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# A Parody of the Church Service in Seventeenth-Century Finland

## Reconstructing Popular Religion on the Basis of Court Records

BY MIIA KUHA (JYVÄSKYLÄ)

In the summer of 1668, the district court of Sulkava in Eastern Finland was presented with a suspected mockery of the Holy Communion. On the evening December 26, the second day of Christmas, a feast had taken place at Olli Holopainen's household in the village of Telataipale. Against Lutheran doctrine this day was still celebrated as St Stephen's day among the peasantry. In the course of these festivities, a participant had acted as a clergyman in a carnivalesque parody of the church service while others adopted the roles of churchgoers. Rumours of this peculiar party spread quickly as leftovers of the so-called Host were served the day after. People started talking about "the Congregation of Telataipale" and it does not seem that the organizers were concerned by their notoriety, in fact, they even added fuel to the fire. It did not take long, however, before these rumors reached the rural police chief,<sup>1</sup> and the participants in the parody ended up before the bishop and finally in the courtroom.<sup>2</sup>

This article discusses the use of rural district court records in the study of popular religion, focusing on the above-mentioned case of the popular celebration of St Stephen's Day in seventeenth-century Eastern Finland as an example. In the past few decades, historians have developed an interest in the study of early modern popular religion, and the study of ritual practice has been one of the main approaches to the topic. The celebration of holy days, however, has largely been omitted from historical research. In Finland, for example, the topic has been studied in more detail mainly in the fields of ethnology and folklore.<sup>3</sup> Historical studies of popular religious festivals in early modern Europe have usually been based on different types of church records.<sup>4</sup> In Finland, a part of the Swedish kingdom in the early modern era, it is possible to use secular judicial material that has been preserved in exceptional abundance. Through district court records it is also possible to glean information on the celebration of religious festivals outside the church.<sup>5</sup> This article focuses on methodological issues in using secular court records in the study of popular religion, especially on the question of how an individual or even

exceptional case can be used in this kind of research. I will also suggest possible interpretations of the case in terms of popular religion.

In early modern Europe, most people experienced religion through various rites of passage and the annual cycle of ritual practice constituted by the liturgical year. A large number of popular rituals existed alongside official celebrations.<sup>6</sup> Even in the uniformly Lutheran Sweden, people carried on celebrating abolished holidays and venerating certain saints after the Reformation.<sup>7</sup> In the most remote areas, some holy days that dated back even to the pre-Christian era were still celebrated. Saints' commemoration days often also contained elements of ancient, pre-Christian beliefs.<sup>8</sup>

The celebration of St Stephen's day in seventeenth-century Finland exemplifies the multi-layered religious festival that had absorbed elements from many different periods. In the Medieval ecclesiastical year, the day had been celebrated as both one of the holidays of Christmas and to preserve the memory of the first martyr of the Christian Church, St Stephen. After the Reformation, the worship of saints came under attack from Lutheran reformers.<sup>9</sup> December 26 was thus only officially celebrated as the second day of Christmas. On this day, St Stephen was remembered in the churches, but he was not supposed to be worshipped.<sup>10</sup> The saint's day, however, preserved its position as a part of the ritual year in popular tradition. In Finland, St Stephen's day was, and still is, a part of the celebration of Christmas. Traditionally, Christmas day was celebrated silently, but on the following day, the atmosphere changed. The popular celebration of the day included a sleigh ride and a ceremonial feast that was often consumed by men in the stable, reflecting the origin of St Stephen's day in an ancient celebration of horses and horsemen. An abundant use of beer was central to the sacrificial celebration, and magical rituals were performed to ensure the future success of horses in the household.<sup>11</sup> December 26 is still today known as "Stephen's day" (*tapaninpäivä*) in Finland, and the celebration includes some ancient traditions such as a sleigh ride and a dance.

Popular religious culture in the peripheral areas of the Swedish kingdom provides an interesting comparison to other parts of Europe. When the Reformation brought major changes to religious practices all over Europe, it went almost unnoticed in the liturgical life of remote parishes in Eastern and Northern Finland. Before the Reformation, there were only three churches in the sparsely populated but vast Eastern Finnish province of Savo (ca. 43,000 km<sup>2</sup>). For the most remote households, their "local" church could be up to two hundred kilometers away. Although new churches were built in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, ongoing expansion of settlement made it difficult for state and church authorities to control the inhabitants of Savo. Mobility was also a feature of slash-and-burn farming, the main source of livelihood in the area.<sup>12</sup> In addition, the settlement consisted of small villages and single households, often some distance from each other and the nearest church. The village of Telataipale, where the parodic church service took place, consisted of only three households. Most of the land belonging to the village was owned by cavalry estate owner and son of the former rural police chief, Olli Holopainen. In the following, we will take a closer look at what happened in Holopainen's household on St Stephen's day 1667 as documented in the district court records.

There were at least ten people at the house of Olli Holopainen spending the evening of the second Christmas day in 1667. The company included both members of the household and invited guests. The mistress of the house seems to have been the only woman present. Baked fish and bread were served with plenty of beer and spirits.<sup>13</sup> The drinking was so heavy that some of the guests passed out before the celebration was over. In the course of the evening, the participants took part in a ritual play that parodied the church service. This re-enactment started with the ringing of the "bell". The farm-hand of Holopainen's household, Samuel Skumpe, who was named the bell-ringer, hit a fish trap hanging on the ceiling with two sticks. Hereafter the service was led by a cavalryman, Suni Mikkonen, who played the part of the clergyman. First Mikkonen "called God's people for confession" and the guests of the party fell on their knees. He gave them absolution one by one.

The imitation of communion was the central element of the parody. Suni Mikkonen broke and shared the bread amongst the men saying that they would eat the pieces of the bread as if it was the Host. Beer and spirits served as communion wine. One of the guests asked for more to drink because he thought himself to be a greater sinner than the others. This request evidently appealed to the idea that the effect of communion was mechanical and receiving the sacrament would lead straight to God's blessing.<sup>14</sup> This was a common way of thinking but it might also have been a suitable target for mockery in this context.

To close the parody, Suni Mikkonen put on a cloak symbolizing the cassock of the clergyman and started quoting the Bible and singing hymns. In the trial, the farm-hand Samuel Skumpe witnessed that Suni Mikkonen had sung and cited the Gospel "as he should". The participants of the celebration explained that the mistress of the house had let Mikkonen sing only godly hymns and say things he had heard from the clergy. Thus the mistress, who did not take part in the parody, had controlled the party of the drunken men to a certain extent, apparently fearing retribution from authorities or God. The clergy actively spread the idea that God would punish the whole community if even one individual sinned against him. Unlike the mistress, the master of the house Olli Holopainen did not have a significant role in the events as he was one of those who passed out at an early stage.

Rumors of the party started when leftover bread was served the next day as the "leftover of the Host". People began to talk about "the congregation of Telataipale" referring to the village where the events took place. The importance of rumours in bringing the case to court and as a source of information for the official prosecutors should be emphasized. Many witness accounts are based on rumours that also contradict each other in many details, making it difficult to reconstruct the events. It is clear, however, that people talked about that evening for a long time. Rumours could clearly spread even though the population did not live in close proximity because these inhabitants were very mobile in their daily routines and also met at the church and the court.<sup>15</sup>

The longevity of this story of "the congregation of Telataipale" reflects that the parody operated in the luminal area between the accepted and the forbidden or the sacred and profane. Mockery took place both at the expense of the participants and by the participants at the expense of the local community. Joking at the expense of the church service and the clergy was tempting but dangerous, and this parody confused both community and officials.<sup>16</sup> Some people were probably afraid that the event would invoke God's wrath, but there were also those who did not seem to care about potential divine consequences. The court seems to have been most concerned with discovering whether or not the participants had abused actual sacramental bread or whether they had otherwise insulted the Eucharist which would have been a criminal act. The clergy and the jury discussed the matter and decided that they could not assume that the men had used actual sacramental bread. It was not possible to drop the charges, however, because they had "in their drunkenness made fun of God's word and talked about the Host". Juridically, this accusation came close to blasphemy, which was not only a serious religious offence but also a capital crime.<sup>17</sup>

The case was obviously difficult, and finally the judge made the decision to turn the case over to the chapter, ceasing investigation by the secular court. It was not common for a case to be transferred from the secular court to ecclesiastical authorities, but it could happen in cases where it was difficult to prove if a crime had been committed. Unfortunately, the records of the chapter have not survived. The two main figures, Suni Mikkonen and Samuel Skumpe, however, turn up again as prisoners in the castle of Vyborg in the summer of 1669. It is likely that they were brought here for the hearing of the chapter as it was situated in the same town. The men were kept in the prison for almost four months but in August 1669 they were discharged.<sup>18</sup> Being kept in investigative custody was probably tantamount to corporal punishment but, apart from this, it seems that there were no serious consequences for any of the participants of the parody.

The case described above is quite exceptional: it has no equivalent in my source material and I have not come across anything similar in either Finnish or Swedish research on popular religious practice. Although it provides plenty of information about how people spent holy days in the seventeenth century, it also poses questions about generalization. Should it be treated as an individual case or can it tell us something about broader patterns of popular culture and religion in seventeenth-century Finland?

First of all, the social standing of the participants seems to have been somewhat higher than the majority of Savo's inhabitants. Olli Holopainen's cavalry estate was a relatively wealthy household with extensive landholdings and the capability to furnish a horse and rider to war.<sup>19</sup> The old master, who still lived in the household, was the former rural police chief of the old fiscal territory of Telalahti, which made him a member of the local peasant elite. In the first half of the seventeenth century, the rural police chiefs of the area, all of peasant origin, usually came from Telalahti. After the parish of Sulkava was founded, however, it was no longer convenient to recruit these important local authorities from the area situated approximately 30 kilometers from the centre of the parish. The village of Sulkava was small and similar to all the others, but after the parish was founded, it became the core that gathered people to the church and the court.<sup>20</sup>

It seems that Telataipale and the other villages of Telalahti had previously formed a locus of power but, after the mid-seventeenth century, this was displaced. The pastor and the rural police chief, who cooperated in implementing church discipline and other means of control, were usually the most important local officials in the rural areas. In this context, it might be possible that the idea of "the congregation of Telataipale" was not only a joke but an actual attempt at resistance by a community attempting to retrieve lost authority. To draw more certain conclusions, it would be

necessary to study the community in more detail but it is likely that the struggle for local authority triggered the events of Telataipale.<sup>21</sup>

The relationship between the festive revellers and the church should be considered further. In the seventeenth-century Sweden the law ordained that people had to attend church every Sunday although, in practice, this ideal was hardly attained. Most people had to travel a long way to the nearest church, and necessary agricultural work often prevented people from embarking on a journey that could take a day or two. It was thus common to attend church only on the most important holidays of the year, such as Christmas and Easter.<sup>22</sup> The inhabitants of Telataipale were able to use the waterways or travel to the church over the frozen lake, which was easier than travelling by land at a time when roads were either poor or non-existent. The journey, however, was long and often difficult in tough weather conditions.<sup>23</sup> On the basis of this case, we can probably assume that the inhabitants of Telataipale attended church fairly regularly, but that was not the case for the entire parish. It is likely that the participants in the parody were more familiar with church ceremonies and doctrines than most of the other commoners. They were probably more educated than average peasants since many of them came from old office-holding families. Knowledge of the basics of Christian doctrine was poor in most of the province, and a great majority of the peasants were illiterate.<sup>24</sup>

It thus seems that these revellers differed from the other peasants to a certain extent. Yet, as Carlo Ginzburg writes of Menocchio, "[even] a limited case - - can be representative". On one hand, it can show the boundaries of the thought of the majority, and on the other, it can still offer information on a topic like popular culture that is often very hard to find in the sources. After all, an individual, or a group of individuals, was only able to act within the framework of a common peasant culture.<sup>25</sup>

The parody of Telataipale allows us to think about the way seventeenth-century peasants understood and received the church service. On the basis of the case, people seemed to think that confession, absolution, communion and the reading of the Bible formed the most important parts of the ceremony. The communion seems to have been considered the single most important ritual in the church service. The comments of participants reveal that the ritual effects were perceived to be mechanical and derive straight from the action. In other words, eating the sacramental bread and drinking the wine would straight lead to God's blessing and the forgiveness of sin.<sup>26</sup> The Host was considered to be a powerful tool that could be used in magical rituals, indicating the special nature of these sacramental elements in popular religious thought. It was thought that the sacred power of the consecrated host could be called upon to invoke

physical effects, such as cure from illness or protection against storms. People believed that this kind of effect could be produced not only by performing rituals using the sacramental elements, but also by participating in the communion ceremony. It was believed, for example, that taking communion on New Year's Day was a way of ensuring divine protection and material success for the following year.<sup>27</sup>

The case of Telataipale also shows that ritual plays and parodies were a part of the popular celebration attached to church festivals in early modern Finland, although this kind of behavior has not usually been associated with the Lutheran parts of Northern Europe. These ritual plays were not religious rituals and they could even parody the cult of the church.<sup>28</sup> People were familiar with holy texts and the course of the divine service, and were thus able to use the texts and rituals of the church in multiple and ambiguous ways.<sup>29</sup> In Telataipale, divine service was re-lived by repeating concrete rituals: even the text of the Bible and hymns were used. The peasants probably did not experience the imitation as a religious ritual, but it shows that they had learned to know the course of the church ceremony and listened to what the clergyman had said. It is interesting, however, that the sermon, that was the high point of the Lutheran service, is not mentioned at all in the description of the parody. There are many possible reasons for this aside from an assumption that the peasantry did not regard the sermon as equally important with the other parts of the service.<sup>30</sup> It might have simply been too difficult to imitate. In the event that a sermon, or a mock sermon, actually took place, it could have been considered too dangerous to even mention in the court.<sup>31</sup>

The parodic play of the church service can be described as carnivalesque, which Peter Burke uses as a general term describing common popular rituals linked to the major festivals of the year. Popular festivals were occasions for eating, drinking, laughter and disorder. One of the central themes in popular festivals all over Europe was the idea of the "world upside down", which meant that the hierarchical roles of everyday life were suspended or turned around.<sup>32</sup> This is what happened also in Telataipale, when the cavalryman Suni Mikkonen took on the role of the clergyman. It is interesting that a cavalryman played the most important part in the parody, since St Stephen's day was traditionally a day for horses and horsemen.<sup>33</sup> In a cavalry estate, horses were an important part of the prosperity of the whole household. The celebration might thus have been linked to the material success of the household which may evidence continuity of the traditional content of the St Stephen's day celebration.

In conclusion, the court case from the parish of Sulkava in 1668 has bequeathed a unique record that offers a lot of information on popular religious festivals, popular conceptions of church ceremonies and the popular knowledge of the Christian doctrine. As we have seen, participants in the

St Stephen's day celebration cannot be regarded as average peasants, since they stood out from the majority by wealth and education. Most of the other commoners would probably not have had the same knowledge of the church service or an equal capability of using the texts and rituals of the church as the leaders at Telataipale. The case, however, also reflects the attitudes of the rest of the community. Some parishioners seem to have internalized the teachings of their Lutheran clergy about God's wrath, but many, including the main actors, did not seem to fear for the divine punishment propagated by the clergy. It also seems that even the main actors understood the parts of the church service in a different way than the clergy intended.

The case thus shows that lay people lived in contact with their local church but they had the capacity to make their own interpretations of the church service. They could also make comment on the power of the clergy and other authorities by diminishing it in a carnivalesque manner. We can, however, see that the church played an important role in the life of the people of Sulkava, and when the authority of the church was so obviously attacked it caused confusion throughout the community. All in all, the court case dealing with the ambiguous celebration offers a powerful example of the usability of court records in the study of popular religion.

#### Annotations

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- 1 Rural police chief or *nimismies* (Sw. länsman) was an official of the crown and a central authority at the local level. Each parish was supposed to have at least one rural police chief. Veijo Saloheimo: Savon historia II: 2 – Savo suurvallan valjaissa 1617–1721, Kuopio: Savon Säätiö 1990, p. 31–32.
- 2 The visitation records have not survived, but the course of events can be reconstructed with the help of court records. The National Archives, Helsinki: Pien-Savon tuomiokunnan renovoidut tuomiokirjat [Transcribed court records of the Pien-Savo jurisdiction]; KOa1: 113–119, District Court at Sulkava 6.–7.5.1668. The record of the case is available in a digitalized form in the Digital Archive at <http://digi.narc.fi/digi/view.ka?kuid=3870837>.
- 3 E. g. Kustaa Vilkkuna: Vuotuinen ajantieto – Vanhoista merkkipäivistä sekä kansanomaisesta talous- ja sääkalenterista enteeseen, Helsinki: Otava 1983 (1950).
- 4 See e. g. Ronald Hutton: The Rise and Fall of Merry England – The Ritual Year 1400–1700, Oxford – New York: Oxford



- University Press 1994; Muriel C. McClendon: *A Moveable Feast – Saint George’s Day Celebrations and Religious Change in Early Modern England*, in *The Journal of British Studies*, 38, 1 (1999), p. 1–27; Margo Todd: *Profane Pastimes and the Reformed Community – The Persistence of Popular Festivities in Early Modern Scotland*, in *The Journal of British Studies*, 39, 2 (2000), p. 123–156. On the celebration of holy days in the kingdom of Sweden, see Göran Malmstedt: *Helgdagsreduktionen – Övergången från ett medeltida till ett modernt år i Sverige 1500–1800*, Göteborg: Historiska institutionen, Göteborgs universitet 1994.
- 5 The usability of judicial material in the study of early modern popular culture and religion has been demonstrated in the classic studies of Carlo Ginzburg, e.g. *The Cheese and the Worms – the Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press 1992 (1976).
  - 6 R. W. Scribner: *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany*, London and Ronceverte: The Hambledon Press 1987, p. 18. See also Peter Burke: *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, Aldershot: Scolar Press 1994 (1978); Edward Muir: *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge University Press 1999 (1997).
  - 7 In the kingdom of Sweden, the Lutheran confession was adopted in 1527 and finally established in 1593. After that, all Catholic practices and other religious deviations were strictly forbidden. Kauko Pirinen: *Suomen kirkon historia 1 – Keskiaika ja uskonpuhdistuksen aika*, Porvoo: WSOY 1991; Pentti Laasonen: *Suomen kirkon historia 2 – Vuodet 1593–1808*, Porvoo: WSOY 1991.
  - 8 On the folklore in Savo, see Anna-Leena Siikala: *Myytit, riitit ja tietäjän toimet*, in Riitta Räsänen (ed.): *Savo ja sen kansa*, Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura [SKS] 2008. On the continuity of the veneration of saints in Sweden, see Malmstedt 1994, p. 66–67, 76–79, 88–94, and 145–148.
  - 9 Malmstedt 1994, p. 21–24, 57, 59–60.
  - 10 There were altogether four holy days that formed the celebration of Christmas in the Swedish kingdom. The Church codes of the sixteenth and seventeenth century don’t mention St Stephen’s day. The Church Order of 1571 prescribes that “Christmas with its holidays” is to be celebrated as one of the festivals of Christ. The Church Law of 1686 decrees that “the days of Christmas” are to be sanctified. Sven Kjollerström (ed.): *Den svenska kyrkoordningen 1571*, Lund: Håkan Ohlssons Förlag 1971, pp. 107–109; Lahja-Irene Hellemaa, Anja Jussila, Martti Parvio (eds.): *Kircko-Laki ja Ordningi 1686*, Helsinki: SKS 1986, Chapter XIV, § 1.
  - 11 K. Vilks 1983, p. 345–346.
  - 12 On the history of Savo in the era of the settlement, see Kauko Pirinen: *Savon historia II: 1 – Rajamaakunta asutusliikkeen aikakautena 1534–1617*, Pieksämäki: Kustannuskiila 1982, and in Sweden’s age of power, see Saloheimo 1990. On the earliest churches in Savo, see also Markus Hiekkänen: *Suomen keskiajan kirkot*, Helsinki: SKS 2007, p. 534–535.
  - 13 In the province of Savo, fishing was an important means of livelihood, and eating fish was very common because of the many lakes. Saloheimo 1990, p. 177–191.
  - 14 The peasants in Northern Karelia were sometimes discontented with the sacrament if the amount of wine given by the minister was considered inadequate. Pentti Laasonen: *Pohjois-Karjalan luterilainen kirkollinen kansankulttuuri Ruotsin vallan aikana*, Helsinki: Suomen kirkkohistoriallinen seura 1967, p. 262.
  - 15 Rumors were a part of controlling moral behavior in an early modern community. They were closely connected to honor, and becoming the target of a rumor brought one’s reputation into question. Through the case in question it would be possible to study the rumors themselves, but since this is not the focus of the article it will not be examined further here. On rumors in early modern Sweden, see Piia Einonen: *Poliittiset areenat ja toimintatavat – Tukholman porvaristo vallan käyttäjänä ja vallankäytön kohteena n. 1592–1644*, Helsinki: SKS 2005, p. 221–236.
  - 16 Cp. Kustaa H. J. Vilks: *Katse menneisyyden ihmiseen – Valta ja aineettomat elinolot 1500–1850*, Helsinki: SKS 2010, p. 131, 151.
  - 17 Blasphemy is an utterance or an action that consciously or clearly expresses disregard of something considered holy. On blasphemy as a crime in early modern Sweden, see Soili-Maria Olli: *Visioner av världen – Hädelse och djävulspakt i justitie-revisionen 1680–1789*, Umeå: Institutionen för historiska studier, Umeå universitet 2007. See also Susanne Hehenberger’s contribution in this volume.
  - 18 The National Archives, Helsinki: *Accounts of the County of Vyborg and Savonlinna [Läänintilit], tositekirja [TK] 1669: 8663*.
  - 19 A farm that armed a horse and rider to war got a tax relief from the state. Horses were the most valuable domestic animals and it was usually possible only for wealthier houses to own several horses. Saloheimo 1990, p. 55–57, 244–250.
  - 20 Paavo Seppänen: *Sulkavan historia I – Sulkava vuoteen 1860*, Sulkava: Sulkavan kunta 1999, p. 235, 254–256, 301.
  - 21 Humor could be a way of expressing discontent to the present situation and protesting against authorities. See K. H. J. Vilks 2010, p. 103.
  - 22 Miia Kuha: “Jumalan sanan ylenkatsojat” – Rahvaan kirkossakäynti Savossa vuosina 1660–1710, in *J@rgonia*, Vol. 10, No. 19 (2012), p. 1–18. <http://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:jyu-201203211473>
  - 23 Seppänen 1999, p. 346–347.
  - 24 Esko M. Laine & Tuija Laine: *Kirkollinen kansanopetus*, in Jussi Hanska, Kirsi Vainio-Korhonen (Eds.): *Huoneentaulun maailma – Kasvatus ja koulutus Suomessa keskiajalta 1860-luvulle*, Helsinki: SKS 2010, p. 264–283.

- 25 Ginzburg 1992 (1976), p. xx–xxii.
- 26 On the meanings of communion in popular religion, see Mikko Juva: Suomen kansan uskonnollisuus 1600- ja 1700-luvulla – Eräitä kehityslinjoja, in Suomen kirkkohistoriallisen seuran vuosikirja 43–44 (1953–1954), p. 32–47; Göran Malmstedt: Bondetro och kyrkoro – Religiös mentalitet i stormaktstidens Sverige, Lund: Nordic Academic Press 2002, p. 134–139; David Warren Sabean: Popular Culture and Village Discourse in Early Modern Germany, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1984, p. 37–60.
- 27 Kuha 2012, p. 10–12; Malmstedt 2002, p. 143–145; Scribner 1987, p. 11. The Church Law of 1686 stated that the leftovers of the sacramental elements were to be kept safe and guarded to avoid their use in magical rituals. Kircko-Laki ja Ordningi 1686, chapter XI, § X.
- 28 Mihail Bahtin: François Rabelais – Keskiajan ja renessanssin nauru, Helsinki: Taifuuni 1995 (1965), p. 7–9.
- 29 K. H. J. Vilkkuna 2010, p. 131.
- 30 Cp. Malmstedt 2002, p. 161–162. Malmstedt has argued that the Lutheran clergy probably succeeded in teaching the peasants that the sermon was an important part of the church service. However, the parishioners did not necessarily find it important to actually listen to the sermon but only to be present at the church when the pastor was preaching.
- 31 For mock sermons, see e.g. Burke 1994, p. 185.
- 32 The term ‘carnavalesque’ derives from the Carnival, which was one of the most important popular festivals of the year in the Catholic areas of Europe. The celebration of the Carnival had the weakest importance in northern Europe, but other festivals could perform the same function and share the same characteristics. Burke 1994, p. 185–199. See also Bahtin 1995 (1965), p. 11–13.
- 33 In Finland, St Stephen was actually considered to be a protector of horses even though he did not possess this quality in the European tradition. It was a part of the strategy of the Catholic Church to apply elements of local tradition when trying to evangelize new areas. Thus, in Finland, St Stephen was presented as a protector of horses to transform the pagan celebration of horses into a festival of a Catholic saint. K. Vilkkuna 1983, p. 347–348.

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