



UDC 008(930.85):910.26:902/904:7.045+74.01/09(141.5)

DOI: 10.63009/cac/1.2024.21

Serhii Tsarenko*

PhD in Architecture, Associate Professor
National Academy of Culture and Arts Management
01015, 9 Lavrska Str., Kyiv, Ukraine
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4395-6390>

Modeling the paths of ethno-political traditions and building cultural routes by means of ethnodesign and GIS

Abstract. The growing value of distinctive culture in the context of modern global civilisation makes it important to study the possibilities of ethnodesign to identify identity attributes and, at the same time, to search for integration meanings. In this sense, it is of great unifying cultural significance and relevance to identify by means of ethnodesign the sustainable visual features of ethno-political traditions of the past on the paths of their ancient movements, which were often migratory and as of the beginning of the 21st century can be modelled within several modern states with the subsequent construction of relevant international cultural routes by means of geographic information systems. The purpose of this work was to develop a methodology for modeling the paths of movement of ethnopolitical traditions – geospiritual modeling with the approbation of scientific and research possibilities of ethnodesign for the construction of cultural routes with the use of geographical information systems on the example of the location field of the ancient ruthenians, or rus/rug/ros – of the annalistic “rus family” and the ancestors. The author’s methodology of inheritance of culture is applied – a complex of methods for the developing processing of a unique cultural space based on the methods of complex source studies, comparative stylistic analysis and interdisciplinary semantic synthesis according to the general theory of systems. The results of the research were the confirmation of the continental polycentricity of the rus’ ethnopolitical tradition thanks to the clarification of its essential content and the main visual and graphic representation based on archaeological and heraldic artifacts, sacred ethnonymy and onomastics with the identification of the main locations, proposals for the construction of relevant international cultural routes. On this example, the methodological foundations of geospiritual modelling and terminological definitions on ethno-cultural dynamics were formulated, which have scientific novelty, ideological content and practical value for the formation of databases and algorithms in relevant geographic information systems, and in general for international cultural cooperation in this area

Keywords: annalistic “rus family”; cultural generalisations; geospiritual modeling; ethnoculture; religious heraldic symbolism; Rus Field

INTRODUCTION

The intensification of global ideological, semantic, and cultural conflicts since the turn of the 21st century, compounded by civilisational divides, migration trends, and economic crises, underscores the need for comprehensive

scientific exploration of socio-cultural dynamics. This pursuit aims to establish robust cultural and spiritual frameworks essential for global unity. International cultural cooperation, particularly through the creation of

Suggested Citation:

Tsarenko, S. (2024). Modeling the paths of ethno-political traditions and building cultural routes by means of ethnodesign and GIS. *Culture and Contemporaneity*, 26(1), 21-30. doi: 10.63009/cac/1.2024.21.

*Corresponding author



Copyright © The Author(s). This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

cross-border cultural routes for tourism, scientific exchange, and artistic collaboration, presents significant opportunities to achieve these urgent goals.

The significance of this international approach is underscored by pivotal documents such as ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) (2008) and Charter on Cultural Routes and the Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (2008). However, ongoing challenges, highlighted by recent events in Ukraine, persist in their spiritual dimensions, necessitating enduring solutions. Thus, a critical scientific imperative emerges: to identify the essence and geospatial localisation of the oldest ethnopolitical traditions, notably exemplified by conflicts on the Rus Field (the historical forest-steppe region, including the chronicled "OUKRAINE" of the Rus principalities).

The development of the essence of the spiritual content of the acquisition of stable historical traditions – ethnopolitical and corresponding visual traditions – along the paths of their bearers, in particular, on the example of ancient Ruthenian migrations, is so far limited to separate scientific interpretations from archeology and history, such as in special publications from the scientometric bases of France (Gruat *et al.*, 2019), or works on ethnology, linguistics and source studies.

At the beginning of this decade, interesting studies have been published on modeling, in particular, based on geographic information systems (GIS), of historical roads in Asia related to the activities of famous dynasties (Xi *et al.*, 2022). But until now, the cultural presentation of the heritage from the spiritual ethno-political content on certain thematic cultural routes has not been practiced.

Cultural routes of Ukraine, registered by the European Institute of Cultural Routes (Luxembourg), are actually two points of certain routes assigned to Ukrainian members of the relevant association, or one more, the third is actually a structure registered for this activity: historical and cultural complex "Radomysl Castle" (since 2013 as a point in the "Via Regia – cultural route of the council of Europe" network organised in 2009 on the basis of the "Royal Road"); Association for Promotion of Rural Green Tourism Development in Ukraine (since 2010 – as a tourism stakeholder in Kyiv); National Dendrological Park "Sophiiivka" of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (as an individual member from 2022 as part of the "European Route of Historic Gardens"). For comparison with these three positions in Ukraine, there are 645 such route points (or entire cultural routes) in France, 270 in Germany, and 51 in Poland (Database of cultural routes, 2024).

In addition to the above-mentioned scientific and scientific-practical problems of insufficient development of the subject, which is the focus of interest, the problem of "the lack of development in Ukrainian ethnology (in the end, and in all of humanitarianism) of the latest terminological and conceptual apparatus" (Selivachov, 2023).

Branching out into several directions based on the source information – from ethnology, cultural studies and cultural history, historical art studies, historiographical "ruthenics" with a number of auxiliary historical disciplines, including archeology and heraldry, and, actually, the direction of designing cultural routes – this synthesis touches scientific sources from classical historiography from ancient Rus to the latest analytics on issues of research, protection, use and presentation of cultural heritage.

Since the second decade of the 21st century, a new generation of Ukrainian critics of the centuries-old fascination of Ukrainian medievalists with the "Vikings", who unprecedented on the Rus Plain has already appeared in historiographic reviews – those critics who prove the ancient polycentricity of the mainland dynastic movement and the balto-slavic territorial origin of the historically famous dynasty (Kyrlyenko, 2019). After all, until recently, the identification of the rus with the varangians precisely as allegedly scandinavians was the dominant postulate of a significant part of historical science, which used mainly this doctrine, long ago called the "norman theory" or, more precisely, "normanism", which remains, against the background of the centuries-old "sanctification" historiography, oddly enough, is precisely the doctrine that is completely opposite to the texts of ancient Rus chroniclers, who did not attribute the váryags from the rus to the swedes, danes, norwegians, or even goths (and the annals emphasise that the slavic people and the rus people are one whole – "there is one", and the rus ethnic name was adopted for the entire slavic East since the establishment of the dynasty from the elite váryags stratum, i.e. as a sacred polytonym). The doctrine of "normanism" also does not correspond to the foreign primary sources synchronous with the annals, unless one distorts their content in the spirit of the explanations of the Bertin Annals for 838–839 about the khagan of the people of ros as allegedly about "sveon" due to the fact that this khagan at the court of the german emperor were represented by "sveons", who were, in fact, suspected by the germans as spies, and not ambassadors of the khagan, precisely because they themselves did not belong to the ros people. In addition, "sveons" are not swedes at all, because the name "sveons" was an ancient collective name for the inhabitants of the southern Baltic coast since the time of Tacitus. It is important that regardless of the approach to these issues that the researcher takes – whether a specialist historian-medievalist or a researcher of integral phenomena in the system of historical knowledge – the complexity of ethno-cultural relations and the dynamics of ethno-political development in space and time, as well as differences in special literature, in each case testify to the need for careful, factually verified terminological rethinking, especially ethno-political essence and symbolism.

Historical science and the current dramatic geopolitical context (Goncharenko *et al.*, 2024), in which the

mainland' and motherland "rutenika" in Ukraine and beyond, have taken on a tragically fateful sound, prompts fundamental rethinking. From the heritage of Rus, precisely as the state of Kyiv, is realised and inherited by the original spiritual eternity of the ancient Rus Field – the modern forest-steppe Ukraine and the age-old, victorious and tragic external ties of the Motherland, thanks to which historical research (Rychka, 2023) enables a retrospective analysis of the essential values of political culture and aesthetic sensibility of the annalistic "rus family".

Special studies on the analysis of ancient Rus art in those directions that are tangential to this topic highlight the plot and other features of works of religious significance. A thorough illustrated review of the personal signs – the princely "banners" of the Grand Dukes of Kyiv (Nechytajlo, 2019), taking into account their movement through their capitals according to the administrative "rank" of the dynasty, as well as the peculiarities of the "spiritual investment" of the princes in favour of religious centers (Vukovich, 2019) provide a reliable the probability of exactly that worldview paradigm that drove the "rus family" and its ancestors for thousands of years.

The possibility of a geographical connection of movements from ethno-political activity stems from the very fact of grandiose migrations of ancient times, attested by written monuments (in this example – from the activity of the "Rus family", at least, on the Rus plain and in bordering countries) and studied as of 2024 on the basis of databases GIS data on cultural heritage. This system information, the corresponding possibilities of the digital environment become decisive for the construction of thematic cultural routes. Software applications with specialised thematic or industry GIS databases have been tested by researchers from various fields that correspond to the focus and aspects of this work. The coverage in such studies of the nuances of historical ideologies and their semantic reflection in heraldry is a clear example of a methodological approach for ethnodesign.

The purpose of the work is to develop a methodology for modeling the paths of movement of ethnopolitical traditions (geospiritual modeling) with the approbation of the scientific and research possibilities of ethnodesign for the construction of cultural routes using geographic information systems on the example of the location field of the ancient rutenians, or rus/rug/ros – the annalistic "rus family" and his ancestors.

The following work tasks were set: to develop the methodological principles of geospiritual modeling by clarifying the categories of ethnoculture and ethnopolitical tradition in the context of a comparative-stylistic analysis of ethnodesign under the corresponding program of spiritual imagery, with the definition of the essence of the tradition using the example of the "rus family"; to identify the locations of the rus (inherited by Rus) ethnopolitical tradition based on geographically determined data; to

develop proposals for the construction of thematic international cultural routes in the places of concentration and movement of the oldest ethnopolitical (dynastic) traditions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

On the Ukrainian example, the methods of complex source studies and interdisciplinary semantic synthesis were applied to determine the pictorial features of ethnoculture (Polyany-Rus).

From the terminologically verified analysis of materials, it follows that the primary (from genera and tribes) ethnos, in the context of ethnodesign, should be called a genetically related group of people (polyethnicity phenomena in the principle) with a distinctive self-name, religious priorities and the corresponding sacred image – verbal and visual, which distinguishes representatives of this ethnic group from others. Using the method of comprehensive source studies, on the example of sacred art inherited by Ukraine from the Polano-Rus ethnoculture and its elite "Rus family", the conditions of territory development and meaning-making-setting were clarified by analysing archaeological, written, and toponymic data. The author's holistic methodology of cultural inheritance also involved the method of comparative stylistic analysis of sacred artefacts from different countries and epochs, connected by pictorial continuity, which was helped to differentiate by the method of interdisciplinary semantic synthesis to find the figurative content of artefacts described by historical and art historical disciplines.

Methodical and informational capabilities of GIS, relevant software applications serve as tools for determining the locational field of ethnopolitical tradition. Its field is clearly defined by the geographically precise binding of artifacts from interconnected archaeological cultures and dynastic antiquities and oikonyms of a common pictorial program with spiritual semantics. Additional research and special GIS applications will be required for the cultural route of the geospiritual Rus Field proposed by this study, and open data from the Google Earth system and thematic maps from the geospatial information of Ukraine, based on ArcGIS products, were used. At the points of the proposed cultural route from Rodez to Kyiv (or Roden), known from written sources and archaeology, the existing sacred monuments and place names were analysed using the chosen methods. Symbolic, artistically expressive and spiritually significant works were analysed, precisely as belonging to a certain historical tradition of ethno-cultural origin – reasonably follows from the "law of the diapason" formulated by F. Shmit (2023) according to the publication, which recently took shape in the Ukrainian scientific discourse. According to the conclusions of F. Shmit (2023), who with a metaphorical, at first glance, analyticalism in his "History of Art" postulated the soul of the ethnic group as its essential cultural diapason with a unique image-making identity, it is possible to confidently identify the ethno-cultural

belonging of the artistic heritage – especially, sacral and heraldic, of course, if one does not go astray on biased and unappealable labels such as the allegedly exclusively “Germanic” belonging to the *varyags* stratum with a contrived *rus* dissolution and movement within this stratum, although the first phenomenon was stratum, or ethnic-social (*varyags*), and the second was actually ethnic (*rus*).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the comparative and stylistic analysis of artifacts that are semantically and compositionally related and even graphically congruent (the first motif is a woman in labour, “woman-pot”, “woman-tree”, World tree-genealogy, the Great Mother; the second motif is the Sun, solar signs, blacksmith and military symbolism, time and eternity), the unity of the spiritual imagery of solemn and/or heraldic symbols and the corresponding onomastics of dynasties and territories, which according to the finds, as this study has shown, are chronologically localised: in the whole of the Dnieper and especially in the forest-steppe Field – *Rus* Field of both banks of the Dnieper (from Stone Age to *Rus* proper); in the ancient Azov region and Crimea; in ancient Mesopotamia (later Iraq) and in Asia Minor (the kingdom of Urartu, or Van), as well as in the north of Iran and in some locations of the Caucasus region; in the center and north of the Apennine Peninsula, in the historical Roman provinces on the Danube and in Southern Gaul; on the southern and eastern coasts of the Baltic Sea; in *Pidkarpatska Rus* (Transcarpathian region of Ukraine).

The wide chronological and locational coverage of the entire Old World by the so-called sacral motifs of image formation can mean not only and not so much direct inheritance by certain families over thousands of years, but the likelihood of imitation or, much less often, borrowing of the content of archetypes, such as the image of the Sun. But even the borrowing of spiritually important images in ancient times took place exclusively on certain traditional grounds and definitely relied on the aesthetic sympathy of neophytes (or initiates) with the symbols they adopted. In addition, in ancient times, the self-name of the family, especially the name of the dynasty, remained an unchanged central category of spiritual significance. Using the example of the ancient Ruthenians and their distant predecessors, starting from the enigmatic, etymologically variable names-titles of the kings of Urartu – *Rusa/Ursa* – the preservation of the self-name and the associated spiritual (addressed to eternity) symbolism should be recognised taking into account the neighboring linguistic and cultural environment, which has always been polyethnic.

As this study has shown, under ethnoculture, in the context of ethnodesign, it is necessary to mean the original collective geo-spiritual integrity with the original features of the confessional, linguistic and cultural, everyday and artistic positioning of the native land and the positive potential (without denying others and without renouncing

predecessors) of one’s own political culture, combining and modeling methods of information exchange and aesthetic sympathy in the area of their settlement between the indigenous (leading) and other solidarity ethnic groups. According to this paradigm, ethnoculture as an objective unifying phenomenon historically precedes the later formation of a separate nationality as a linguistic identity (for example, modern from the 17th–19th centuries). In this example, it can be noted: the flexible polyanian-*rus* ethnoculture, which on the *Rus* Field modeled the interaction of spiritual worlds on the mainland level – proto-slavic-ruthenian, proto-slavic-gothic, balto-slavic, slavic-russian-alanic, slavic-hungarian and slavic-turkic – became the main source of Ukrainian (cossack-*rus*, according to Samiylo Velychko) self-awareness and national culture of Ukraine and the ancient primary source of traditional (i.e. dynastic) state formation.

Pointing out, for example, the probability of celtic expansion in the area of the Danube “fatherland” of the slavs due to the weakness of the ethno-political organisation of the Danube Slavs and the nature of the Slavic territorial community (Kyrylenko, 2019), it should be borne in mind that the migrating groups of conditional “celts” had their own self-names, and one’s ancestral home can mean the homeland of the ancestors, using the example of the slavs, the homeland of those who did not call themselves slavs yet (properly from the Celtic era). The dynamics of self-awareness is best revealed precisely by the use of folk self-names (and foreign ethnonyms of a given people), which appear as indicators of the renewal of the ethno-cultural situation; therefore, on this example, it is necessary, thanks to the secretary of the gothic king Alan Jordan (6th century), to bear in mind the stages of evolution of the ancestors of the slavs (according to their self-names) from the *veneds* to the *sklavins* and “antes”, while the last word is a greek change of the self-name with a Slavic nasal sound – it is worth reconstructing: these people were probably called **vānts*, and they were called *polyans*, as the chronicle emphasises, after settling in the Pole region (the future Right Bank and Central Ukraine), and there, according to the testimony of the same Jordan, no later 4th century the *rosomones*, i.e. “the people of *ros*”, already lived there.

With regard to the conditional “celts” on the Danube, in the Carpathians, on the Dnieper, in the Southern Baltic of the proto-slavic (i.e., *veneds*’ and “antes”) era, their permanent privileged status in the *polyanians*’ environment as an elite and military stratum – the *varyags* and *kolbyags* of the southern the coast of the Gulf of *Veneds*, or the Baltic Sea, later the ruling family, whose ancestors used the generic self-name *ruthenas* (ruthenians), from *ruth* – *rus*, that is, “field” from the gaulish ruthenian dialect, or “bright place” or “light” in general. Ruthenians in the Gallo-Romance language environment are the same *polyanians* in the Slavic language environment (although in Latin the ruthenians are actually “red” or “ruddy”, and

their belonging to the military dynasties eventually contributed to the widespread use of the root of the family self-name “rus” in quality of a group of multi-meaning homonyms, because on the Rus plain, prince’s warriors, the land of the main domain, and the state in general were called that way). A polyanian is a strong breadwinner, so it is not surprising that they, the ancient rus – the polyanians’ elite – in the Germanic language environment were called rugy (or rogy), i.e. “rye strong”, “strong from rye”. The fact that German chroniclers called princess Olga the “Queen of the Rugs” is sufficient to confirm these ethnonym identities and status-ethnic relations of antiquity (even if to consider the ethnonym “rugs” in the eyes of the Germans as a transfer of the name from one of the ancient German tribes), and the Ukrainian “Pravda Ruska” singled out the ruthenians among the slavs; this chain of “bright” ethnonyms is complemented by the form “ros” from the proto-slavic-iranian or alanic environment, which became common for the greeks (Ρως), and for the hungarians became the name of both ruthenians and slavs in general (Orosz; Oros – widespread surname in Transcarpathia). Prince Olg (Oleg) Vishchy called Kyiv the “Mother of Rus cities” not only and not so much because of Kyiv’s favourable, potentially metropolitan location on a major waterway trade route and, even more so, not because of his personal whim: it was and remains the city of the same polyanians, which were also called the sacred name rus, and last but not least, the same city that was dedicated to one of the most important spiritual symbols for the “rus family”.

Leading ethnopolitical symbolism that reflected religious priorities and contained a heraldic visual core fundamental to the rus dynasties was revealed by the 2008 archaeological discovery of the ruthenian “Heroic Sanctuary of Tourier” with further publications of ongoing research (Gruat *et al.*, 2019). The following facts are interesting: the heraldic symbols carved on the stone slabs of this sanctuary constitute a chronological link that was missing before this discovery by French archaeologists, which preceded the development of the so-called “Sarmatian” or conventional “saltiv” style of “Rurik signs”, which became the source and basic for proto-slavic family symbols (*vǫnds), as well as for the southern branch of the “rus family”; in the same way, there is no doubt that the main religious “masculine” symbol of the dynastic movement is the thunderbolt, or the sign of Perun, clearly depicted on the chest of one of the anthropomorphic steles of the ruthenian sanctuary, along with other solar symbols of these victorious sun worshipers on other steles.

The ancient hydronyms of the main rivers of the Rus Field – between the Dniester and the Dnieper and the Dnieper and the Don – often represent examples related to the above root of the generic self-name of the ruthenians, or to the proto-slavic *vǫ, which are not alien to a number of hydronyms of the south of Western Europe and Transcarpathia (Subcarpathian Rus). This made it possible,

against the background of available data based on written primary sources and/or local history information on religious and heraldic symbols, to model probable locations and probable paths of movement of this ethno-political tradition on the basis of complex source studies, as well as to propose the construction of thematic international cultural routes.

The physical condition of the stele of the “heroic sanctuary” raised from nothingness in 2008, as it was figuratively called by French archaeologists – toppled and crushed several centuries BC (Gruat *et al.*, 2019) – testified to the dramatic struggle of the elites of the Gallic south and the correctness of the conclusions of many researchers, from Professor Serhiy Shelukhin (1864–1938) to Academician Vitaly Sklyarenko (1937–2020), about the migration of the ruthenian elite of “sun worshipers” and “women lovers” under the pressure of irreconcilable hostility of the germans to the more favourable (and related to the ruthenians) proto-slavic environment. The latter was formed in the Danube valley and on the river systems connecting the southern coast of the Baltic, the Carpathians, the Field (Rus Field) between the Dniester and the Dnieper and to the Seversky Donets and the Don, to Taman, and later developed on the Volga–Baltic and Balto–Dniprovsky – “from the Varyags to the Greeks”. The paths of these migrations and river routes, regardless of the chronological framework or stages, can be outlined based on written evidence and archaeological artifacts, in particular, relying on the “female” link of the symbolism of old rus religious heraldry and the corresponding sacred hydronyms or ancient place names associated with coastal routes: the “rus family” carried out their expeditions through river valleys or cabotage along the sea coast (in contrast to scandinavian sailors, who were more oriented towards the open sea, on oceanic expeditions).

For a model created as a geo-spiritual one – addressing eternity according to the identified religious goals, strict chronological frameworks for modeling ancient history are not characteristic, but the complexity of source studies from written evidence, archaeological and toponymic data, semantic and stylistic analysis and the probability of determining the locations of concentrations or bifurcations of the ethnopolitical tradition. The latter is defined as a subsystem of ancestral (dynastic origin) spiritually determined management values of ethnoculture, which moderate power relations in this ethnosocial system.

On the example of the “rus family”, meaningful meanings that were fundamentally important for the dynastic elite are clearly reflected by those “hook-like” heraldic symbols, which were mistakenly included by some researchers of heraldry as “anchors” or “hooks” or “tridents”, which according to evidentiary probability come from “twodents”, and the latter – from ancient prototypes that clearly interpret the silhouette-gestural configuration from the images of the Great Mother of gods and

cities and, accordingly, the image of the God-Bearer people. A vertical “tree trunk” with a bifurcated “fishing rod” at the bottom with highly raised ends (somewhat softer in the version of the Ruthenian shrine of Tourier and more sharply outlined on the personal signs of Svyatoslav Yaroslavich 2nd half of the 11th century or, for example, of Danylo Halytsky of the 12th century (Nechytajlo, 2019) corresponds to both the scheme of the World Tree, or the Heavenly genealogy, and the outline pose of a woman in labour from many versions of the image of Cybele (Kubaby, *Kyj-Vbly – “Mermaid of God”, in the city of Kyiv – the sacred hydronym Kyjava or Kyjan, later Kyjanka), aka Ushas or Ushi of the Indo-European cultural circle (Rsha or Ros of the Dnieper region, Ushytsia and Bushanka, Rusava of the Dniester basin), aka the “snake-legged goddess” Api – the “daughter of Borysthenes” (Dnieper-Slavutich) from the mythology of the proto-slavs of the Scythian era of the future Rus Field – skolots (according to their solar self-name “connected with the name of the king” given by Herodotus) (Fig. 1). As this study has shown, it is noteworthy that Kyjan was a tributary of the Dnieper, and after the acceptance of the Sun of Christ, according to a popular philosophical image, the heraldic sign of “the birth of the Heavenly lineage” in the princely tradition of the Olhovychs (starting with Svyatoslav Yaroslavich according to the signature on the back of the princely portrait in the Izbornik of 1073) was crowned with a cross, which gave the researchers of heraldry a reason to identify similar images with the so-called “blooming cross” of the actual Christian pictorial tradition, much later on the Rus Plain. The fallacy of this interpretation is well illustrated by the sign on the seal of the elder Yaroslavich – Prince Izyaslav – a similar sign, but without the upper cross. Another thing is the late reinterpretation of this symbolism in the wake of the Christian worldview, especially in the New Age, along with changes in the configurations of the symbols of the cossack elite according to the Polish tradition of “collective” coat of arms (a clear example is the coat of arms of the “Abdank” type, i.e. “uda”, adopted in this geometrised “tamgo-like” form by Bohdan Khmelnytsky) led to a noticeable erosion of the ancient content, in particular, in the form of its decorative reproduction with Christian symbols of salvation. At the same time, the spiritual conditioning of the essence of the dynastic vocation remained intact. This essence consisted in ensuring that the dynasts of the “rus family” protected the religious sentiments and political and economic independence of the polyethnic (multinational) people by the priorities of its elite stratum – the called representatives of the “god-bearing solar stream” (váryags from the proto-slavic linguistic and cultural environment of the ancient ruthenians), and namely, their management, religious integration, military defense, trade life priorities. Feeding on a spiritual vocation, the traditional Rus state also had functional stability in the form of a princely outfit – “nariad” (a centralised dynastic entrusting) for the land united by princely routes on waterways.



Figure 1. Ancient related sacred signs and tribal symbols (motifs of the tree of life – the World Tree–Genealogy, the woman–tree, the mother earth – the Great Mother, genesis, the Heavenly Family Tree and the Sun, time and Eternity), and the corresponding princely emblems

Note: 1) carvings on a mammoth skull, 12th millennium BC (Mezhyrich, Kaniv district); 2) ancient Egyptian hieroglyph for ‘growth’ or ‘genesis’; 3) seals of Urartu; 4) snake-winged Gaia (Api) – daughter of Borysfen, ruler of the Scythians on a mirror and on a gold plate of the 4th century BC. (Haiman’s grave, Vasylivskiy district of Zaporizhzhia region); 5) ‘a woman in labour in a house with descendants and birds’ – an ancient motif of folk embroidery, The Rus Plain, 19th century; 6) marks on silver jewellery of the 6–7th centuries from the Martynivka treasure, Cherkasy region; 7) amulet from Don Rus (northern, or ‘Ros’/‘Ros-Alan’, a variant of the Saltovo–Mayak archaeological culture); 8) a mark on the seal of Izyaslav Yaroslavych (11th century); 9) a sign of Svyatoslav Yaroslavych (11th century. The author’s reconstruction based on Svyatoslav’s Izbornyk); 10) princely seal from Biloozero; 11) ‘flourishing cross’ – a Christian version of the ancient religious motif on the princely seal; 12) outline of the Olhovych sign of the early 13th century (Starodub, Bryansk); 13) ancient ‘Vinnytsia’ sign on the seal of Vinnytsia Mali and Velyki Khutory of 1839; 14) Proto-Slavic heraldic and solar signs on the monumental stele of the Ruthenian sanctuary of Touriers (according to P. Gruat); 15) Proto-Slavic solar sign (the future ‘thunderbolt’ – a symbol of Perun) on the monumental stele of the Ruthenian sanctuary of Touriers (according to P. Gruat); 16) coat of arms of Hetman D. Apostol of the 18th century; 17) solar and other religious and heraldic ideograms on the backs of sledges, Uman district, mid-nineteenth century; 18) ‘thunderbolts’ on a spinning wheel, Berestey district, 30s of the 20th century

Source: developed by the author

As an example of an international cultural route from the geospiritual Rus Field, based on the available set of data, in this example developed the direction of a combined land and water coastal road on a hypothetical migration route from the following locations (from West to East): the starting point is the French city of Rodez (the ancient city of Rutena Civitas) with a branch to the archaeological expositions in the museum of the town of Montrosier and the landscape-archaeological expositions – at the ruthenian sanctuary of Touries (Sanctuaire heroïque des Touries); the city of Vienne on the Rhone; the Swiss cities of Lausanne (with the Ouchy embankment) and Lucerne (on Lake Rot of the Roys River Basin, formerly Rusa or Ursa); the Austrian city of Salzburg (the center of the ancient province of Norik with a famous cave artifact – a memorial inscription on a marble slab of 1521 about the “ruthenian prince Odoacer”); the Ukrainian cities of Mukacheve (with “celtic” archaeological sites and the Rus Way mountain pass), Vinnytsia (the historic Venichya among the “towns of the Field” in the List of Rus cities) with a branch to the Bushan historical and cultural reserve (to the ancient Slavic rock temple – the sanctuary of Olya on the Bushanka River) and the capital city of Kyiv (in particular, Starokyivska Gora above the precipice of the historic Kyjan stream). The main direction of the proposed route between the Rodez – Kyiv points (or Rodez-Roden – to the tract of Knyazha Gora near the mouth of the Ros river near Kaniv) is 2710 km of road and pedestrian-rowing track, not including the named branches. Such a long route as a whole should be calculated on a monthly visiting program.

The fundamental question – whether the combination of the images of Perun, Váruna and the female “hypostasis” of the latter Usha (or Rsha, to whom Cybele corresponded) can be considered the most important act of sacramentation for that ethnopolitical tradition that became Russian – according to heraldic images of religious significance, including after the Sun of Christ, – receives an affirmative positive response with the “mermaid” name of the city of Kyiv, as well as with the list of gods of the integration poly-ethnic “pantheon” of St. Volodymyr, recognised as Equal to the Apostles, and even with the gesture of Oranta’s hands in the Cathedral of St. Sophia of Kyiv, raised for blessing in the same way as the “chthonic” limbs of Cybele-Kubaba-Kyava rose on various ancient images of it, popular in Europe from the hellenistic Panticapae (Kerch) to the German Eisenach, from the ancient “Scythian” Dnieper to gothic cathedrals. Studies on the significant spread of the Christian image of the Mother of God and the wide iconography of the “female” spiritual essence (Hotun *et al.*, 2019; Shevliuga, 2023) allows to pay attention to the probability of this image creation in the realm of ethnopolitical symbolism and heraldry itself. Although Volodimer the Baptist himself, the sovereign “kagan Volodimer” (in the famous speech of metropolitan Hilarion), realising his status as a statesman, chose for his personal sign a monogram of the imperial type – from the letters of the heraldic call

“Volodymyr on the throne”, – a monogram that became known as a trident, although it was made precisely by the celtic interweaving of letters with the outline of an attacking falcon – the “sun bird” of the Baltic Slavic Wends and their Slavic defenders, the váryags, who were “called rus”. Designing this imperial personal emblem simultaneously in the configuration of a trident, a symbol of the lord of the seas, became another artistic find of the ancient Rus coat of arms designers. Behind the statist visibility remained a deep, original “remembered resource” of the God-bearing people (Scherbenko, 2019).

“The transitivity of culture against the background of eternity” of O.M. Som-Serdiukova (2020) is most fully revealed by a road along a certain route with landscape and other sights and outstanding places that, depending on their suitability for scientific exchange and cognitive tourism, their semantic design and functional content, potentially represent, nevertheless, the concentration of that hereditary content, which was created precisely to the order of eternity. An inescapable meaningful essence appears at the same time as an expression of a certain ethnoculture and parallel to it or neighboring phenomena; therefore, the cultural route is *a priori* international, multinational, even if it is built mostly within the boundaries of only one nation-state.

The current public demand in Ukraine for the study of the spiritual foundations of national culture in the context of historical knowledge, the development of modern scientific approaches from such a direction of research (Stishova, 2023) indicates the timeliness of development of the methodological foundations of the imitation (inheritance) of culture, in particular, the direction of studying the value origins of traditional statehood and its essential pictorial symbolism of religious significance.

In this example suggests a synthesis of spiritual heritage, including political culture, with the opportunity to present a visible state-building heritage in prominent places associated with this ethno-political tradition. The proposal to organise, in parallel to the network “Via Regia – the cultural path of the Council of Europe” (which develops thematically on the basis of the historiographical dynastic “Royal Road”) an additional network – “Geospiritual Rus Field” based on the movements of the ancient ruthenians – looks both logical and equally ambitious. This approach may be quite unexpected in the eyes of a positivist historian, fascinated (for all the rigor of positivism from factual evidence) by all kinds of “Vikings”, runic stones, etymological exercises of Normanism and the image of princess Ingigerda – princess Irina, against the background of centuries-old historiographical criticism of the ancient Rus annals for allegedly “mythological thinking”, and the Cossack chronicler Samiylo Velychko – for his alleged fiction about the succession of hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky from “rusyn Odonatser”. The annals, including the Tale of the Timeless Years, do not contain author’s fictions as such, because writing a known lie was a grave sin, and

historical scholars, beyond any doubt, should not compare ancient Christian writers with current cynical ones, journalists or politicians; therefore, the national annals do not contain semantic contradictions. It is important to understand them without confusing the princely *nariad* (entrusting) with the order in all and noting not only the words of the chronicler that “the slavs sat down on the Danube”, but also the fact that the chronicler testified that they “sat down” there “after many times” (Motsia, 2020). If for the actual historiographical discourse of the researchers of ancient Rus, observations about ancient Rus cultural borrowings from Christian Constantinople and dynastic ties with it are important, especially after the “causeless”, according to the not very sincere expression of the chroniclers of the empire, the war against it by Yaroslav the Wise (Rychka, 2023), then for the study of ethnocultural symbolism, interesting are not only the architectural forms of the Church of St. Sophia reinterpreted in Rus for Novgorod the Great, not only and not so much the dedication of the most venerable altar to the Mother of God, but the traditional decoration of this altar with towels with embroidered folk “women in labour”. Similarly, from the historical details of the regional features of state formation and ethnic development of Rus, this topic is more concerned with the fact that the famous waterway “from the Varyags to the Greeks”, according to the testimony of Adam of Bremen (11th century), began precisely in the Slavic Stargorod (Motsia, 2020). And the desire to perpetuate the Rus ethno-political essence and, in general, according to this methodology, the idea of building the movement routes of those ancient dynasties, each of which were the predecessors of several national states (for example, the Merovingian dynasty), is an aspiration, this idea has a significant ideological and philosophical meaning for the future the unity of European civilisation, as well as the perspective of historical and cultural research on the construction of international cultural routes, for which, first of all, modern GIS tools should be used.

For example, GIS with predictive search algorithms for potential locations of archeology monuments (not yet opened settlements, parking lots) are used precisely in the context of forming databases for perspective research and scientific excursion routes (Castiello & Tonini, 2021). Modern technology allows you to literally go deep into the thickness of cultural layers for their smallest remains: this is evidenced by the delineation of an unmarked cemetery using high-resolution ground-penetrating radar and X-ray radiography of the area near the medieval church in Furulund in Norway (Cannell *et al.*, 2018). The study of objects of the cultural landscape as information elements (Carvalho *et al.*, 2023), the visual presentation of antiquities using digital “augmented reality” was demonstrated by researchers using examples of tools and methods of virtual reproduction of cultural heritage (François *et al.*, 2021). Current methodological approaches to the study of ancient social phenomena from the analysis of images on archaeological sites – images, in particular gestures, which “say

more than words” (Kopij *et al.*, 2023); the combination of GIS technologies with game-based dynamic visualisations to build more accurate models of historical routes appears to be a promising direction of research for the clarification and variability of the cultural route.

In general, the modeling of the ancient network of roads, territorial connections, the identification of relevant nuances from the functional history of landscapes is becoming more and more popular and relies on new empirical methods and digital geographic information support, such as modeling based on the routes of modern travelers with an introduction to materials study of the entire complex of data from local cultural heritage, including the most complete data from archeology (Tolksdorf *et al.*, 2019). Rightly considering the promotion of territorial heritage values as a key means of restoring vulnerable territories, modern researchers are testing regional development management methodologies based on web applications with complex integration of information and management subsystems related to cultural heritage and tourism and environmental services (Hidalgo-Sánchez *et al.*, 2024), publish the concepts of “ethnographic perspectives of transregional connections” (Marsden & Henig, 2019), and also develop its aesthetic aspects, which are important in the context of promoting heritage. Among the latest developments, the most interesting and directly related to this topic is the study of the directions of image creation of elite emblems and heraldic design of nobility titles (Mercardo-Oliveras & Alcantara-Garsia, 2023).

The functional purposes of the places of interest equipped for visiting on the such cultural routes, in addition to the actual ethnopoltical heritage presentations and related popular science expositions and research laboratories, can include proven art therapy practices for visitors (Solyeyko *et al.*, 2023). Visiting locations should be provided with technical geographic information means to support safe amateur, gaming and special professional travel.

CONCLUSIONS

The content of the inherited goal-setting according to certain historical traditions, in the ethno-political context, is clearly reflected by the symbolism of the religious and heraldic purpose. The bearers of such symbols were the dynasts who claimed state-making primacy in the wake of this tradition. Indicators of the presence of dynasts on migration routes, taking into account the conditions of ancient migrations, in addition to visually recognisable artifacts, including archaeological, and written evidence of the relevant movements, are also local onomastics, primarily – sacred hydronyms.

Using the example of the annalistic “rus family” and its ancient ancestors – proto-slavic-celtic ruthenians, or rus/rug/ros people – it is proposed to apply a comparative stylistic analysis of artifacts of sacred and heraldic significance with the tying of finds to geographical locations attested by written primary sources about the relevant presence and confirmed by ethnic onomastics, especially

sacred hydronyms, for geo-spiritual modeling of probable migration routes of dynasts – bearers of this historical tradition with subsequent construction of international cultural routes. On the chosen example, the concept of polycentricity of the rus ethnopolitical tradition is confirmed by identifying the locations of activity of ancient ruthenians on the basis of their associated presence, attested in written monuments, in archaeological artifacts from religious heraldry, in toponymy and especially hydronyms – ethnically sacred names with the imaging program, that a single with the material monuments.

The methodological basis of geospiritual modeling by interdisciplinary means should be taking into account in GIS databases from prominent places the categories of geospiritual integrity of the people, its ethnoculture as a model of the spiritual self-awareness of the leading

ethnic group with solidarity groups and ethnopolitical tradition as a moderator of power relations, improvement of methods of identification of dynastic ownership of masterworks and territories, as well as algorithms and GIS applications for the analysis of the locations of archaeological and heraldic artifacts with associated religious imagery according to the most ancient local onomastics, which is a promising prospect for further research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is grateful to Mr. Philippe Gruat for outstanding archaeological discoveries and an important response to an email request.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

REFERENCES

- [1] Cannell, R.J.S., Gustavsen, L., Kristiansen, M., & Nau, E. (2018). Delineating an unmarked graveyard by high-resolution GPR and pXRF prospection: The medieval church site of Furulund in Norway. *Journal of Computer Applications in Archaeology*, 1(1), 1–18. doi: 10.5334/jcaa.9.
- [2] Carvalho, M., Martins, S., & Pinto, C. (2023). Landscape and cultural heritage: Object and information. *Heliyon*, 9(10), article number e20395. doi: 10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e20395.
- [3] Castiello, M., & Tonini, M. (2021). An explorative application of random forest algorithm for archaeological predictive modeling. A Swiss case study. *Journal of Computer Applications in Archaeology*, 4(1), 110–125. doi: 10.5334/jcaa.71.
- [4] Database of cultural routes. (2024). Retrieved from <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/cultural-routes-database-main-page>.
- [5] François, P., Leichman, J., Laroche, F., & Rubellin, F. (2021). *Virtual reality as a versatile tool for research, dissemination and mediation in the humanities*. *Virtual Archaeology Review*, 12(25), 1–15. doi: 10.4995/var.2021.14880.
- [6] Goncharenko, N., Lysenko, O., Starchenko, N., & Shandra, V. (2024). *International congress “Rethinking Ukraine and Europe: New challenges for historians” (notes from the forum)*. *Ukrainian Historical Journal*, 1, 226–231.
- [7] Gruat, P., Albinet, N., Malige, G., Méniel, P., Trescarte, J., Dedet, B., & Garnier, N. (2019). *Stelae and statues from the First and Early Second Iron Ages in Southern France: The question of archaic sanctuaries in the light of research into the Touriès heroic complex (Saint-Jean and Saint-Paul, Aveyron)*. *AFAEF*, 111–130.
- [8] Hidalgo-Sánchez, F.M., Merino-del-Río, R., Mascort-Albea, E.J., Ruiz-Moreno, I., Linares-GómezDelPulgar, M., & Tejedor-Cabrera, A. (2024). Digital reactivation of territories through geospatial cultural itineraries: The VIDA-HTL web application. *Heritage Science*, 12, 56. doi: 10.1186/s40494-024-01173-w.
- [9] Hotun, I.A., Kazymir, O.M., & Sukhonos, A.M. (2019). The virgin of Khodosivka. *Archeology*, 1, 42–58. doi: 10.15407/archaeologyua2019.01.042.
- [10] Kopij, K., Glomb, K., & Popławski, S. (2023). More than words: A study on the visibility of hand gestures in public spaces. Case studies of Forum Romanum and Mayan Tikal. *Virtual Archaeology Review*, 14(29), 1–13. doi: 10.4995/var.2023.19315.
- [11] Kyrilenko, S.O. (2019). Balto-slavic theory of the origin of Rus: Historiography of the problem. *Literature and Culture of Polissia*, 94(11), 5–35. doi: 10.31654/2520-6966-2019-111-94-5-35.
- [12] Marsden, M., & Henig, D. (2019). Muslim circulations and networks in West Asia: Ethnographic perspectives on transregional connectivity. *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 10(1), 11–21. doi: 10.1177/1879366518814668.
- [13] Mercardo-Oliveras, V., & Alcantara-Garsia, J. (2023). *Cartas Ejecutorias de Hidalguía* (executory certificates of nobility): A survey in materials analysis, legal, and aesthetic contexts – two case studies. *Heritage Science*, 11, article number 6. doi: 10.1186/s40494-022-00850-y.
- [14] Motsia, O.P. (2020). Kyiv Rus: Some regional features of state formation and ethnic development. *Archeology*, 2, 52–61. doi: 10.15407/archaeologyua2020.02.052.
- [15] Nechytajlo, V. (2019). *Signs of the Rurikovichs, which belonged to the Grand Dukes of Kyiv*. *Bulletin of Lviv University. The Series is Historical*, 54–66.
- [16] Official website of International Council on Monuments and Landmarks. (2008). Retrieved from <https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/icomos>.
- [17] Rychka, V. (2023). *The “causeless” war of Yaroslav the Wise*. In *SEMINARIUM. Ruthenica* (pp. 10–18). Kyiv: Institute of History of Ukraine, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine.

- [18] Scherbenko, E.V. (2019). *The remembered resource. The moment of responsibility in the Ukrainian political discourse of the transition period (1985–2014)*. Kyiv: IPIENR named after I.F. Curas of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine.
- [19] Selivachov, M.R. (2023). *Service reflections of an art critic. Part one: Glimpses of dissertations in opponent's reviews*. New York: Almaz.
- [20] Shevliuga, O. (2023). *Some observations on the iconography of the “Virgin Enthroned” miniature from the Gertrude Codex (CXXXVI)*. In *SEMINARIUM. Ruthenica*, (pp. 61–73). Kyiv: Institute of History of Ukraine, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine.
- [21] Shmit, F. (2023). *Art: Its psychology, its stylistics, its evolution*. Kyiv: Duh i Litera.
- [22] Solveyko, O., Tsarenko S., Chernykh M., Berezovsky A., Soleyko, A., Fedorchenko, O., Zhuchenko, P., Benediktova, N., & Davtian, L. (2023). Integrative art-therapeutic correction of psychosomatic disorders in children with undifferentiated connective tissue dysplasia. *Archives of Pharmacy Practice*, 14(1), 62–65. doi: 10.51847/XnQ5IvbZyY.
- [23] Som-Serdiukova, O.M. (2020). The road as part of the cultural landscape of Norway: A change in worldview paradigm. *Issues of Cultural Studies*, 36, 147–155. doi: 10.31866/2410-1311.36.2020.221058.
- [24] Stishova, N. (2023). Historiography achievements and modern scientific approaches to the study of the spiritual foundations of Ukrainian culture. *Ukrainian Historical Journal*, 2, 161–178. doi: 10.15407/uhj2023.02.161.
- [25] Tolkendorf, J.F., Schubert, M., Schröder, F., Petr, L., Herbig, C., Kočár, P., Bertuch, M., & Hemker, C. (2019). Fortification, mining, and charcoal production: Landscape history at the abandoned medieval settlement of Hohenwalde at the Faule Pfütze (Saxony, Eastern Ore Mountains). *E&G Quaternary Science Journal*, 67, 73–84. doi: 10.5194/egqsj-67-73-2019.
- [26] Vukovich, A. (2019). *The gift economy of the Princes of Rus*. *Ruthenica*, 15, 75–90.
- [27] Xi, X., An, X., Zhang, G., & Liang, S. (2022). Spatial patterns, causes and characteristics of the cultural landscape of the Road of Tang Poetry based on text mining: Take the road of Tang Poetry in Eastern Zhejiang as an example. *Heritage Science*, 10, article number 129. doi: 10.1186/s40494-022-00761-y.

Сергій Царенко

Кандидат архітектури, доцент
 Національна академія керівних кадрів культури і мистецтв
 01015, вул. Лаврська, 9, м. Київ, Україна
<https://orcid.org/ORCID 0000-0002-4395-6390>

Моделювання шляхів етнополітичних традицій і побудова культурних маршрутів засобами етнодизайну та ГІС

Анотація. Зростаюча цінність самобутньої культури в контексті сучасної глобальної цивілізації актуалізує дослідження можливостей етнодизайну для виявлення атрибутів ідентичності та, водночас, пошуку інтеграційних смислів. У цьому сенсі велике об'єднавче культурне значення та актуальність має виявлення засобами етнодизайну стійких візуальних ознак етнополітичних традицій минулого на шляхах їх давніх переміщень, які часто були міграційними і станом на початок ХХІ століття можуть бути змодельовані в межах кількох сучасних держав з подальшою побудовою відповідних міжнародних культурних маршрутів засобами геоінформаційних систем. Метою цієї роботи була розробка методології моделювання шляхів руху етнополітичних традицій – геодуховного моделювання з апробацією науково-дослідницьких можливостей етнодизайну для побудови культурних маршрутів із застосуванням геоінформаційних систем на прикладі поля розселення давніх русичів, або rus/rug/ros – літописної «руської сім'ї» та прашурів. Застосовано авторську методологію успадкування культури – комплекс методів розвивального опрацювання унікального культурного простору, що базується на методах комплексного джерелознавства, порівняльного стилістичного аналізу та міждисциплінарного семантичного синтезу відповідно до загальної теорії систем. Результатами дослідження стали підтвердження континентальної поліцентричності руської етнополітичної традиції завдяки з'ясуванню її сутнісного змісту та основної візуально-графічної репрезентації на основі археологічних та геральдичних артефактів, сакральної етнімії та ономастики з визначенням основних локацій, пропозиції щодо побудови відповідних міжнародних культурних маршрутів. На цьому прикладі сформульовано методологічні засади геодуховного моделювання та термінологічні визначення щодо етнокультурної динаміки, які мають наукову новизну, ідейно-світоглядний зміст і практичну цінність для формування баз даних та алгоритмів у відповідних геоінформаційних системах, а також для міжнародного культурного співробітництва у цій сфері

Ключові слова: літописна «руська родина»; культурологічні узагальнення; геодуховне моделювання; етнокультура; релігійна геральдична символіка; Руське поле