

‘GOD IS MY BOSOM BUDDY’: EXPERIENCING FAITH AND THE ROLE OF ETHNICITY IN ROMA AND *KAALE* MISSIONIZING AMONG ROMA IN ESTONIA AND LATVIA

ABSTRACT

This article examines the mission encounter between *Kaale* (Finnish Roma) missionaries and Roma in Estonia and the Vidzeme region of Latvia. The article analyses the importance of ethnicity in the Pentecostal mission work conducted by the *Kaale* and by the local Roma. I pay particular attention to the way God’s presence among the born-again Roma community in Estonia and Latvia is embodied and emotionally experienced and argue that in the current multicultural and multilingual mission setting sensations, affects, and aesthetics become especially influential. The article concludes that despite Pentecostalism’s transnational message, ethnicity remains for the Roma/*Kaale* missionaries a key category that is not only used to attract attention, but in some cases is combined into the mission and contributes to the creation of local versions of being a Pentecostal Roma believer. The inclusion of ethnic elements into the mission, especially in the sensory forms of experiencing religion, and combining it with the usage of the methods that are culture specific, is also a contributing factor to the acceptance of the missionaries.

Keywords: Roma in the Baltics, Finnish *Kaale*, ethnicity, Pentecostal mission, embodied and experienced faith

INTRODUCTION

The first time I attended a Finnish *Kaale*¹ organised mission event called Romani Days, taking place in a small town in the Latvian Vidzeme² region, it was a nice northern summer day in 2015. I had heard about the event from Pentecostal Roma in Estonia and knew that

Mary³, the wife of former Romani pastor Gregory, would be there. Soon after arriving in town, I noticed people distributing flyers of the event I was looking for. In this flyer, which invited people in Latvian to come to the events, Roma dancers and musicians⁴ were depicted in traditional clothing. Shortly afterwards, in a park in front of a shopping centre situated in

the centre of the town, I found a tent set up for this event and also noticed Mary.

On the walls of the tent there were texts in Finnish about the history of the religious organisation *Elämä ja Valo* [Life and Light]⁵ and the Finnish *Kaale*. This first tent was at the time used mostly for introducing Romani culture in Latvia. Surprisingly many different languages (Finnish, Russian, Latvian, Estonian, Romani) could be heard at the rather small-scale event, with translations being made between several languages. The talks about Romani culture in Latvia and Pentecostal church work among the Roma in Latvia were given in Latvian with translation to Russian, the main mediating language of the event. A traditional Romani dish, *mariklya*⁶, was prepared in a kettle on an open fire and served, in exchange for donations, by the local converted Roma women. Next to the tent, there was a horse-drawn carriage wagon decorated with birch branches and flowers, and behind the tent, in the park, horse riding was provided for children as a pastime activity. As horses have historically been an important part of the Romani lifestyle in Estonia and Latvia—men used to practice horse-trading and horses were used for seasonal travelling—in this context, together with the other cultural activities on show, they represent one of the key symbols of traditional Romani culture in Latvia and Estonia. From time to time recorded Romani music was played, and on the square in front of the tent the local Roma women danced typical Romani dances of the region. In addition to the songs in Finnish, including some influenced by traditional Romani music, there were a few songs in the local Romani dialect which were sung together with the local Roma from Estonia and Latvia.

As I found out in the evening, the second tent which was advertised as a concert venue was for testimonies and prayers. The Finnish

Kaale were explaining how they had found God and had come to faith. They also performed Christian devotional songs and distributed CDs of a Finnish Romani gospel group. During the meeting, the evangelical Roma from Finland, Estonia, and Latvia shared their testimonies (telling their personal stories of changes in their lives after becoming born-again Christians), interchanging with musical and dance performances. The Roma had gathered from both Latvia and Estonia, so the talks in Finnish and Estonian were translated into Latvian and Russian. During the whole event people were encouraged to come and pray together with the believers⁷ and also come to faith and accept Jesus into their hearts as the believers often expressed it. For children there was a designated area where they were attended to and could draw and do crafts on religious topics under the guidance of *Kaale* and Latvian women. On the fourth day of the event there was a sermon at the local Pentecostal church in which the Finnish *Kaale* and local Roma also took part together with the local majority population (comprising mostly of Latvians, but also Russians and to a lesser extent of different ethnic minorities who often speak Russian as their first language)⁸.

When looking at the organisational characteristics of this mission event in Latvia, the emphasis on the elements of Romani culture becomes apparent. Romani Days [Latvian *Romu Dienas*], the name of the described mission event, which was organised in co-operation between Light and Life Latvia organisation, the local Pentecostal church, and Finnish *Kaale* missionaries, clearly connects the event to Roma and bears the same name as the mission events for *Kaale* in Finland (see also Roman 2015). The following year (in 2016), the mission event, organised by the same partners, was named The Days of Friendship: All the Nations praise the Lord [Latvian *Teiciet to Kungu, visas tautas*.

Sadraudzibas Dienas] and was regarded by the church as a mission event directed towards the Roma. The style of advertising and organising the mission events during the following years has changed as *Kaale* have started co-operation with other churches of the majority people. Less obvious usage of ethnic elements can be noted in the advertising of the mission event in 2017, which was a more directly Roma-oriented and less public mission event, taking place in the countryside of Southwestern Estonia. During the summer of 2019 Latvian-Estonian religious camp (Finnish *leiri*) for Roma in the border-town of Valga/Valka and also a tent meeting (Finnish *telttakokous*) together with a Pentecostal church in Estonia was organised without advertising it visibly and specifically as a Roma-oriented event. Although the advertisement of the events can vary according to the co-organisers and types of events, ethnicity and culture (and culture-specific approaches) receive an especially important role in the mission, and with the missionaries being also from the Roma minority, the approach of the mission depends on emphasizing the category of ethnicity even if ethnic elements are not always openly visible.

The aim of this article is to analyse what the significance of ethnicity in Roma /*Kaale* to Roma mission is, how does the relationship between Pentecostalism and ethnicity contribute to the creation of a local culture-specific approach in the mission, and whether and in which cases does ethnic belonging and interest in creating a local form of Pentecostalism impact the success of the mission among the traditionally Lutheran, Russian Orthodox, or Catholic Roma in Estonia and the Latvian Vidzeme region.

For that purpose, I analyse the usage of ethnic elements in the mission, including in the sensory forms of experiencing religion, as the latter constitute an important aspect of being

a born-again believer and have started to receive also greater anthropological interest during the last decades (e.g. Csordas 1999; Luhrmann 2004; 2014; Meyer 2010a; 2010b; Bialecki 2015). The way ethnicity is treated in the mission events can be regarded as characteristic of Pentecostalism, which is globally successful in proselytising and spreading its transnational message by giving importance to the local cultures of different peoples and adapting its mission to different conditions (e.g. Coleman 2004; Robbins 2004; Peel 2009; Meyer 2010b). The Pentecostal approach of combining local features into their mission has similarities to the inculturation theory of the Catholic church which claims that local forms of practicing religion are not only acceptable, but may be even necessary, as long as the existence of Christian God, in the form of a transcendent deity that governs everything, is accepted (Cannell 2006: 26; c.f. Orta 2004).⁹

The usage of the above mentioned cultural elements (horses and horse carriages, Romani music and dances, traditional Romani dishes) during these events is a part of the strategy of the mission. On the one hand, the mission aims to bring more Roma to conversion by connecting religion and culture, and on the other hand, it wishes to help the co-operation between the local majority people and the local Roma converts by educating the non-Roma about the cultural traditions and history of the Roma minority in Latvia and Estonia. I will analyse how the mission is conducted by both Finnish *Kaale* and local Roma missionaries to understand the role of ethnicity in their mission, and finally I will look into how the believer Roma explain experiencing the workings of Holy Spirit in their lives and how this connects to ethnic elements and the culture-specific approach in the mission.

PENTECOSTALISM, ITS REACH, AND THE ROLE OF EMBODIMENT AND SENSATIONS

Pentecostalism can be seen as achieving unity in diversity, that is through a global network of exchanges without one centre it creates the possibility to feel connectedness to others, but is also open to adjustments dependent on each context (Peel 2009: 193). In addition to being global, Pentecostalism places importance on the local, for instance, Pentecostal/charismatic churches have often been created by evangelists with local roots, and even if the missionaries are foreign, the local leaders form their own churches fitting to the local situations (Robbins 2004: 129). Characteristic to Pentecostal/charismatic churches is that there is no centralised authority and they function in a web-like structure of personal connections, so the members can find support from each other in missionising in new places (Robbins 2004: 125). The fact that all born-again believers are considered to have the ability to be filled with the Holy Spirit and therefore receive spiritual authority aids the creation of new churches (Meyer 2010a: 753). Therefore, the global character of Pentecostalism is based on the idea of one overarching view of the world, instead of the small-scale local worldviews, and promises believers involvement in this global community, as Birgit Meyer (2010b) points out. Pentecostalism has been successful in spreading to different parts of the world because it does not come with an essential substance with a ready set of doctrines and practices. This way it is not like a fixed religious system with strictly set authority, but instead is more fluid and always performed and changing, as its core features can be used in different locations and conditions, allowing these new arenas to again become

part of the larger view of the world. (Meyer 2010b: 121–122) Charismatic Christians create both global frameworks and emphasise the local, and use both abstract symbols and language for intellectual understanding and for embodied experience (Coleman 2004: 65).

Pentecostalism and local cultures can have a tense relationship, as Joel Robbins demonstrates by criticising the view that regards Pentecostalism in non-European contexts as open to syncretisation with indigenous forms of worship and embracing and accommodating the local ecstatic cultural forms. Ecstatic experiences, as Robbins (2004) points out, should not be regarded as generic as these can actually differ depending on the contexts and Pentecostal/charismatic and traditional practices might only seem to resemble each other, meaning that Pentecostalism is accepting local cosmologies only to attack them. (Robbins 2004: 126–127) Robbins notes that the Pentecostal/charismatic church ritualises discontinuity and places emphasis on rupture, dualism, and moral ascetism, and that these qualities create a distinction between what comes to be considered the traditional culture and the new Pentecostal/charismatic way of life. The local ontologies are preserved, but in Pentecostalism transform into an aspect of the demonic world. That is also the reason for the existence of both so-called global and local features. (ibid. 129–130) In the case of Roma, it has been noted in several locations, that with conversion some parts of the traditions or occupations of Roma groups have become regarded as demonic and in need of abandoning, as for instance the traditional occupation of fortune telling (e.g. Marushiakova and Popov 2016; Kwiek 2014; Åberg 2014; Laurent 2014). This is also the case in Estonia (Roht-Yilmaz 2019).

Although the research on Pentecostalism has focused on studying the usage of the word

and language as the most crucial for understanding the process and nature of conversion (e.g. Harding 1987; Stromberg 1993), there has been a shift to incorporate more ways of experiencing conversion and being a born-again believer into the study of Pentecostalism. The bodily and sensory experiences, in addition to language and narrative, have taken a more central place in the study of Pentecostalism focusing on experiencing Pentecostal faith (e.g. Meyer 2010a; Meyer 2010b; Luhrmann 2004; Luhrmann 2012; Luhrmann 2018; Bialecki 2014; Bialecki 2015; Bialecki 2018, Csordas 1999; Coleman 2004). Also, looking at the role of body and bodily practices and how these change with conversion gives important information about the ways Roma/*Gitanol/Kaale* Pentecostals experience both their ethnic identity and becoming a born-again believer (e.g. Mena 2008; Roman 2017). For instance, *Kaale* morality rules (distinction between clean and unclean, gender separation, age related rules etc.) and Pentecostal expressions of faith, though seem to be contradictory at times, for example in case of water baptism, actually both place importance on the control of the body. Therefore there is a constant negotiation and synchronisation of the meaning of bodily discipline for the believer *Kaale*. (Roman 2017)

For understanding the non-verbal character of Pentecostal/charismatic faith, which will be discussed later in the article as a key part in the adaption of the mission to the local conditions of Roma in Estonia and Latvia, I regard the term 'sensational forms' coined by Meyer (2010a; 2010b) useful. This concept denotes the authorised modes for accessing the transcendental that gives form to the religious content and norms (Meyer 2010a: 750). The sensational forms belong to a specific religious aesthetics, which is responsible for the way the humans engage with the divine and each

other, and creates particular sensibilities (Meyer 2010a: 750–751). The mission reaches new converts not only through the message that they convey through rhetoric, but persuasion also takes place through sensational forms, for what Meyer (2010a: 757–758) deploys the concept 'aesthetics of persuasion'. For instance, it can aid understanding how the persuasion of new converts takes place by the staging of miracles and other spectacular mass events. The sensational forms appeal to the senses and the body in distinct ways and thus form the religious subjects. (Meyer 2010b: 122) The process of learning to have the experiences cannot be separated from the process of learning the words that are used to describe them, Tanya Luhrmann explains (2004). The way the believers engage in these bodily processes and how they integrate these into the new ways of understanding of their bodies and worlds result in perceiving the world differently than before. This is explained by believers as due to the presence of God. (Luhrmann 2004: 522) Feeling God has to be learnt. Therefore sustaining the faith requires hard work from the believer. (Luhrmann 2018: 306) Although religious sensations are felt individually, they are produced socially, which means that in order to be repeated in a stereotyped way, they require the existence of formalized, authorized practices, which frame the individual religious sensations, and allow the sensations to be reproduced (Meyer 2010a: 754). While discussing how emotion discourse can be related to the social, Catherine Lutz and Lila Abu-Lughod (1990: 12–13) point out that in addition to emotion seen as discourse, it can also be framed in most contexts as experiences involving the whole person (including their bodies), meaning that emotions are cultural products reproduced in individuals in the form of embodied experience.

To bring together the topics of language and embodiment for the analysis of the mission's success and effect on the Roma in Estonia and Latvia, I find the term 'affect' as used by Jon Bialecki (2015) fitting. He explains that 'by focusing on affect imagined as a thread that runs through multiple bodies and between different kinds of language use, we can see how the linguistic and the embodied change and interact with one another, while still allowing bodies to be bodies and language to be language.' Affect can be found in intimate gatherings and conversations, also in texts and other media (Bialecki 2015: 98) and at certain moments the affective energy builds up and seems to flow from one person to another (Bialecki 2015: 107). These moments with affective energy flow can also be noticed during prayers at mission events among the believer Roma in Estonia and the Latvian Vidzeme region.

I argue that with the usage of methods and approaches that are culture-specific and considered appropriate by the local Roma believers and that include the successful combination of ethnic elements, especially into the sensory forms of experiencing religion, the global message of the evangelical charismatic churches has greater chances of finding its way to the Roma in Estonia and Latvia. In cases the mission creates the necessary conditions by offering sensational forms that are culture appropriate, already known and valued and therefore more readily accepted, these will help to create the shared affective energy that again strengthens the Pentecostal religious experience, while at the same time allowing local elements into its practice. For the expected emotions to rise, the potential converts and believers need to be provided with locally and culturally fitting sensational forms. In the case of the Roma in Estonia and Latvia the universal message and charismatic experience of Pentecostalism

becomes adapted to the local conditions and community through varied strategies utilised by different missionaries.

ETHNICITY IN/AND THE MISSION

The Roma started converting to Pentecostalism already during its appearance during the first years of the 20th century. Since the early 1950s, when Le Cossec, a Breton pastor, started evangelising among the Manouche and founded an organisation called *Vie et Lumière* (Life and Light), Roma across Europe have organised into Pentecostal congregations (Marsh and Thurffell 2014: 7; 11). Although it can differ among Roma groups and communities, for generalising purposes the success of the Pentecostal mission can be explained by features in Roma cultures and in Pentecostalism that combine well with each other, for example the importance of music, improvisation and oral culture, a view of the past that connects with the salvation narrative, and organisational characteristics that allow the Roma to create churches and allow also people without higher education to become pastors (Thurffell 2009: 185–187). In several locations in the world Romani or Gypsy¹⁰ churches have been formed (e.g. Slavkova 2007; 2012; 2014; Benovska-Sabkova and Altanov 2009; Marushiakova and Popov 2014; Carrizo-Reimann 2011; Cantón Delgado 2010; 2014, Gay y Blasco 2012). As Pentecostalism embraces both mono- and multi-ethnic churches, it can find followers among different Roma groups, who then can choose the strategy for their ethnicity management which suits them depending on their relations with the majority society (Ries 2010; 2014). In the case of Finland and *Kaale*, they do not belong to mono-ethnic Roma churches, but to mixed congregations (Roman 2017: 257; 2018: 42). Nevertheless their

mission abroad is conducted among Roma communities and based on the notion of shared ethnic identity (Roman 2014; 2015; Roht-Yilmaz 2019; 2020).

In Estonia and Latvia, although the Roma go to the majority population's multi-ethnic churches, missionising distinctively and in a constant manner among the Roma is mainly done by *Kaale* from Finland¹¹ and local Roma missionaries. Recently there have also been a few shorter sporadic visits by Roma missionaries from Ukraine¹², which will be discussed later in the article. On the initiative of *Kaale* missionaries, a training course on different educational topics for the Roma in Estonia was held in 1997 at the Pentecostal Bible school in Estonia (Lutt 2006) and several events were organised together with Pentecostal and Baptist¹³ churches. Notwithstanding the co-operation, working among the Roma specifically has not been a separate goal of the local churches. In the last decade the co-work between *Kaale* missionaries and Latvian Pentecostal churches has become more active and due to that, the *Kaale* mission and co-work with local churches is expanding again also to Estonia, mostly to the areas bordering with Latvia. In addition to organising mission events, the *Kaale* attend Pentecostal conferences in Latvia, and the representatives from Latvian Pentecostal church and Roma believers from Latvia and Estonia visit *Kaale* religious meetings in Finland. This way new transnational networks are created and sustained for supporting the mission and fellow believers, but it also creates relations between believer Roma from different countries and groups (see also Roht-Yilmaz 2020: 102–103).

During the fieldwork¹⁴ my main interlocutors who have contributed to this work are a married couple, Aleksi and Tuulikki, who are the most active *Kaale* missionaries in Latvian mission in the Vidzeme region, and Pentecostal

Roma women Maria and Christy, who organise home prayer meetings in the twin-town Valga/Valka at the Estonian and Latvian border. Maria, who converted to Pentecostalism already in the 1990s, invited pastor Yuri to the meetings hoping by doing this to 'bring faith' to the Estonian and Latvian Roma. Maria used to meet for home prayer meetings with Sandra, who also converted after meeting Finnish *Kaale* missionaries during 1990s, and Mary, the wife of Gregory, the former Pentecostal Romani pastor from Estonia. Helen, a young woman in her 30s has a Pentecostal family background from her childhood. Nadya also used to attend Gregory's church meetings in Estonia and currently goes to a Pentecostal church across the border in Latvia and cooperates actively with the *Kaale* missionaries, while Lydia, who also converted during the 1990s, goes to a Baptist church. All these people know each other, but due to complicated family histories or conflicts may not be constantly in close communication, although they are aware of each others' activities.

The local Pentecostal mission in Estonia among the Roma in Estonia started after the former pastor Gregory, speaker of Latvian Romani¹⁵, and his non-Roma wife Mary, who had taken up Romani customs and learned the language, both first converted to Baptism after meeting the Finnish *Kaale* missionaries who had come to Estonia during the 1990s. Later Gregory established a Pentecostal church in his hometown in South Estonia and was active in doing missionary work in Estonia and also in Latvia close to the Estonian border. The Roma in Estonia who had converted before 2012, when Gregory stopped working as a pastor due to alcohol use and therefore not adhering anymore to the necessary moral code, have been in contact with him due to his mission work. Pastor Yuri from Riga is of Russian Romani background. He lives in the capital, but used to

pay visits to Valka/Valga to preach among the Roma. Previously, before the economic crisis of 2008, he had a large congregation in Latvia with many Roma members. Although he had converted to Pentecostalism, he now considers himself a non-denominational free church pastor. He has refrained from working with the *Kaale* and has decided to keep a distance from them because he does not find their way of working by conducting mission trips fruitful and does not want to be controlled by the politics of the majority churches that co-operate with the *Kaale*. Deacon Paul, a Rom from Latvia, has started co-work with *Kaale* missionaries again after experiencing some relapses into behaviour considered morally wrong by believers and now organises weekly prayer meetings for the Roma in his hometown in the Vidzeme region of Latvia. The role of pastors and other religious leaders in the Roma community in Estonia and Latvia has proven very important not only in converting people but in helping them remain believers. The Roma or non-Roma pastor's personal charisma often decides whether the believers stay in his church or look for another. It is a common understanding that divine power moves mainly through the charismatic pastors although every born-again believer is capable of embodying the Holy Spirit, as for instance Meyer (2010a) demonstrates in her analysis of Ghanaian Pentecostals. The pastors are regarded to possess charisma that is based on the embodiment of divine power and this leads people to choose the churches according to the pastors so that they could also take part of the workings of the Holy Spirit, be 'filled' with it, and receive protection and blessings. (Meyer 2010a: 753)

Both the Roma and the non-Roma consider it convenient that missionaries from the Roma ethnic group carry out the mission work among the Roma because of the view of the

majority population, who often stereotypically consider the Roma a closed community with different morals, customs, and temperament and therefore more difficult to reach. For instance, a non-Roma Baptist pastor Priit whose sermons Maria used to attend, does not focus his outreach towards the Roma. He explains:

No, we don't work separately with the Roma. For now, it is better to keep the Roma working among themselves, otherwise other members of the congregation will be scared off. (FM: Baptist pastor Priit)

The Pentecostal church that took part in organising the previously described mission events of 2015 and 2016, which were directed towards the Roma due to the co-operation with the Finnish *Kaale* mission, has also been using elements of Jewish religion and culture, for instance the kippah and folk music during these events to accompany the dances performed by the church youth. The church has a partnership with a congregation in Jerusalem, Israel, where the pastor has converted from Judaism and that also uses Jewish elements in the church setting. Deploying cultural elements from the music and clothing of different peoples in the prayer meetings and mission events demonstrates how ethnic distinction becomes a way to overcome ethnic boundaries. Laur Vallikivi (2014: 103) explains how a Baptist mission in the Russian North categorises indigenous groups into natural 'nations' and considers its duty to evangelise them as one unit, at the same time saying that this is in any case a temporary concept that will not matter 'in the end times' when all ethnic differences will be surpassed. 'We are a new nation, the Christians', Roma pastor Yuri from Latvia explains (FM: Yuri). He preaches an overarching identity of being a Christian

instead of concentrating his speeches on different ethnicities, nevertheless he finds it also important to missionise specifically among the Roma. At the same time a theory of the ancestry of Roma as a Biblical nation is circulating both among the believer Roma in Estonia and *Kaale* missionaries (c.f. Thurfjell 2009: 185–186; Carrizo-Reimann 2011). According to these ideas, the Roma are considered not to come from India originally, but are regarded as the descendants of the Elam people of the Bible. The logic behind this connection is that the way the Elam people were scattered around is considered to link them to the Roma people who have similarly dispersed across many countries. These theories of ancestry are heard from preachers and also learned from Youtube videos¹⁶. They are used to legitimise the Roma as believers equal to other nations, furthermore they give the Roma a special role as a chosen people. In this way, emphasising both religious identification and ethnicity becomes a ‘tool’ for the mission. For instance, Christian missionaries in Kyrgyzstan, like the communists previously, intended to disconnect religion and culture; however, by using it as a tool and objectifying and folklorising culture they instead caused the ethnic boundaries to remain intact although they had wished to remove them (Pelkmans 2008: 883). In the case of Estonian and Finnish missionaries who proselytise in Russia among the Finno-Ugric peoples, Vallikivi (2018) demonstrates how the missionaries use ethnic elements to achieve their goals as they possess a view of kinship of the Finno-Ugric peoples based on the relatedness of the Finno-Ugric languages. The missionaries present themselves as promoting safeguarding the language and culture, but when it comes to the animistic beliefs, these are not tolerated as part of the ‘culture’. (Vallikivi 2018: 28–29) In the case of Roma to Roma mission, ethnic elements

are in the service of mission, but more so if the majority church with whom co-operation is organised is already inclined towards the approach of deploying elements from different cultures. The *Kaale* are accommodating their mission to fit the local Roma in the ways they perceive Roma culture/customs and living conditions in Latvia and Estonia, and the local Roma, depending on their approach, can start changing the mission and religious practice into a form that combines ethnic and culturally adapted sensational elements into it.

The *Kaale* work closely together with the Finnish non-Roma missionaries and regard it important to carry out mission work in post-socialist countries in Europe, where they do not consider the majority mission active enough in evangelising among the Roma. The *Kaale* missionaries emphasise ethnicity in their testimonies and talks, but they also preach transnationality and promote ethnically mixed congregations. Pentecostalism’s partial character, it being a ‘part-culture’ as Simon Coleman (2006: 3; 2010: 800; 2015: 284) defines it, means that cultural and religious otherness that will often be causing tensions is always assumed to exist and therefore there is already a readiness to handle it. Another way to explain Pentecostalism is as a kind of dual culture because tensions do not reduce its strength but give life to it (Robbins 2010: 162). The usage of Roma cultural elements in the mission events functions bi-directionally as part of the ideology of the Pentecostal mission. The missionaries use what is considered valuable by the Roma to create a bridge to their faith, and at the same time the usage of Roma cultural elements is also supposed to create more awareness and tolerance towards the Roma people among the majority population. As the missionaries and initiators are also Roma/*Kaale* themselves, the topic of reducing discriminative and stereotypical ideas

about the Roma becomes a part of the mission's message.

KAALE/ROMA TO ROMA MISSION

Most of the Finnish mission group (altogether about 20 people) on the trips to Estonia and Latvia have been *Kaale*, together with a few non-Roma. While the *Kaale* missionaries Alekski and Tuulikki are leading the whole trip and staying for the whole duration of the mission trip including all the preparation for the main events and prework in organising the event, the rest of the group is changing, and stays for shorter periods during the time the help is most needed, usually for the main event. For the *Kaale*, going on mission trips to Estonia and Latvia is a way of being a Pentecostal believer. They are involved in different areas of social engagement such as working with prisoners, working with children, and also doing mission abroad (cf. Roman 2018). For instance, Tuulikki explains that they also take children from an orphanage to spend some time with their family every year. The urge for *Kaale* to missionise is based on the kinship they feel with the Roma in Estonia and Latvia (and in other countries where they do mission work)¹⁷. Although their customs, conflict solving and rules of proper conduct, and their dialect differ from the dialects of the Roma among whom they missionise, they reach out and try to find the shared culture and identity (cf. Roman 2015; 2018; Gripenberg 2019). The *Kaale* reach out via humanitarian aid and missionise among Roma with whom they identify themselves as belonging to the same nation, although to different subgroups. The *Kaale* wish to bring them to faith and a better life in all means. Emphasising Roma culture and traditions as well as the common Romani

identity of the missionaries with the local Roma drives the mission.

Nevertheless, the search for common ethnic identity does not mean that the *Kaale* or Roma missionaries and pastors are always accepted and thus the success of mission has its limitations. The charisma of pastors and missionaries and their ability to create a common identity based on ethnicity and ethnic sub-group belonging and to combine it with being a believer has to be approved by the local Roma. Family and personal relations between persons can determine among whom the mission is conducted and usually the mission expands through family and kin lines. During the mission some doors remain closed to the missionaries as their message is not welcome. In addition, some local believer Roma feel that the *Kaale* missionaries work only with certain kin lines while neglecting others. The local Roma believers constantly evaluate the *Kaale* according to whether they seem to them strong believers or simply interested in material affairs; whether they accept, respect, and value their culture, but at the same time place the identity of believer above other likings and dislikings. Although *Kaale* missionaries are able to support some believer Roma in Estonia and Latvia and convert new ones, sharing ethnic origins, though being an advantage, is not sufficient on its own for starting co-work in mission, as the common Roma identity is not always put in the foreground, and kin and family history is not always overcome by common believer identity.

Entertainment, spending joyous time together, is always part of the mission events. When looking at the flyers for Roma-related mission events, it's obvious that they are advertising religious gatherings; nevertheless informative and entertaining cultural and leisure activities such as concerts, traditional Romani

food preparation, grilling, and parties are also often mentioned. The Finnish *Kaale* have a long history of organising similar events in Finland. With their mission outreach towards Roma in Estonia and Latvia they make use of their experience¹⁸. With years of continuous mission trips lasting several weeks during summers and also shorter visits during winter season and Christmas time, they make alterations and every year also try out slightly new strategies that they think might work in the given conditions that they experience as different from their home country and own community and about which they learn more every year.

As mentioned before, during the mission trips the *Kaale* use translators for communicating both with the majority populations and the local Roma. The Romani dialects used in Finland and in the Baltics differ considerably and *Kaale* have usually limited knowledge of their Romani dialect. Nevertheless, language itself in general is not considered an insurmountable obstacle in spreading the Gospel. When asked in which language they communicated with the Finnish Roma, Lydia explains:

In Finnish, we waved with hands and legs, talked, showed... If God is one for people, then people are able to get along very well. God forgives, gives understanding and comprehension. (FW: Lydia)

The Roma in Estonia and Latvia use two or more languages in their everyday life. In addition to Romani, also Estonian, Latvian, and Russian are often used. For the *Kaale* missionaries the communication is somewhat easier with the Roma in Estonia than with the Roma in Latvia. In case the Roma in Estonia have knowledge of the Estonian language, they tend to learn Finnish quickly enough to be able to communicate with the *Kaale*, as both languages (unlike Latvian)

belong to the Finnic group of the Finno-Ugric or Uralic language family. Nevertheless, during the mission trips the *Kaale* use translators so that Russian becomes the mediating language when speaking with the local Roma in Latvia, and also in some cases in Estonia. In the cases when the *Kaale* can construct a few sentences, this seems to bridge gaps and bring the local Roma closer to them, as the communication becomes more direct and emotionally charged, creating a feeling of togetherness. The *Kaale* sometimes become interested in learning the local Romani dialect. For instance, Reeta was expressing hope to learn more Romani by texting with a converted Latvian Roma woman via social media applications. This attempt to speak Romani seems to be well received also by the local Roma. Nevertheless, the converted local Roma play an important role in mediating the *Kaale* mission through knowledge of the local conditions, customs, and languages. Moreover, in this setting, multilingualism poses a challenge in communicating the message of the mission verbally, also hindering one-to-one communication. Therefore, sensational forms start to play an even greater role in the mission, and, depending on the approach of the pastors and missionaries, can become more culture specific. The usage of Romani in preaching and in music and its role in the sensory forms will be discussed in detail in the next section of the article.

The local Roma also value missionising among their community as part of their way of sustaining and strengthening being a believer. They feel the responsibility and urge to bring their own family but also their 'own people [the Roma] to a life in faith' as they express it. When Gregory was working as a pastor of a small multi-ethnic Pentecostal congregation, he continuously conducted mission trips among the Roma in Estonia and Latvia. The need, and

chance, to raise the self-esteem of the Roma through conversion has been stressed as an important issue both by Gregory and the *Kaale* missionaries. Deacon Paul from Latvia, who himself converted after meeting evangelical Roma in Latvia, sees it as his duty to work with Roma: 'I am happy to be serving my people' (FM: Paul). Pastor Yuri works with both the majority and the Roma, but he explains that it is also good if Roma evangelise among Roma as 'I understand and know how they think' (FM: Yuri). He points out that the pastors from the majority are not well equipped to reach the Roma and might still have negative attitudes towards the Roma and therefore Roma do not feel always welcome in majority churches. Although the believer Roma describe positive experiences in multi-ethnic congregations where they experience equality with other believers, they also speak of encountering negative attitudes in church settings which again encourages religious practice in more intimate and private settings (Roht-Yilmaz 2020: 104). For instance, Helen recounts the experiences of her believer family, explaining how the Roma have encountered different treatment and negative attitudes among *gadze*¹⁹ believers in Estonia:

For us our dances and songs were not allowed, but later we understood that for them their dances and culture were allowed, but they are against ours, it was seen as savage. There were some quite negative attitudes also and not much help. Later they understood that it's better to let us work however we want, using our music and dances on our own. Everyone is saying that we are brothers and sisters [in Christ], but if you look now later more closely then you understand that it is not the case actually, there was still quite different behaviour towards us. (FM: Helen)

This shows that the Roma in Estonia and Latvia wish for a practice of religion that allows cultural traits to be involved both in the worship and in everyday life. Similarly, in the case of Spanish gypsies (see also footnote 10), Manuela Cantón Delgado (2010) points out that they explain the reason behind their churches having a majority of gypsy membership with the argument that the non-Roma are not interested in listening to the gypsy preachers and prefer to preach among themselves, so the gypsies should also keep working among themselves. The gypsies know that the mistrust stems from the long history of persecution and stigma and thus cannot be overcome with the universal message both the *payos* (non-Roma) and gypsies preach. (Cantón Delgado 2010: 263) In Estonia and Latvia there seems to be a similar case as the Roma themselves also find it more fitting that Roma should missionise among Roma even if they attend services at multi-ethnic congregations.

CULTURE IN/AND MISSION

The usage of culture-specific approach in mission affects the way the missionaries are perceived. As mentioned earlier in the article, the *Kaale* missionaries co-operate with the local Pentecostal congregations both in Latvia and Estonia and both Roma and non-Roma are invited to the public mission events and tent meetings. Nevertheless, for achieving the presence of Roma participants in these meetings, the *Kaale* use not only the method of handing out information leaflets on the streets about the tent meetings, but they also visit homes of the local Roma they know of through their already existing contacts among the local believer Roma. For instance, *Kaale* missionaries drove with their van to the remote small towns and villages to visit the homes of believer Roma and potential converts to give them information

about mission events in preparation and to help organise transportation to these events.

The way the *Kaale* conduct their mission trips by visiting peoples' homes fits the local context because it is a more personal approach, and the Roma in this area of Latvia and Estonia live scattered in the scarcely populated countryside and therefore it is not easy nor affordable to reach the towns on regular basis for mission events or church attendance. Gregory and his wife used to travel missionising among the Roma in Estonia and Latvia in a similar manner and pastor Yuri also travelled to Estonia and to the towns in Vidzeme region. This is not strictly practiced only by Roma preachers, currently also a Russian speaking Baptist congregation from Estonia is going on weekly daytrips to preach at Roma homes in Latvia, as this is the best way to reach the small towns. This has had an effect as more recently these Roma families, whom the *Kaale* missionaries also visit, have found ways to travel themselves by car to the church in Estonia for bigger events.

In addition, Gregory's approach on mission trips can be described as a whole family mission—his wife Mary worked with the women and their children aided by music and dance performances. Gregory and Mary considered this kind of gender-separation useful in keeping a morally suitable stance and being better accepted by the Roma. A similar Romani style of working has been noted in Bulgaria where evangelical Roma pastors involve the whole family in the church and mission work; the pastor's wife helps him, the children are musicians, and so on (Slavkova 2014: 64). After Gregory, with his culture-appropriate and culture-specific approach, stopped working as a pastor, the believers have been left to themselves to find ways to practice their faith communally. For instance, Nadya expressed that it was great luck to now have Finnish Roma

coming on mission trips. Now with her husband they either have prayer meetings with extended family members at their home village in South Estonia, or if possible, go to church in Latvia where they have relatives. Maria and Christy attend different church meetings in Estonia according to their second or third language skills, either Estonian or Russian (both of them also speak Latvian).

As Pentecostalism allows and encourages religion to be practiced privately, the local Roma in Valka/Valga often meet at private homes in addition to or instead of a church setting. Additionally, Maria invited pastor Yuri from Latvia so that they would include more non-converted Roma to the prayer meetings. Private meetings at homes or at the premises of a congregation together with a pastor or more active believers leading the gatherings is a common way for Roma in the border-town to practice their faith. After trying different churches, this kind of meetings have proven important for Maria and Christy as a way to reach possible Roma converts in a more private and fitting environment. This allows meeting in small believer Roma circles, while not completely excluding trusted (believer) *gadze*. Both at homes among themselves or with *Kaale* or Ukrainian Roma missionaries, a nice table is always set with food and tea as a part of the hospitality that is required towards guests by Romani customs, as traditionally Roma from other towns should be welcomed at home and offered food and tea and coffee. The *Kaale* missionaries have also noticed which kind of food the local Roma prefer to serve at their gatherings and try to provide that at the mission events. A few families of believer Roma who have moved (after having contact with *Kaale* and converting) from Estonia to Finland with their families in search of better work possibilities continue meetings also at homes in addition to

the churches they attend. In the case of Estonia and Latvia, private prayer meetings and Bible readings fit the dynamics of communication among the Roma community.²⁰

Mary, who kept actively working among the women even after her husband stopped working as a pastor, organised Bible reading and prayer meetings at Romani homes. She expressed the importance of allowing the Roma to have differences in worship and cultural traits valued by the Roma. She thought that their attitudes and religiosity should be taken into account during the mission, otherwise it would push them away. 'The Baptist preachers who come to us say wearing jewellery is wrong, but I don't think it's right, faith is in the heart, God does not look at the jewellery' (FM: Monica), a young believer woman from a Latvian village explains while showing her golden pendant necklace. For instance, the *Kaale* women's traditionally worn jewellery includes large pendant (hoop) earrings, and these are also worn by believers. Traditionally golden jewellery has been important for the Roma in Estonia and Latvia. This is understood by both the Roma and *Kaale* missionaries as an important custom and not regarded as conflicting with being a believer. Another believer is sceptical of Baptists saying that they are limited by rules, while God is free.

Mary explained that although believer *Kaale* refrain from dancing, as with conversion it comes to be considered immoral, it is important to allow it for the local Roma. Her daughter, for instance, values it as part of her Romani culture. Similarly, Sanita, whose parents are also converted and whose higher education in a vocational school was financially supported by *Kaale* believers, explains how at home they often dance in Romani style with her mother and sisters. For Mary, who has changed her view over the course of time while being a believer,

the interpretation of dancing depends on the relevance it has for the self-identification of the Roma:

When a person dances from their heart to express joy there is nothing bad in it. It comes naturally to Roma. And this is not dancing for money in some restaurant or bar. If a person has gone deep in the faith, then he/she understands it. (FM: Mary)

Her view separates different stages of faith. A person who is considered to have gone 'deep in the faith' is seen as capable of differentiating between moral and immoral actions. This view in the given situation legitimises Roma cultural expressions without prohibiting parts of it because they conflict with the moral rules that guide the life of believers. What is appropriate for Roma and for believer Roma may change in different Roma groups as they try to find a suitable way to balance the Roma cultural traits and the Pentecostal morality rules (c.f. Slavkova 2007).

This kind of approach that aims to combine the ethnic elements of a local culture into the religious practice is, for instance, noted by Art Leete (2013) in the case of Komi evangelical Christians in the Russian Federation. The ideology of the evangelical Komi church, with Baptist and Pentecostal influences, combines elements that are considered important for Komi identity, using both Orthodox and Komi elements in their practice, and brings under discussion the need of using the Bible in Komi language (Leete 2013: 270). The Roma in Estonia and Latvia usually read the Bible in their second language, with which they are most comfortable. Translations of the Bible into *Romanes*²¹ are neither widespread nor used in practice. Gregory used Romani (*Lotfitka* dialect) when preaching among the Roma, in addition

to using majority languages when appropriate, for example while reading the Bible.

Another example of combining Roma cultural elements into mission work is that Gregory translated songs into Romani from Russian, Finnish, and Estonian, and in some songs changed the tempo to a faster pace. He also wrote new songs and allowed his daughter to initiate using traditional Romani dance in the mission. Pastor Yuri, on the other hand, lacks the whole family approach and does not stress the ethnicity, specialness, nor difference of the Roma when preaching. Neither did he use Romani in preaching, explaining the choice by saying that his *Xaladytka* dialect differs from the *Lotfitka* dialect and cannot be understood easily, therefore he uses Russian as the mediating language. After a couple of years of visits, pastor Yuri has stopped coming to the prayer meetings organised by Maria, who explains that he was not well received by the possible new converts because they did not like how he sang, adding that they described it Russian. During the event he spoke in Russian and did not manage to express himself correctly when speaking in Romani, which caused some confusion and laughs. In this case the pastor's prestige was questioned (see also Roht-Yilmaz 2020: 107) and the sensational forms together with the religious aesthetics were not accepted nor shared by the possible new converts.

THE WORKINGS OF HOLY SPIRIT IN CONVERSION AND IN RELIGIOUS LIFE

Sandra, a Roma woman originally from Estonia, now living in Finland, has accompanied the Finnish Roma mission during the tent meeting in Eastern Latvia. She advised the *Kaale* to use more songs in local Romani dialects, explaining that when she and other Roma in her town in

Estonia first met the *Kaale*, the devotional songs were what touched their hearts. This shows the importance placed on the workings of the divine (Holy Spirit) and also on the usage of culturally appropriate versions of religious practice.²² Affect is supposed to bridge divides of class and race (Bialecki 2015: 15) and in a similar way Barbara Rose Lange (2003: 106) explains that a non-Roma couple in Hungary switched to a mixed congregation with Roma where they experienced that the feeling of the presence of the Holy Spirit was greater, rendering differences within the group unimportant as all of them shared a common experience of divine energy. Therefore, the difference can be used to create a feeling of unity. In the current case, Sandra considers songs in her Romani dialect more effective in helping the Roma experience the Holy Spirit's work as these made the affective energy flow.

After visiting believer relatives of Maria for a home prayer meeting led by pastor Yuri in a town in Vidzeme region, we drove back to Estonia by car and Maria, Christy, and Mary were singing devotional songs in *Romanes* and Russian during the trip. These same songs that had been either modified, translated, or written by Gregory continue to play an important role in the creation of a shared and cherished way for experiencing the presence of God through the Holy Spirit.²³ These had not been sung during the prayer meeting where the songs had been in Russian and not in Romani style. Believers also listen to devotional songs (in Romani) sung by Roma from different countries²⁴ on Youtube. For instance, in Bulgaria Romani churches are creating albums of Christian music with songs in Romani which are supposed to both inspire and help convey messages to the Roma (Slavkova 2014: 65; see also Slavkova 2012). The devotional songs are part of experiencing God's presence, as Luhrmann (2004) describes

in her fieldwork site, a Vineyard church where songs are performed to God, not just about God, and people are emotionally moved to tears while longing for personally experiencing God through His speech in their prayers and in His text (Luhmann 2004: 523).

Pentecostal faith is personal and the presence of God needs to be intimately felt. To distance the faith from that of the not born-again Christians, pastor Yuri calls them 'armchair Christians' and explains to the gathered Roma that faith must show in the believer's life: 'Just believing is not enough. You need to believe with your heart. The prayer must be lived in your heart. Learn with your hearts, then you'll have the strength from the Holy Spirit.' (FW: Yuri) This resembles what Meyer (2010a) writes about Pentecostal/charismatic churches which place a great emphasis on sensing the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in a direct and immediate way. Nevertheless, to experience the sensations of divine presence is not unexpected but based on the existence of a shared religious aesthetic, thanks to which one can access and recognise the Holy Spirit (Meyer 2010a: 742). For experiencing the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in one's life the believers themselves have to actively work so that they can feel being 'seized' by it. To reach this state of being filled with the Holy Spirit the believer needs to accept the shared techniques as natural for themselves (Meyer 2010a: 753). Attempting to convert others by persuading them to accept 'faith in the heart' can be rather intense, in some cases resembling even an experience of a fortune teller offering her service to a potential customer on the street (c.f. Roht-Yilmaz 2019). Though, in a case where the potential new convert does not wish to convert, as in the case of Christy's reluctant husband at a prayer meeting, pastor Yuri reasoned that not feeling it in their heart

is acceptable. The person attending the prayer meetings is considered already in the process of conversion (see also Harding 1987: 178–179) so after accepting that they do not testify at that very moment, they are expected to open themselves to the Holy Spirit with time. For Pentecostals, prophecy, speaking in tongues, and faith healing, together with divine revelation from the Holy Spirit, all play an important part in being a believer (Coleman 2004: 25) and to receive God's gifts, the person him or herself must be open to the process. Often they need to make an effort to achieve this openness, for example when allowing others to pray for them for healing (Bialecki 2018: 5).

The notion of love takes up an important place in the narration of conversion stories by the Roma in Estonia and Latvia and is described as transcending borders between different communities (Roht-Yilmaz 2020: 98–99). The image of the heart is constantly used in the testimonies narrated by the converted Roma. Robbins et al. (2014: 585) have demonstrated how conversion in Amazonia and Melanesia transforms the inner self, which in Christian terms is expressed as the heart and which then becomes the centre of the conceptualisation of selfhood. In addition to changes in understanding selfhood, understanding of the body has also changed. In her conversion story Diana from Latvia, compares her life before and after conversion using the image of heart:

Peace entered my heart, it was easier to live, there was no trouble. The door of their heart is closed. We need to pray that hearts would open to God. We were explained that Jesus suffered everything for us and in my heart, I started feeling so weird. My heart was empty. I had good husband, children, work, I was in England then, and

then I started praying. Having faith in your heart is the main thing, reading is not that important. (FM: Diana)

The image of a heart is often used to refer to the Holy Spirit working in believers. For instance, expressions such as: ‘With whole heart God allows himself to be found.’ (FW) ‘I started going to the church that is right for my heart.’ (FW) are used. Pastor Yuri explains:

Holy Spirit works inside of us, prayer can’t be just memorised. The Holy Spirit works through people, otherwise we don’t have the strength. Listen with your hearts, the soul is the ear of the heart. (FW: Yuri)

Christy expresses how what she felt in her heart became known to the pastor:

There was a church ensemble and they were singing so nicely, and in my heart, I was thinking that I also want to sing a solo number and then afterwards the pastor told: Christy, you too will get your solo! (FW: Christy)

In a similar way Maria explains the importance of the experience of hearing God’s voice as guiding her life:

It is good if God talks to you. Once I woke up from sleep and heard God say: ‘First do God’s things, after that other things.’ I thought that every prayer is helping, when I had been thinking not to go to the meeting. (FW: Maria)

As Lydia explains: ‘God is my bosom buddy’ (Estonian *Jumal on mu südame sõber*—word to word translation from Estonian ‘God is my heart’s friend’). For such experience one should

be able to experience the Holy Spirit working. Luhrmann (2004: 518) explains that for U.S. evangelicals God is remarkably intimate, personal, and not without majesty, but he has become a pal. Similarly, for Lydia God has come to be regarded as a close friend, someone she can confide in also when communication with people does not provide similar support. Attention should be paid to how God, the Holy Spirit, and also the Devil become present in believers’ personal experiences, as Meyer (2010b) notes. This is often explained as happening due to sensing the touch of God that takes place through the performance of the preacher, the words, gestures, images, and especially through music which all have a strong physical effect on the believers (Meyer 2010b: 125). Christy explains how she was yearning to have an experience of hearing God’s voice and feeling his touch:

I was waiting to be touched by Holy Spirit (...) A few years ago, the Holy Spirit came. You have to ask for gifts of the Holy Spirit. God will give you what he thinks is right for you. I was sleeping and suddenly saw a light, I heard a voice saying: ‘Do God’s work then everything will be fine. I will come soon’, I had waited for long time to be touched by Holy Spirit. (FW: Christy)

Recently in 2019 there were Roma women missionaries visiting Roma in Estonia and Latvia and previously in 2016 a home prayer meeting with Ukrainian Roma missionaries was held in a small quiet village of less than 200 habitants in South Estonia. In the garden of the small farm house of Nadya and her husband, speakers were set up for music and a rich table of food and non-alcoholic drinks was set. Later during the event, talks were given by the Ukrainian Roma in Russian. It was

mostly Roma attending the meeting together with a few Latvians and a Jewish woman from the Latvian Pentecostal congregation through which the visit of Ukrainian missionaries was organized. At the event, in which around ten people took part, praying turned into a very emotional experience for the participants who were invited to come and pray together while the missionaries held their hands on them. The healing session that took place in open air concluded in the fainting and falling on the ground of all the participants, one after another. Nadya was surprised that even her husband had been so strongly emotionally affected by the Ukrainian Roma preachers, who were regarded as having great power by several participants.

In Pentecostalism the body is not subordinated to achieve higher spirituality, instead it becomes the place where the 'power' of God, by which the believer is overcome, is manifested, as Andrew Singleton (2011) explains. In this way the believer's body becomes a 'highly visible locus of spirituality' (Singleton 2011: 381–382). The bodily sensations can be even more intense and more complexly constructed than hearing God's voice, and the congregants in Luhrmann's (2004) study described emotionally overpowering experiences with the loss of bodily control as God is considered to have taken over their bodies. Such emotional experiences are very distinguishable between the experiences of everyday life and the bodily sensations that people experience as God's presence. (Luhrmann 2004: 524–525) These kinds of experiences are sought after also by Roma believers in Estonia and Latvia. Meyer (2010b) points out that in worship the bodily involvement of the believers is important; they are expected to participate with the whole body, for instance standing up, sitting, lifting one hand, praying in tongues, singing, listening etc., are all ways to create a high degree of bodily

involvement which can generate overwhelming religious experiences (Meyer 2010b: 122–123).

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

In order to spread the global and transnational message of salvation, the Pentecostal mission among the Roma in Estonia and Latvia stresses ethnicity and difference between peoples (although not so much between Roma subgroups). An emphasis on ethnicity plays an important role in the mission among the Roma in Estonia and Latvia, as the mission itself has an ethnic drive. It is mostly the *Kaale* and Roma who are interested in making the effort to missionise among the Roma and see it as their religious duty to missionise among their own ethnic group to bring them to 'a better life in God'. The *Kaale* and Roma missionaries also have a chance to be received better during first encounters than the *gadze* missionaries, as they emphasize common identity, even if they belong to another subgroup, and try to fit their mission to the practical conditions of where the Roma live. The ethnic solidarity, the lack of distrust, contempt and discrimination, and the creation of a mutual Romani identity strengthened by the shared belonging to the community of believers functions when both sides show interest in finding the common points, whether it is Romani language, traditions, or similar history. The contacts with *Kaale* missionaries allow for new bonds and connections to be formed based on shared believer and Roma identities. Although the mission aims for the equality of different peoples and the overarching identity of being a believer, this does not mean that the ethnic boundaries between Roma and non-Roma disappear in church settings, nor that all customs and traditions are excluded from the mission. This distinction can cause tensions between the ethnic and religious identities but

can also support both of these. Depending on the missionaries and pastors, their background and belonging, the view on allowing and promoting cultural elements in the mission and religious practice varies, as there is no one fixed set of guidelines given by Pentecostalism how this issue should be attended to. The non-Roma are less interested in allowing cultural elements, especially if they regard Roma and their cultural practices and traditions as more sinful. The visible and openly advertised cultural elements (such as horses, dances, songs in Romani language, traditional food) in the mission are supposed to attract the attention of possible Roma converts and to create more tolerance towards the Roma among the non-Roma. In addition, it can aid in reinforcing the idea of Roma as a special, chosen people from Biblical times. So, here by stressing the ethnicity and legend of ancestry, the Roma as a nation becomes more strongly a part of the community of Pentecostals and stressing ethnicity serves as a tool for the mission to reach different peoples (c.f. Pelkmans 2008; Vallikivi 2014; 2018).

In the current case of the *Kaale* to Roma mission there are several levels of accommodating Pentecostal teachings to the local needs. The Finnish *Kaale* have created a suitable way of being believer Roma for themselves and they are presenting this version of how one can be both Roma and a believer in their mission. With time they try more and more to adapt their work to the conditions of the Roma in Estonia and Latvia as their believer community has already created their own views on the proper version of being a Roma believer and accommodating Pentecostalism to a fitting form for themselves. The local Roma believers are constantly (re-)evaluating what is accepted for them as believer Roma. In a similar way, the *Kaale* keep evaluating the level of the depth of faith of the local Roma according to their

understanding of the change that the believer should have experienced in their life after conversion. This kind of constant evaluation of oneself and others is also an inherent part of being a believer. As Coleman (2015: 285) explains, borders between Pentecostal and local worldviews are not only constantly constructed and reconstructed by believers and it is not only the previous worldview of the converted that changes, but Pentecostalism itself is also reconstituted by this contact with the 'other'. Ethnicity can be regarded here as the other for Pentecostalism in the way that it is in constant use for testing and drawing the boundaries for a proper way of being a Pentecostal believer by the Roma/*Kaale* individuals.

In practice, it can be observed that the level of incorporation of cultural elements and practices (songs in local Romani dialect, dances etc) into the mission has a more long-lasting effect. Missionaries, either *Kaale* or local, who address this need appropriately with the values, practical tools, and sensational forms they offer also have more chance of success. These needs are often better understood by local active and experienced believers and pastors. Thus, for *Kaale* including local believers in their mission proves an asset for a more accurate culture-specific approach that seems to be better received by the Roma, who then feel that they can include their cultural practices in religious practice which allows them to become believers while not having to deny parts of their culture that they consider compatible with being a believer.

In cases where the local Roma feel that they are discriminated against and that they are not accepted as equals or not given enough freedom in the majority church, Pentecostalism provides them the possibility to gather according to need in new groups and meet privately at homes. This has led to the development of

a more group-specific religion, allowing them to practice religion in the way they consider the most appropriate (e.g. whole-family mission, gender separation). The incorporation of cultural elements (Romani dance, songs in *Romanes* and in a 'Romani style') into religious practice becomes more likely when there is a Romani pastor or missionary who initiates and supports it, or if the convert finds enough freedom in their multi-ethnic congregation to create a personally fitting way of practicing their faith.

Feeling the close relationship to God and the presence of Holy Spirit is achieved by a combination of preaching the Gospel and creating the conditions for bodily felt emotional experiences. Pentecostalism ritualises daily life and its ritual forms such as song, healing, and praise, which are all connected with the body (Robbins 2010: 165). This becomes also important in the mission, as for reaching the new converts also takes place through the 'aesthetics of persuasion' (Meyer 2010a) especially as the given multilingual context, with translations between several languages and cultural contexts, also contributes to the sensational forms becoming as, or even more, important than the usage of the word itself. The effect of ethnic elements and a culture-specific approach (e.g. prayer meetings with gospel songs in 'Romani style' and with the usage of *Romanes*, meeting in smaller circles at homes in addition to church setting, and keeping gender separation when needed, having Roma pastors and missionaries with proper authority and oratory skills) in the mission becomes more apparent when these are also incorporated into the practice of faith and become a part of the sensational forms that allow the believers to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit. These conditions can be seen as contributing to the rise of an energy during the prayers which Bialecki (2015) calls affect. Although affect works to

bridge divides in Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity (Bialecki 2015: 15) and music helps to create a divine energy that makes differences unimportant (Lange 2003: 106), it seems that for the affective energy to rise, culture-specific forms of worship, for example songs in Romani language and style, are an aiding condition. The ethnic elements in religious practice and a culture-specific approach, not being only a 'tool' for the mission, but also a way to create a personally fitting way of being a Roma believer, appear to bring more Roma to conversion and support them in their efforts to stay believers.

NOTES

- 1 *Kaale* is the endonym of the Finnish Roma and as the people I encountered generally referred to themselves as *Kaalet* (when speaking Finnish), less as *romanit* or *mustalaiset* (exonym in Finnish) therefore it is used throughout the text.
- 2 This research is conducted among the Roma who live in Estonia and in the Vidzeme region of Latvia, near the Estonian border. The Roma living in these areas are connected through family ties and live on both sides of the state border. The other regions of Latvia have not been included in this research.
- 3 All names used in the article are pseudonyms in order to protect the anonymity of the participants in the research.
- 4 A photo by Nikolay Bessonov of the musical group Svenko from Russia was used on the flyer. The picture features a romanticised depiction of the members of the group playing instruments and dancing in traditional clothing easily recognisable by both non-Roma and Roma as typical Roma attire from Russia. The members of the group have a background of working at the Romen theatre in Moscow, which, together with well-known and loved Soviet films depicting the Roma, were popularising Roma music and culture in the Soviet Union. Theatre Romen was also well known among the non-Roma and Roma in Latvia while among the latter there is no such long tradition of public music performance for the non-Roma audiences as in Russia (Tihovska 2017: 241–242).

- 5 The Finnish Free Romani Mission (*Suomen Vapaa Romanilähetys* in Finnish) was established in 1964 in cooperation between three Finnish free churches, the Pentecostal, the Baptist and the Free Church and to connect it to the international Romani revival founded by Le Cossec in France, its name later was changed to Life and Light (*Elämä ja Valo* in Finnish) (Thurfjell 2013: 42). The Life and Light association has, since 2015, also a sub-organisation Life and Light Latvia (*Dzīvība un gaisma* in Latvian).
- 6 *Mariklya* is a flat cake cooked in boiling water.
- 7 The born-again converts referred to themselves mostly as believers, sometimes also as Christians.
- 8 Both Latvia and Estonia have a large Russian-speaking minority group comprising of different nationalities (the Russians being the largest group) most of whom migrated from different Soviet Socialist Republics during the years after Estonia and Latvia were annexed by the Soviet Union.
- 9 Reforms of the Second Vatican Council from the 1960s allow revisions of liturgical books that are made for legitimate variations and adaptations to fit different groups regions and peoples (Eller 2014: 292), c.f. Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (1963).
- 10 In general, the word Roma (plural) is used throughout the text and the word ‘G/gypsies’ is used in cases the cited authors have used it in their work to denote the groups they are studying. The Roma in Estonia and Latvia call themselves *Roma*, although they also use exonyms (*mustlased, čigāni, цыгане*) in everyday language while speaking in Estonian, Latvian, or Russian.
- 11 Missionising by the *Kaale* among the Roma in Estonia begun with the opening of the borders of Estonia prior to the collapse of Soviet Union and was most active during the 1990s and 2000s. For the last decades the mission has been more active in Latvia, but lately has moved back towards Estonia as well (Roht-Yilmaz 2020: 94).
- 12 The fall of the Soviet Union released a greater flow of global Christianity to Ukraine, where already a great number of Baptist and Pentecostal believers existed during the Soviet Union (Wanner 2004: 732). A similar trend can be noticed among the Roma, as it is estimated that at least one quarter of the Roma population in Ukraine are ‘new Christians’ (Marushiakova and Popov 2014: 50).
- 13 The *Kaale* have co-operated mostly with local Pentecostal churches but visit both Pentecostal and Baptist believers. Most of the local Roma in the research see Pentecostal church as their church, although at times they may also attend Baptist churches, switching between churches according how charismatic they find the pastor and for practical reasons such as reachability of the church. The gifts of Holy Spirit are valued as part of their Pentecostal church by those who have converted to Pentecostalism, but due to practical reasons have attended Baptist churches. The Baptist churches can be less concentrated on accepting the cultural traits and differences of the Roma and are viewed as having more rules that do not comply with Romani traditions.
- 14 The ethnographic data for this article has been collected episodically during the years 2015–2019. The fieldwork consisted of participant observation at prayer meetings at homes and churches and at mission events and during their preparation in Estonia and in Vidzeme region close to Estonian border and also of ethnographic semi-structured interviews with converted and non-converted Roma.
- 15 The main dialects of Romani or *Romanes* spoken in Estonia and Latvia are *Lotfika* (so-called Latvian Romani) and *Xaladytka* (so-called Russian Romani) (Tenser and Granqvist 2015; Ross 2016).
- 16 For instance, a Youtube video called Semitic Jewish Roma Gypsies are the Lost tribes of Israel (2015: online).
- 17 Roman (2018) describes how *Kaale* missionaries conduct missionary work among Roma in Romania.
- 18 Similar mission events called Romani Days are organised in Finland for missionising among fellow *Kaale* (c.f. Roman 2015).
- 19 *Gadze* (plural) is the word in *Lotfika* dialect of Romani language to denote the non-Roma people, while by Finnish *Kaale* the word *Kaajet* (plural) is used.
- 20 The private practice of religion is also common among Roma in Slovakia, as Podolinská (2014: 93) has demonstrated, and is one of the reasons why Pentecostalism suits their previous religiosity, the way they practiced Catholic faith.
- 21 Bible translated into Baltic Romani language by Valdemar Kalinin was published in 2014. Kalinin was born in Belarus in 1946 and is a Romani poet, writer and translator. The Bible is distributed by the translator. The dialect used in the translation is mostly understandable to *Lotfika* speakers, but still they prefer to read in their second

language (Estonian, Latvian or Russian) as they say they are more used to the vocabulary in these languages.

- 22 Ethnomusicologist Barbara Rose Lange (2003: 7) discusses the music styles, including Roma music used in a Pentecostal church in Hungary and also notes that many were attracted to the religion first because of the songs. Slavkova (2012:10) explains that organising evangelical concerts in Gypsy churches in Bulgaria is an essential tool in missionising and also it allows the existing contacts and relationships between Gypsy churchgoers to be confirmed. On the role of religious music in identity building among Finnish *Kaale* see Åberg (2014).
- 23 For instance, in the regions of Malorussia and Novorussian in Ukraine a religious Roma organization Čačimo has organised translations of gospel hymns into different dialects of *Romanes* and new evangelical hymns that are using melodies of famous Gypsy songs have been also created (Marushiakova and Popov 2014: 48–49)
- 24 For instance, songs by Romanian Roma singer Isaura Gheorghiu.
- i Sources: FM = Fieldwork materials. Fieldwork materials, in the form fieldwork notes gathered during participant observation and semi-structured interviews, were collected during the years 2015–2019. Materials are kept in the author's personal collection.

REFERENCES

- Abraham, Sarah** 2015. *Semitic Jewish Roma Gypsies are the Lost Tribes of Israel*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HejHgsFM1kU> <accessed 29 February 2020>
- Benovska-Sabkova, Milena and Velislav Altanov** 2009. Evangelical Conversion Among the Roma in Bulgaria: Between Capsulation and Globalization. In Andrea Boscoboinik and François Ruegg (eds). *Transitions: Nouvelles identités rom en Europe centrale & orientale* 48 (2). Geneva: Université de Genève.
- Bialecki, Jon** 2014. Does God Exist in Methodological Atheism? On Tanya Lurhmann's When God Talks Back and Bruno Latour. *Anthropology of Consciousness* 25 (1): 32–52. <https://doi.org/10.1111/anoc.12017>.
- Bialecki, Jon** 2015. Affect: Intensities and Energies in the Charismatic Language, Embodiment, and Genre of a North American Movement. In Simon Coleman and Rosalind I. J. Hackett (eds). *The Anthropology of Global Pentecostalism and Evangelicalism*. New York: New York University Press. <https://doi.org/10.18574/nyu/9780814772591.003.0005>.
- Bialecki, Jon** 2018. Character as Gift and Erasure. *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale* 26 (2): 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-8676.12477>.
- Cannell, Fenella** 2006. Introduction. *The Anthropology of Christianity*. Durham: Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822388159>.
- Cantón Delgado, Manuela** 2010. Gypsy Pentecostalism, Ethnopolitical Uses and Construction of Belonging in the South of Spain. *Social Compass* 57 (2): 253–267. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0037768610362418>.
- Cantón Delgado, Manuela** 2014. Stigma and Ethno-Genesis Amongst Pentecostal Gitanos in Spain. In David Thurffell and Adrian Marsh (eds). *Romani Pentecostalism: Gypsies and Charismatic Christianity*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Carrizo-Reimann, Agustina** 2011. The Forgotten Children of Abraham: Iglesia Evangelica Misionera Biblica Rom of Buenos Aires. *Romani Studies* 21 (2): 161–176. <https://doi.org/10.3828/rs.2011.7>.
- Coleman, Simon** 2004. *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity: Spreading the Gospel of Prosperity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Coleman, Simon** 2006. Studying 'Global' Pentecostalism Tensions, Representations and Opportunities. *PentecoStudies* 5 (1): 1–17.
- Coleman, Simon** 2010. An Anthropological Apologetics. *South Atlantic Quarterly* 109 (4): 791–810. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-2010-017>.
- Coleman, Simon** 2015. Ethics, Ethnography, and 'Repugnant' Christianity. *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 5 (2): 275–300. <https://doi.org/10.14318/hau5.2.016>.
- Csordas, Thomas J.** 1999. Embodiment as a Paradigm for Anthropology. *Ethos* 18(1): 5–47. <https://doi.org/10.1525/eth.1990.18.1.02a00010>.

- Gay y Blasco, Paloma** 2012. Gender and Pentecostalism among the Gitanos of Madrid: Combining approaches. *Romani Studies* 5, 22(1): 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.3828/rs.2012.1>.
- Eller, Jack David** 2014. *Introducing Anthropology of Religion* (2nd Edition). London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315740157>.
- Gripenberg, Lidia** 2019. *They Look Me in the Eyes and I Smile and then We Know: The Interaction of Finnish Roma and East European Roma in Finland*. PhD Thesis. University of Helsinki. <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-951-51-3395-3>.
- Harding, Susan F.** 1987. Convicted by the Holy Spirit: The Rhetoric of Fundamental Baptist Conversion. *American Ethnologist* 14 (1): 167–181. <https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.1987.14.1.02a00100>.
- Kalinin, Valdemar** (Transl) 2014. *Біблія на Балтійско Рومانі чиб: Романёс. [Biblija pe Baltiiko Romani čib: Romanés]*. [Bible in Baltic Romani]. Belarus.
- Kwiek, Gregor Dufunia** 2014. The Synchronisation of Traditions in Lovari, Kelderash and Kalo Pentecostalism. In David Thurffell and Adrian Marsh (eds). *Romani Pentecostalism: Gypsies and Charismatic Christianity*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Lange, Barbara Rose** 2003. *Holy Brotherhood: Romani Music in a Hungarian Pentecostal Church*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Laurent, Régis** 2014. On the Genesis of Gypsy Pentecostalism in Brittany. In David Thurffell and Adrian Marsh (eds). *Romani Pentecostalism: Gypsies and Charismatic Christianity*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Leete, Art [Лэте, Арт]** 2013. «Бог говорит на моем родном языке»: этническая стратегия Коми церкви. *Антропологический форум* 18: 256–275.
- Luhrmann, Tanya M.** 2004 Metakinesis: How God becomes Intimate in Contemporary U.S. Christianity. *American Anthropologist* 106 (3): 518–528. <https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.2004.106.3.518>.
- Luhrmann, Tanya M.** 2012. *When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship with God*. New York: Vintage Books. <https://doi.org/10.24260/alalbab.v1i1.16>.
- Luhrmann, Tanya M.** 2018. The Faith Frame: Or, Belief is Easy, Faith is Hard. *Contemporary Pragmatism* 15: 302–318. <https://doi.org/10.1163/18758185-01503003>.
- Lutt, Roman** 2006. Eesti mustlaste organisatsioonid, nende eesmärgid ja tegevus. *Eesti mustlaste haridus*. https://estblul-ervl.weebly.com/uploads/2/7/9/4/27949701/eesti_mustlaste_haridus.pdf <accessed 29 February 2020>
- Lutz, Cathrine A. and Abu-Lughod, Lila** 1990. Introduction. In Catherine A. Lutz, Lila Abu-Lughod (eds). *Language and the Politics of Emotion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Paris: Ed. de la Maison des sciences de l'homme.
- Mena, Ignacio R.** 2008. El Ascetismo Pentecostal Gitano y la Gestión Corporal: una aproximación desde la antropología del cuerpo. *Athena Digital* 13: 1–26.
- Marsh, Adrian R. and Thurffell, David** 2014. Introduction. In David Thurffell and Adrian Marsh (eds). *Romani Pentecostalism: Gypsies and Charismatic Christianity*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang. <https://doi.org/10.3726/978-3-653-03921-4>.
- Marushiakova, Elena and Vesselin Popov** 2014. The Gypsy Religious Revival Movement: 'New Churches' in the Territories of the Former Soviet Union. In David Thurffell and Adrian Marsh (eds). *Romani Pentecostalism: Gypsies and Charismatic Christianity*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Marushiakova Elena and Vesselin Popov** 2016. *Gypsies in Central Asia and the Caucasus*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-41057-9>.
- Meyer, Birgit** 2010a. Aesthetics of Persuasion: Global Christianity and Pentecostalism's Sensational Forms. *South Atlantic Quarterly* 109 (4): 741–763. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-2010-015>.
- Meyer, Birgit** 2010b. Pentecostalism and Globalization. In Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, Andre F. Droogers, and Cornelis van der Laan (eds). *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Orta, Andrew** 2004. *Catechizing Culture: Missionaries, Aymara, and the 'New Evangelization'*. Columbia University Press. <https://doi.org/10.7312/orta13068>.

- Peel, J.D.Y.** 2009. Postsocialism, Postcolonialism, Pentecostalism. In Mathijs Pelkmans (ed.) *Conversion After Socialism: Disruptions, Modernisms and Technologies of Faith in the Former Soviet Union*. Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- Pelkmans, Mathijs** 2007. 'Culture' as a Tool and an Obstacle: Missionary Encounters in Post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 13 (4): 881–899. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9655.2007.00462.x>.
- Podolinská, Tatiana** 2014. Questioning the Theory of Deprivation: Pentecostal Roma in Slovakia. In David Thurfjell and Adrian Marsh (eds). *Romani Pentecostalism: Gypsies and charismatic Christianity*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Pope Paul VI** 1963. *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium Solemnly Promulgated by His Holiness Pope Paul VI on December 4, 1963. Norms for Adapting the Liturgy to the Culture and Traditions of Peoples*. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat_ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum_concilium_en.html <accessed 29 February 2020>
- Ries, Johannes** 2010. Romany/Gypsy Church or People of God? The Dynamics of Pentecostal Mission and Romany/Gypsy Ethnicity Management. In Michael Stewart and Márton Rövid (eds). *Multi-Disciplinary Approaches to Romany Studies: Selected Papers from Participants of Central European University's Summer Courses 2007–2009*. Budapest: Central European University Press.
- Ries, Johannes** 2014. The Cultural Dynamics of Romani/Gypsy Ethnicity and Pentecostal Christianity. In David Thurfjell and Adrian Marsh (eds), *Romani Pentecostalism: Gypsies and Charismatic Christianity*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Robbins, Joel** 2004. The Globalization of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33: 117–143. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.32.061002.093421>.
- Robbins, Joel** 2010. Anthropology of Religion. In Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, Andre F. Droogers, and Cornelis van der Laan (eds). *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Robbins, Joel, Bambi B. Schieffelin and Aparecida Vilaça** 2014. Evangelical Conversion and the Transformation of the Self in Amazonia and Melanesia: Christianity and the Revival of Anthropological Comparison. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 56 (3): 559–590. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417514000255>.
- Roht-Yilmaz, Eva-Liisa** 2019. "Fortune Telling is a Curse on your Children": conversion, fortune Telling, and beliefs in magic among the Roma women in Estonia. *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics* 13 (1): 79–114.
- Roht-Yilmaz, Eva-Liisa** 2020. A Constant Border-Crossing: conversion and evangelical charismatic Christian identity among the Roma in Estonia and Latvia. *Romani Studies* 30 (1): 89–113.
- Roman, Raluca Bianca** 2014. Trans-National Migration and the Issue of 'Ethnic' Solidarity: Finnish Roma Elite and Eastern European Roma Migrants in Finland. *Ethnicities* 14: 793–810. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796814542179>.
- Roman, Raluca Bianca** 2015. Suomen Romanit ja Helluntailaisuus. *Idäntutkimus* 3: 18–28.
- Roman, Raluca Bianca** 2017. Body Limited: Belief and (Trans)formations of the Body in a Pentecostal Roma Community. *Annual Review of the Sociology of Religion*. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004344181_015.
- Roman, Raluca Bianca** 2018. Roma Mobility, Beyond Migration: Religious Humanitarianism and Transnational Roma Missionary Work as De-constructions of Migration. *Intersections. East European Journal of Society and Politics* 4 (2): 37–56. <https://doi.org/10.17356/ieejsp.v4i2.380>.
- Ross, Anette** 2016. Estonian Lotfitka Romani and its Contact Languages. *Philologia Estonica Tallinnensis* 1: 154–174. <https://doi.org/10.22601/PET.2016.01.09>.
- Singleton, Andrew** 2011. The Rise and Fall of the Pentecostals: The Role and Significance of the Body in Pentecostal Spirituality. *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis* 23: 381–399. <https://doi.org/10.30674/scripta.67396>.

- Slavkova, Magdalena** 2014. 'Prestige' and Identity Construction Amongst Pentecostal Gypsies in Bulgaria. In David Thurfjell and Adrian Marsh (eds). *Romani Pentecostalism: Gypsies and Charismatic Christianity*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Slavkova, Magdalena** 2007. Evangelical Gypsies in Bulgaria: Way of Life and Performance of Identity. *Romani Studies* 17 (2): 205–246.
<https://doi.org/10.3828/rs.2007.10>.
- Slavkova, Magdalena** 2012. 'Singing and Dancing in the Spirit': Gypsy Pentecostal Music and Musicians. *Axis Mundi (Journal of the Slovakian Association for the Study of Religions)* 2: 36–46.
- Stromberg, Peter G.** 1993. *Language and Self-Transformation: A Study of the Christian Conversion Narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tenser, Anton and Kimmo Granqvist** 2015. Romaniikielen Pohjoismurteiden Variaatio. *Idäntutkimus* 3: 3–17.
- Thurfjell, David** 2013. *Faith and Revivalism in a Nordic Romani Community: Pentecostalism Amongst the Kaale Roma of Sweden and Finland*. London: I.B. Tauris. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9780755692750>.
- Thurfjell, David** 2009. Pentecostalism and the Roma Cultural Compatibility and Ethno-Genesis. In David Westerlund (ed.) *Global Pentecostalism: Encounters with Other Religious Traditions*. London: I.B. Tauris.
<https://doi.org/10.5040/9780755625192.ch-009>.
- Tihovska, Ieva** 2017. *Īsta Čigānu Mūzikā: Autentiskums un Etniskums Latvijas Čigānu (Romu) Mūzikā*. Latvijas Universitātes Literatūras, Folkloras un Makslas Institūts.
- Vallikivi, Laur** 2014. On the Edge of Space and Time: Evangelical Missionaries in the Tundra of Arctic Russia. *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics* 8 (2): 95–120.
- Vallikivi, Laur** 2018. Des Finno-Uugriens Convertissent des Finno-ougriens: les missions protestantes parmi les groupes parlant des langues apparentées. *Etudes finno-ougriennes* 49–50: 163–241.
- Wanner, Christine** 2004. Missionaries of Faith and Culture: Evangelical Encounters in Ukraine. *Slavic Review* 63 (4): 732–55.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/1520418>.
- Åberg, Kai** 2014. The Gospel Songs of the Finnish Kaale: Religious Music and Identity in Finland. In David Thurfjell and Adrian Marsh (eds). *Romani Pentecostalism: Gypsies and Charismatic Christianity*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

EVA-LIISA ROHT-YILMAZ
PhD CANDIDATE
DEPARTMENT OF ETHNOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF TARTU
evaliisaroht@gmail.com