the supernatural and people in the liminal phase are arguably at a heightened risk of danger from the supernatural. Thanks to their liminality, both Glastonbury and the Camino de Santiago are excellent places for collecting stories about encounters with the supernatural; I have reproduced and analysed several pilgrims' stories about their extraordinary experiences.

When I started my doctoral studies at the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore in 2007, the working title of my dissertation was *Belief narrative: Santiago pilgrims' stories about their encounters with the supernatural*. However, the original idea changed not only because of incorporating Glastonbury, but mainly because, in a way, I moved away from *communitas* and the supernatural and started to see pilgrimage 'not merely as a field of social relations but also as a *realm of competing discourses'* (Eade and Sallnow 2000: 5).

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ARTICLES

SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Palverändurite usundilised arusaamad Santiago de Compostela ja Glastonbury palverännakust: välitööpõhiseid käsitlusi

Väitekiri käsitleb tänapäevase Euroopa rahvausundi ja nüüdisaegse palverännaku erinevaid aspekte Põhja-Hispaanias kulgeva Camino de Santiago (püha Jaakobuse tee) ja Edela-Inglismaal asuva Glastonbury näitel. Palverändu vaadeldakse kui jutustatud teekonda, kus juhtuvad imed ja toimuvad kohtumised üleloomulike olenditega: erineva religioosse taustaga palverändurid räägivad endaga juhtunud lugusid, muistendeid ja legende. Tähelepanu all on nii *communitas* kui ka palverännakul valitsevad võimusuhted ja palverändurite hierarhia. Üks lugude läbivaid teemasid on autentse palveränduri identiteedi konstrueerimine; otsitakse vastust küsimusele, kellel on õigus otsustada selle üle, kes on tõeline palverändur, ning milliste põhjenduste kaudu otsus tehakse.

Minu töö põhiliseks allikaks on olnud aastatel 2003–2013 tehtud ulatuslikud välitööd Caminol. Olen olnud välitöödel Santiago palverändur ja kõndinud Caminol, ööbinud palverändurite ööbimispaikades, kus töötasin ka vabatahtlikuna. Alates 2011. aastast olen käinud välitöödel Glastonburys, et võrrelda nende paikade näitel tänapäevast Euroopa rahvausundit, milles domineerivad uue vaimsuse teemad. Camino de Santiago on populaarne palverännutee, mida mööda on Loode-Hispaanias asuvasse Santiago de Compostela linna käidud juba üle tuhande aasta. Glastonburyst, mis keskajal oli Inglismaa tähtsamaid palverännusihtkohti, on nüüdseks saanud oluline New Age'i keskus. Minu uurimus kajastab ka erinevate uskumissüsteemide, eriti katoliikluse ja New Age'i kokkupõrkeid ning arutlust teemal „Kellele kuuluvad Camino de Santiago ja Glastonbury?"

Minu väitekirja metodoloogiliseks aluseks on vernakulaarne religioon (ingl *vernacular religion*). Termini võttis kasutusele Leonard Primiano (1995) ning selle käsituse järgi on uurija tähelepanu all inimesed ja nende usundilised praktikad, mitte „religioon" ja „usk" kui abstraktsioonid või normatiivsed õpetused. Tähtis on uurida seda, kuidas religiooni kogetakse ja praktiseeritakse nii üksikisiku kui ka kogukonna tasandil. Vernakulaarse religiooni uurijaid huvitavad erinevate uskumustega kaasnevad fenomenid, mida peetakse tähenduselt võrdseks, olgu siis tegemist institutsionaalselt autoriseeritud uskumustega, nagu näiteks usk Jeesuse ülestõusmisse, või siis kirikudogmade rahvapäraste tõlgendustega. Lähtun oma analüüsis sellest, et minu kui uurija eesmärk ei ole autoritaarsete väidete esitamine, vaid pigem erinevate diskursuste vaatlus ja analüüs.

Töö teoreetilises raamistikus on suur osatähtsus palverännu-uuringutel. Minu välitööde ja uurimistöö käik peegeldab otseselt (ja tahtmatult) palverännuuuringute ajalugu: esimeses artiklis uurin palverännaku liminaalses seisundis tekkivat *communitas*'t, viimases käsitlen palverännul esinevaid võimumänge

„omavahel konkureerivate diskursuste“ vaatenurga kaudu. Kuna tänapäeva palverändurite arusaam autentsest palverändurist toetub suurel määral ettekujutusele keskaegsest palverändurist, siis olen oma töös puudutanud ka keskaegse palverännu teemat.

Vaatlen sõnade „palverännak“ ja „palverändur“ kasutamist ning seda, kuidas nende abil püütakse peale suruda oma isiklikku nägemust tõelisest palverändurist ja tõelisest palverännakust. Minu eesmärgiks ei ole neid mõisteid defineerida, vaid vaadelda nende tähendusvälja muutumist nii akadeemilises kui ka rahvapärases diskursuses. Eriti ilmeka näitena võib nimetada Glastonbury Palverändurite Vastuvõtukeskuse (*Pilgrim Reception Centre*) hiljutist ümbernimetamist Glastonbury Vastuvõtukeskuseks (*Reception Centre*). Sõna „palverändur” eemaldati nimest eelkõige seetõttu, et see tekitas külastajates suurt segadust: kristlased arvasid, et tegemist on New Age'i keskusega ja vastupidi. Kui Camino de Santiagol kasutada sõnu *pilgrimage*, *peregrinaje* ja *peregrinación* – mis tähendavad palverännakut –, siis paljudes tekitab see kerget hämmeldust. Eelistatakse sõna *Camino* (tee). Kui sõna *peregrinaje* tekitas võõristust, siis sõnaga *peregrino* (hisp palverändur) on teisiti. Peaaegu kõigist, kes alustavad Caminot, saab *peregrino a Santiago.*

Mu väitekirjas on kesksel kohal liminaalsuse mõiste, mis esineb töös kolmel erineval tasandil. Esiteks on see palverännak kui liminaalne seisund. Victor Turneri käsitluse järgi on palverändurid liminaalses seisundis: nad on eraldatud suhteliselt kindlaks määratud eluviisist ja sotsiaalsest staatusest ning lähevad liminaalsesse ehk üleminekuseisundisse. Palverännaku liminaalses seisundis tekib eriline ja võimas sotsiaalse ühenduse vorm, mida Turner nimetab *communitas*'eks, milles seisusevahed kaovad või ühtlustuvad. Liminaalne seisund ei ole Turneri sõnul omane ainult palveränduritele ja neofüütidele, vaid näiteks ka kunstnikele, kes on sageli liminaalsed ja marginaalsed inimesed, nö piiripealsed inimesed, kes püüavad vabaneda staatuse ja rollimängude klišeedest. Teiseks arutlen liminaalse seisundi üle, millesse satuvad välitöödele minnes uurijad. Liminaalses seisundis olevad uurijad võivad välitöödel kogeda asju, mida teadusliku maailmavaatega seletada ei saa. Välitöödel olemist on võrreldud teadvuseseisundi muutumisega. Kolmas tasand on eriala liminaalsus: on räägitud folkloristika kui distsipliini liminaalsusest selles mõttes, et selles puudub põhjapanev teooria (*grand theory*).

Liminaalsusega on tihedalt seotud üleloomulik, mida peetakse isegi liminaalsuse lahutamatuks osaks. Palverändurite usundilisi muistendeid kogudes olen püüdnud teada saada, mis on nende lugude taga ja miks jutustajad selliseid lugusid räägivad. Kuna olen uurinud lugusid üleloomulikest kogemustest, siis sageli on informandid tundnud huvi mu enda kogemuste vastu. See teema on mõistagi väga tundlik. Usundiuurijad liiguvad sageli kahe maailma – teadusliku ja maagilise – vahel. Soome folklorist Kirsi Hänninen on kirjutanud üleloomulikest kogemustest rääkimisega kaasnevast stigmast. Sageli ei julge inimesed nendega juhtunust rääkida just stigmatiseerimise tõttu: näiteks kummituste nägemine on paljude arvates psühhiaatriline probleem. Minu uurimuses on

emic vaatenurgal väga oluline roll. Refleksiivse läheneminurga alt uurin ka välitööde metodoloogilisi probleeme, eriti uurija rolli dialoogilises tööprotsessis.

Väitekiri koosneb sissejuhatusest ja neljast artiklist, mis on ilmunud rahvusvahelise levikuga publikatsioonides (*Journal of Indian Folkloristics, Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics*) ja kirjastuse Equinox kogumikus *Vernacular Religion in Everyday Life*. Lisaks väitekirja aluseks olevatele artiklitele olen avaldanud kaks raamatut, kus käsitlen oma välitööde kogemusi: „Peregrina päevik" ilmus 2007. aastal Loomingu Raamatukogus; selle järjena ilmus 2009. aastal „Kas jääte ööseks? Hospitalera päevik".

Sissejuhatuse esimeses osas on toodud välja väitekirja valmimise eeldused, lühike ülevaade Glastonburyst ja Santiago de Compostela palverännakust ning põhjused, miks ma just palverännaku teemat uurima hakkasin. Teises osas tutvustatakse töö teoreetilist raamistikku ja metodoloogiat; kolmandas osas on esitatud artiklite sisukokkuvõtted ja täiendavad kommentaarid. Neljas osa on väitekirja üldkokkuvõte, milles resümeeritakse kõikide artiklite järeldused. Järgnevalt annan lühikese ülevaate väitekirja komponentartiklite sisust ja põhijäreldustest.

I Sepp, Tiina 2007. Pilgrims and Tourists on Road to Santiago to Compostela. *Journal of Indian Folkloristics.* Volume IX No.1/2. January-December 2007 (N.S.) Mysore: Zooni Publications, 1–7.

Esimeses artiklis (eestikeelne pealkiri „Palverändurid ja turistid teel Santiago de Compostelasse") vaadeldakse palverännakut kui liminaalset seisundit ja arutletakse *communitas*'e mõiste üle. Uurin, mis võiks eristada Santiago palverändurit tavalisest rändurist ja analüüsin oma teekaaslaste vastuseid selleteemalistele küsimustele. Annan ka lühikese ülevaate palverännumotiividest. Tänapäeval on religioossete motiivide kõrval hulgaliselt mittereligioosseid: otsitakse uusi sõpru, lahendusi oma probleemidele jm. Juba esimeses artiklis ilmneb *emic* lähenemisnurga suur osakaal mu uurimuses. Seesolijana väidan, et palverändur on see inimene, kes ennast palveränduriks nimetab või keda teised selleks peavad. *Etic* perspektiivi rakendades aga väidan, et peamine erinevus nn Camino-turisti ja Camino-palveränduri vahel on selles, et palverändur kogeb *communitast*, turist aga veedab lihtsalt meeldivalt puhkust. Väidan veel, et *communitas* tekib pigem talvel kui suvel ning pigem üksi kui koos kaaslasega minnes.

II Sepp, Tiina 2012. Stories of Santiago Pilgrims: Tradition through Creativity. – Marion Bowman and Ülo Valk (eds.). *Vernacular Religion in Everyday Life: Expressions of Belief*. Sheffield; Bristol, CT: Equinox Publishing, 301–327.

Teine artikkel (eestikeelne pealkiri „Santiago palverändurite räägitud lood: traditsioon ja loovus“) keskendub erineva religioosse taustaga palverändurite räägitud lugudele, alustades memoraatidest ja lõpetades kristlike legendidega. Vaadeldes palveränuteed kui jutustatud teekonda väidan, et see, mida inimesed on enne teeleminekut Camino kohta lugenud või kuulnud, mõjutab otseselt nende kogemusi. Jätkan esimeses artiklis alustatud „autentse palveränduri“ teemal toimuva diskussiooni käsitlemist ning vaatlen, kuidas artikli peategelane Roger oma lugusid rääkides enda kui tõelise palveränduri identiteeti kujundab. Analüüsin refleksiivselt oma välitööde metodoloogiat ja esitan näitena kohtumise palveränduriga, kes minu pakutud palveränduri definitsiooniga ei nõustunud ning väitis, et tema kui palveränduri jaoks pole oluline mitte *communitas*, vaid see, et ta saab rahulikult ja omaette olla.

III Sepp, Tiina 2012. Interview as an Act of Seduction: Analysing Problems I Have Met During my Fieldwork on the Camino de Santiago and in Glastonbury. *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics*. Volume 6, Number 2. Estonian Literary museum; Estonian National Museum; University of Tartu, 29–48.

Kolmas artikkel (eestikeelne pealkiri „Intervjueerimine kui võrgutuskunst: Camino de Santiagol ja Glastonburys ette tulnud probleemide analüüs“) keskendub probleemidele, mis võivad välitöödel tekkida. Arutlen selle üle, kuidas uurija enda isikuomadused võivad mõjutada töö tulemust ning vaatlen intervjuusituatsioonis valitsevat võimuvahekorda.
Artikkel sisaldab mu enda memoraati ja informantide tõlgendusi sellele. Toon välja uurija enda memoraadi kasutamisega seotud probleemid. Isikukogemuse loo kasutamine välitöödel aitab kaotada barjääri folkloristi ja informantide vahel ning uurida dialoogisituatsioonis tekkivaid spontaanseid tõlgendusi. Teisalt võib uurija ja uuritava rollide segunemine tekitada kahtlusi, kuivõrd kriitiline on uurija vaatepunkt ja kas materjali analüüsist tuletatud järeldused on tõsiseltvõetavad.

Käsitlen ka nn probleemsetelt informantidelt kogutud materjali usaldusväärsuse teemat.

IV Sepp, Tiina 2014. Pilgrimage and Pilgrim Hierarchies in Vernacular Discourse: Comparative Notes from the Camino de Santiago and Glastonbury. *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics.* Volume 8, Number 2. (Ilmumas).

Selles artiklis (eestikeelne pealkiri „Palverännak ja palverändurite hierarhiad rahvapärases diskursuses: võrdlevaid märkmeid Camino de Santiagost ja Glastonburyst“) jätkan juba varem käsitletud võimusuhete ja palverändurite hierarhia teemat. Vaatlen Camino de Santiagol eksisteeriva palverändurite hierarhia erinevaid vorme, nii alt kui ka ülalt kehtestatud hierarhiat.

Arutlen selle üle, et paljud mitteusklikud ja isegi kirikuvastased inimesed naudivad Caminol kiriku pakutud hüvesid. Intervjuude põhjal selgub, et üks levinumaid viise enda ateistliku südametunnistuse lepitamiseks on mõelda Caminol käimisest kui keskaegse rituaali sooritamisest ning seeläbi ka katoliikluse kui sellesse aega kuuluva nähtuse aktsepteerimisest. Kuigi paljud inimesed käivad Caminol mittereligioossetel põhjustel, on katoliikluse osakaal Caminol suurem, kui pealtnäha paistab, ja kirikutegelased näevad Camino populaarsuses suurepärast võimalust misjonitöö tegemiseks.

Võtan kokku oma Glastonbury välitööde tulemused ja väidan, et Glastonburyst kui palverännukeskusest mõtlemine ei ole Glastonburys elavate või seda linna külastavate inimeste seas praegu kuigi levinud. Pigem rõhutatakse, et mõisted „palverännak” ja „palverändur” tekitavad oma kristlike assotsiatsioonide tõttu liiga palju segadust.

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