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Manuscripts under review at another journal cannot be simultaneously submitted to EJBO. The article cannot have been published elsewhere, and authors are obligated to inform the Editor of similar articles they have published. Articles submitted to EJBO could be written in English or in Finnish. Paper written in Finnish must be included English summary of 200-500 words. Submissions should be sent as an email attachment and as Microsoft Word doc format to:

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Emeritus Professor Tuomo Takala

Jyväskylä University School of Business and Economics, Finland

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## Editorial objectives

Electronic Journal of Business Ethics and Organization Studies EJBO aims to provide an avenue for the presentation and discussion of topics related to ethical issues in business and organizations worldwide. The journal publishes articles of empirical research as well as theoretical and philosophical discussion. Innovative papers and practical applications to enhance the field of business ethics are welcome. The journal aims to provide an international web-based communication medium for all those working in the field of business ethics whether from academic institutions, industry or consulting.

The important aim of the journal is to provide an international medium which is available free of charge for readers. The journal is supported by Business and Ethics Network BON, which is an officially registered non-profit organization in Finland. EJBO is published by the School of

Business and Economics at the University of Jyväskylä in Finland.

## Reviewing process

Each paper is reviewed by the Editor in Chief and, if it is judged suitable for publication, it is then sent to at least one referee for blind review. Based on the recommendations, the Editor in Chief decides whether the paper should be accepted as is, revised or rejected.

The process described above is a general one. The editor may, in some circumstances, vary this process.

## Special issues

The special issue contains papers selected from

- the specific suitable conferences or
- based on a certain relevant theme

The final selection is made by the Editor in Chief, with assistance from the EJBO's Editorial team or from Conference Editorial team. In the case of conference papers, articles have already been reviewed for the conference and are not subjected to additional review, unless substantial changes are requested by the Editor.

## Manuscript requirements

The manuscript should be submitted in double line spacing with wide margins as an email attachment to the editor. The text should not involve any particular formulations. All authors should be shown and author's details must be printed on a first sheet and the author should not be identified anywhere else in the article. The manuscript will be considered to be a definitive version of the article. The author must ensure that it is grammatically correct, complete and without spelling or typographical errors.

As a guide, articles should be between 5000 and 12000 words in length. A title of not more than eight words should be provided. A brief autobiographical note should be supplied including full name, affiliation, e-mail address and full international contact details as well as a short description of previous achievements. Authors must supply an abstract which

should be limited to 200 words in total. In addition, maximum six keywords which encapsulate the principal topics of the paper should be included.

Notes or Endnotes should be not be used. Figures, charts and diagrams should be kept to a minimum. They must be black and white with minimum shading and numbered consecutively using arabic numerals. They must be refereed explicitly in the text using numbers.

References to other publications should be complete and in Harvard style. They should contain full bibliographical details and journal titles should not be abbreviated.

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# Globally (Ir)Responsible Leadership - Viewpoints on the Current Political Leadership Debate

## EDITORIAL

Tuomo Takala (Editor-in-Chief)

### Abstract

In this general article, I want to set forth some phenomena of contemporary politics, and theoretical concepts and discussions that are connected with them. Relevant topics are related to the conflicting tendencies of the modern world. Not least with and because of the Ukraine crisis. This is why it is important to bring up points presented in the following treatment. Following themes will be considered: populism and ethics, ideology and politics, bad faith and ideology, propaganda and persuasion, putinism as an ideology, Trumpian power and charisma. In the end of the article some conclusions will be put forth.

**Key Words:** Populism, propaganda, symbolism, charisma

### Populism and ethics

Populism is a political ideology that focuses on the needs and interests of ordinary people. It emphasizes the power of the people and calls for government action to address the concerns of the people. Populism often involves appeals to the common people, a rejection of the political and economic establishment, and the use of populist rhetoric to appeal to the people. Populists often support policies that are seen as benefiting the people, such as social welfare programs, economic regulation, and protection of workers' rights. Populists have been prominent in many countries, including the United States, Latin America, and Europe.

First, populist rhetoric rejects the premise of the pursuit of truth. Various half-truths and facts taken out of context are fine for that, if they serve the ideological or political goals of their presenters. At the same time, it denies the uncertainty of information and the premise of the research approach that new research results lead to correcting our views.

Secondly, the arsenal of populist rhetoric also includes incorrect comparisons, which aim to hide the problematic nature of one's own views by appealing to seemingly "similar" other phenomena, even if there is not sufficient commonality. The parallel phenomenon of incorrect comparisons is the distortion of history, in which similar phenomena and problems from history are applied to contemporary politics, even if there is no sufficient basis to prove the commonality of things.

A third typical feature is the exploitation of easy explanations. In this case, a single characteristic of a person or even a loose connection to something "suspicious" in the past can be brought up as an explanation for current views or actions. It goes without saying that such explanations are usually hoax and at worst take on the characteristics of conspiracy theories.

It can be argued that there is also green populism, feminist populism, anarchist populism and populism connected to various religions. However, it should be

noted that the deeper we go into the true understanding of the concept of populism, it is quite a different thing to talk about, say, green populism and, on the one hand, radical right-wing populism, because the latter excludes the people as citizens of the state, and is anti-pluralist. For populists both on the left and on the right - everything is justified on the basis that something is done for the good of the people. (see Lahti & Mörttinen, 2023, p.62)

Populism and ethics are two concepts that are often discussed in relation to politics and governance. Populism is a political ideology that emphasizes the importance of the "people" and their interests, while ethics refers to a system of moral principles that guide human behavior. The relationship between populism and ethics can be complex, as populist leaders often make claims to represent the interests of the people while disregarding ethical principles such as transparency, accountability, and respect for human rights. Populism can also be associated with a simplistic view of complex problems, which can lead to policies that are not based on sound evidence or ethical considerations.

However, it is also possible for populism and ethics to be compatible. Populist movements can arise from legitimate grievances and concerns of ordinary people, and can champion ethical principles such as social justice, equality, and the protection of the environment. Populist leaders can also act in ethical ways, by upholding democratic values, promoting transparency and accountability, and respecting the rule of law. Ultimately, the relationship between populism and ethics depends on how these concepts are defined and applied in practice. Populism can be a force for positive change if it is guided by ethical principles and a commitment to democratic values, but it can also be a source of danger if it leads to the erosion of ethical standards and the concentration of power in the hands of a few.

### Ideology and politics

Ideology and politics are two closely related concepts. Ideology is a set of beliefs and values that shape an individual or group's view of the world. Politics is

the process by which a society organizes itself to make decisions, allocate resources, and settle conflicts. Ideology and politics are interrelated because the beliefs and values that make up an individual's or group's ideology can influence their approach to politics. Ideology can also shape the way a society organizes itself and the decisions it makes. Ideology can be a major factor in the formation of political parties and the development of political actions.

As Kokko states, in terms of power and propagandistic activity, our postmodern society is in the partial transition. The reason for the change can be attributed to the change in the social identity of individuals, which can be blamed on the development of information networks. The expansion of information networks of our everyday life has pushed societies towards change, because the old socialization mechanisms with their strict norms do not guide people enjoying themselves in information networks in the same way as they did before. Whether information networks create new societal social norms depends on the openness of social communities. On the other hand, in relation to information networks, it can be observed that digital sociality and social networks operating in the digital dimension are partially obscuring the theoretical definition of organizations, because social associations can be found in the Internet that do not have any official purpose. On the other hand, power also exists in digital social structures, but the characteristics of those who wield power do not necessarily correlate with those in the real world. Due to the "untamedness" of information networks, the amount of propaganda has increased strongly in social services on the Internet. (see Kokko, 2013)

### Bad faith and ideology

"Bad faith" is a Sartrean philosophical concept that refers to a state of self-deception or dishonesty in which an individual or group may engage. When someone is acting in bad faith, they may be knowingly disregarding their own beliefs or values, or misrepresenting the truth to others.

"Ideology," on the other hand, refers to a set of beliefs, values, and principles that shape an individual or group's worldview and guide their actions and decisions. Ideologies can be political, religious, social, or cultural in nature, and often involve a particular vision for society or a specific set of goals or ideals.

The relationship between bad faith and ideology is complex. On the one hand, an ideology can provide a framework for individuals to act in good faith, with a clear sense of purpose and direction. However, ideologies can also be used to justify bad faith behavior, such as lying, manipulation, or exploitation. For example, someone who strongly believes in a particular ideology may engage in bad faith behavior by disregarding evidence that contradicts their beliefs, or by misrepresenting their views to others in order to gain power or influence. Alternatively, someone may use an ideology as a way of justifying unethical or immoral actions, such as discrimination, violence, or oppression.

Overall, while ideologies can provide a sense of direction and purpose, they can also be used to justify bad faith behavior. It is important for individuals to critically examine their own beliefs and actions to ensure that they are acting in good faith and not using ideology as a means of justifying harmful behavior. The concept "distorted ideology" created by Jason Stanley helps to better understand the post-truth era. According to him, propaganda has expanded into entire erroneous worldviews that seem natural to their supporters. This makes it possible to present and spread false information. In a distorted ideology, propaganda is therefore a kind of meta-level manipulation from where you

can't see out (Pitkänen & Sutinen, 256). This is how you manage to spread a lie as truth and accept it, as long as it has enough supporters who create group pressure.

### Propaganda and persuasion

Propaganda and persuasion are related concepts, but they have different connotations and goals. Propaganda refers to the systematic dissemination of information, ideas, or opinions, usually with the intention of influencing public opinion or promoting a particular agenda. Propaganda can take many forms, including advertisements, news reports, speeches, and social media posts. The purpose of propaganda is to shape public perception and behavior in a way that benefits the propagandist or the organization they represent.

Persuasion, on the other hand, is the act of convincing someone to change their beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors. Persuasion can also take many forms, including logical arguments, emotional appeals, and appeals to authority. The purpose of persuasion is to change someone's mind or behavior in a way that benefits the persuader. While propaganda and persuasion both aim to influence people's attitudes and behavior, propaganda is often associated with manipulative or deceptive tactics, while persuasion is often seen as a legitimate means of communication. Propaganda can be used to promote harmful or unethical agendas, while persuasion can be used to promote positive change and encourage people to take action for the greater good. In summary, propaganda and persuasion are both powerful tools of communication, but they differ in their goals, methods, and ethical implications.

For example, Kivijärvi and Takala (2022) study focuses on the stigmatization in media discourse and the impression management tactics used by the presidential candidate to resist stigma. The analysis builds on Steyrer's Impression continuum of leadership and contributes to our understanding of how the social construction of some populist leaders takes place at the continuous bordering between charisma and stigma. The results highlight how religion, radical nationalism and erosion of authoritative-ness are used as the main sources for attributing stigma. These are resisted through moral argumentation and strong leadership.

The modern study of propaganda came about after World War I and led the way to the social scientific study of persuasion. At the same time the word propaganda became less used and was replaced by the words such as communication, information, and persuasion because they imply no value judgement and tend to embrace the development of new communication technologies as well as the "intricate perplexities inherent in developing societies and international diplomacy" (see Jowett and O'Donnell, p.35). Propaganda is a form of communication and can, therefore, be depicted as a process. A model of propaganda process therefore includes the sociohistorical context; a cultural rim made up of government, economy, events, ideology and myths of society; the propaganda institution, the propaganda agents, media methods, the social network; and the public. Generalisations about propaganda in modern society are based also on the several events and concepts. (ibid p. 262).

In Italy, there has been some populist movements during this decade. In the autumn of 2023, the populist Giorgia Meloni's government will practice conservative right-wing politics. For example, it has cut social benefits, toughened penalties and tightened the asylum policy. Recently, Meloni's release has become more institutional after he came to power. But it's about communication, the values have remained unchanged. At the heart of Meloni's politics is the defense of traditional family values. He raises child allowances and speaks loudly in favor of a

higher birth rate. Italy is threatened by a population crisis: the population is aging rapidly and the number of children born last year was the lowest in Matali's measurement history, i.e. since 1861.

Hamas attacked Israel in October 2023 and while some of the blame is placed on Israel, it does not explain the state's complete dysfunction. Israeli historian Noah Harari states that history is not a morality play. The real explanation for Israel's failure is populism rather than any alleged moral lapse. Harari continues that for years Israel has been ruled by a populist leader, Benjamin Netanyahu, who is a communication genius but an incompetent prime minister. Time and time again, he has put his own interests before the national interest and built his career on dividing the nation in two. He has appointed people to key positions based on their loyalty rather than competence, taking credit for every step forward but never responsibility for failure.

### **Putinism as an Ideology and using of propaganda**

Putinism" is a term used to describe the political system and ideology associated with president Putin. It is not a well-defined ideology with a specific set of principles or beliefs, but rather a collection of ideas and policies that are often associated with Putin's leadership style and worldview. Some of the key features of Putinism include:

- **Centralized power:** Putinism is characterized by a highly centralized system of governance, with Putin as the ultimate authority. Power is concentrated in the hands of the president and his close associates, who have significant control over the political, economic, and social spheres of Russian life.
- **Nationalism:** Putinism emphasizes the importance of Russian national identity and promotes a strong sense of patriotism among the Russian people. This includes a focus on Russian history, culture, and traditions, as well as a commitment to defending Russian interests both at home and abroad.
- **Anti-Westernism:** Putinism is seen to be very critical toward Western liberal democracy and its perceived cultural and moral decay. Putin and his supporters have frequently portrayed Russia as a bulwark against Western influence and as a defender of traditional values.
- **Authoritarianism:** Putinism is characterized by a strong authoritarian streak, with little tolerance for dissent or opposition. Critics argue that Putin's regime has limited civil liberties, curtailed press freedom, and suppressed political opposition in order to maintain its grip on power.
- **Economic nationalism:** Putinism emphasizes economic self-sufficiency and the importance of protecting Russian industries from foreign competition. This has often involved government intervention in the economy, including state ownership of key industries and the use of protectionist policies to shield Russian companies from international competition.

Overall, Putinism can be seen as a hybrid of various political ideologies, including nationalism, authoritarianism, and *populism*. While it has been successful in maintaining Putin's grip on power, critics argue that it has come at the cost of democratic norms and human rights in Russia. In the autumn 2023, Russia has established a new political propaganda project. Russia has started a new history teaching -lesson that has been changed to suit the Kremlin at all school levels. A new historian learning book

was also introduced in elementary schools in the fall. According to the researchers, the key to everything is to get through the Kremlin and Putin's world of thought. Putin is rewriting history to serve his power. According to researchers, Russia's new subject is not based on science. We must notice and emphasize that the new subject does not mean that the Russian leadership is now creating a new ideology of Putinism. Of course, Putin's personality and world of thought are influential, but Putin is not a theoretician or a philosopher.

In Russia, we can talk about a super-presidential system, which has been shaped into a fairly stylish dictatorship under Putin, says political researcher Lassila. Putin can be assumed to be spinning in historical geopolitical delusions, as it were, and thus does not have the same concern and pressure created by political responsibility that democratic heads of state have. In Russia, the president exercises absolute supreme power, where, unlike in democracies, there is practically no mechanism to control the actions of the head of state. Putin wants to order even small administrative actions. According to researcher, Korkeila, the reason for the need for micromanagement is that, from the point of view of the people and the administration, the "all-powerful person" is a great savior for the people and, along with his own efforts. He is also pushed into position of excessive power, where small things flow upwards, even though power is nominally given to subordinates. However, with dictators, the concrete fear of death is constantly present. Authoritarian systems are inherently more inefficient because a huge amount of political energy has to be used to stay in power and protect one's own position.

Indeed, Russian system also has a totalitarian component. And a totalitarian regime needs the mobilization of its subjects. So it is no longer enough for everyone to be passive. That's why the Kremlin is also targeting children and young people with the propaganda it accelerates. The Russian leadership explains that it is fighting a defensive battle for Russia's existence against the West and presents the war as something that will purify and benefit Russia.

For example, Professor Kangaspuro has put forth that Russia has begun to speak harshly about Finland and Finns. Finland is no longer a friendly neighbor whose citizens you can get to know. Russian propaganda now brings out negative news and dark aspects of history from Finland. For example, the Russians are told how during the Continuation War the Finns held concentration camps in Eastern Karelia and engaged in systematic torture. However, it could be that the propaganda will not immediately sink in with Russians. It will take time before Russians' image of Finns changes. In Russia, people have so many personal foundations, at least among the Russians in the surrounding areas. Propaganda hardly takes root there very quickly. Russians have had the opportunity to form an image of Finns when they have visited Finland on a cabin trip or shopping. Professor Kangaspuro thinks that when time passes, people's personal connections are broken and the formation of a vision of Finland is lacking, one-sided propaganda will gain ground. The touch surface is getting thinner, there is no counter-information or counter-propaganda. Misinformation has a more fertile ground to grip people's minds. It is often quite humane for people to think that if something drastic is claimed, there must be some basis for it. They don't turn us, Finnish people, into monsters very easily in their propaganda and hopefully the war will end before it happens. There are many supporting continuities that work against it in people's everyday consciousness.

### **Charisma and power - Trump in the spotlight**

Charisma and power are two different qualities. Charisma is the ability to influence and inspire others through an attractive personality, while power is the ability to gain control or influence over people or situations. Charisma is an intangible quality, while power is a tangible one. Charisma is often seen as a more positive trait, while power can be seen as a more negative one. Ultimately, both charisma and power can be used for good or bad ends, depending on the individual and their intention.

Charismatic leadership has an emotional influence that populism uses in its own ideology. It creates its own "truths" and values. Our forthcoming study will find out what is President Trump's leadership like as the most influential leader in (during his presidential period) in the USA and the whole world in the light of the charisma study. How do populism and charisma connect together in populist Trumpian leadership? How does the truth transform into a product of the post-truth era, i.e. into opinions? As Plato said, "knowledge is not a belief, it is a true belief", an opinion is not the truth, even though the current social information society wants to convince us that this is the case. Twitter truth is a product of the post-truth era, which e.g. Trump strongly exploits. What is the relationship between charisma and populism? The assumption is a dialectical interaction, where one force accelerates the other, and this is how we progress dialectically through collisions and confrontations towards a new post truth future and the dystopia of the 2020s. The empirical research material (research material) of the study will consist of articles dealing with populism and charisma published in Helsingin Sanomat from 2010-2020. In particular, it delves into Donald Trump's populism, power and charisma. In the study, he represents a case example, on the basis of which the dialectical path of progress from a rascal to a ruler is illustrated.

Now it could be the time for US President Joe Biden – and the world. The time is now, in the spring of 2024, over 200 days until the next US presidential election. They can return Donald Trump to the White House, whom a clear majority of Republicans, according to polls, want as their party's presidential candidate. Trump's possible return is awaited with fear in many places, as his previous presidency was a stormy period that ended with the president's supporters trying to prevent the change of power with a violent takeover of Congress. Democratic President Joe Biden has not been able to unite a divided nation, although he has managed to repair some of the damage caused by the Trump era. The United States has once again taken its place as the leader of the free world. This would be threatened if Trump made a comeback.

Trump claimed some time ago that he could force Russia and Ukraine into a deal that would end Russia's war of aggression in one day. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy publicly wondered why Trump did not carry out his stunt as president, if it is once so excellent. Russia certainly hopes for Trump's victory.

Trumpian charisma. "Trumpian charisma" refers to the unique style of charisma exhibited by former U.S. President Donald Trump. It is characterized by his flamboyant personality, outspokenness, and a penchant for speaking his mind. Trump's charisma is also often associated with his ability to connect with his base of supporters and his use of simple, direct language that resonates with his audience. While some people find Trump's charisma compelling and inspiring, others find it polarizing or even off-putting. Regardless of one's personal opinion of Trump, his style of charisma has been a subject of much discussion and analysis, particularly in the political and media spheres.

The Republican National Convention is in July 2024 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The Democratic National Convention will

be held in August in Chicago, Illinois. The meetings are supposed to choose the parties' presidential candidates. This option has the feel of a reoccurring disaster. Trump was elected as the Republican candidate for president in November 2016. He lost the next election four years later to Democrat Joe Biden. Next summer it will be known whether the same men will face each other again in the elections in November 2024.

In the summer of August 2023, Trump was charged with four counts related to his activities after the 2020 presidential election. Trump, who was representing the Republicans at the time, lost to the Democratic candidate Joe Biden. After the election, however, Trump did not accept the legal result of the election. According to the indictment, the new charges concern conspiring to violate citizens' rights and defrauding the federal government by attempting to overturn the election result, as well as obstructing the investigation and attempts to obstruct it. On Thursday (August 3), Trump was charged with conspiracy to defraud the United States, conspiracy to obstruct official proceedings, and attempting to obstruct official proceedings. Trump was also charged with conspiracy. Trump is accused of trying to influence the outcome of the 2020 presidential election, in total there are 13 charges against the former president. Trump was ordered to Bail \$200,000 and a historic arrest photo was also taken of him. No US president has ever been arrested before. Former US President Donald Trump surrendered to the authorities at the Fulton County Jail in Atlanta, Georgia, early Friday (August 25) Finnish time. Trump arrived at the prison after half past two on Friday morning and left the place a little before three in the morning.

The following information is revealed by the image measurement of the NORC research institute operating in connection with the news agency AP and the University of Chicago at the end of August 2023. The survey asked respondents to say the first word that comes to mind about the main candidates. The survey does not give a flattering image of either candidate. When Biden is associated with old age, Trump is associated with crime. For Trump, almost a quarter of the respondents mentioned words related to corruption, crimes, lying and unreliability.

The committee of the House of Representatives that investigated the attack on the US Capitol in January 2021 has published its long-awaited final report. The report is more than 800 pages long and sums up an investigation that lasted more than 18 months, during which the committee, among other things, conducted more than a thousand interviews. In the report, which is divided into eight parts, it is estimated that the former president of the country, Donald Trump, is primarily responsible for the violence in the Congress building.

In the autumn 2023 Trump's supporters' power only gets stronger. The accusations against Trump have not reduced the former president's support, let alone made supporters back down. Trump's support has become stronger. This reminds some kind of a *cult* and a religious leader. In their own thinking, people associate all relevant matters with him and refuse to see anything else. We can speculate that the more serious question is in what way the US political system re-produces political consciousness. Because of many causes no one has a good answer, but it seems that politics has become not only mud wrestling, but also show wrestling. So Americans are a struggle in politics, but don't connect with it themselves or react to it as passionately as they should.

Francoise Heisbourg is a respected French security and defense policy expert and adviser. Trump's re-election as president is a realistic risk, says Heisbourg. The result of the 2024 US presidential election will affect the security of Europeans

in a way that is difficult to predict. Trump has promised to end the Ukraine war in 24 hours if he is elected. This week, Zelenskiy demanded that Trump reveal his plans immediately. Donald Trump, who is overwhelmingly leading the Republican polls, has been horrified by how much military aid the country has already given to Ukraine: "We don't have ammunition for ourselves." However, Ukraine's support has both Biden's and the Senate majority's support, but next year the presidential election at the end can shake up the situation. Among the Republican candidates, it has already been commented that Ukraine's funding would be better used "in the attack on our own southern border".

## Struggle for symbolic power

One central device presented in political theory is the using of symbols. New York artist Scott LoBaido's latest visual art work has been signed by Donald Trump himself. The painting is called *Furious Animals*. In the painting Donkeys represent Democrats and rhinoceroses represent Republicans who are not in the same side with Democrats. Like rabid animals, they try to bring this man down, but he doesn't give up, LoBaido describes to MTV News, in his art studio on Staten Island. The painting imitates the famous photograph from World War II, where American soldiers raise the American flag during the battle of Iwo Jima. In LoBaido's work, the flag is raised by Trump.

As Pekonen states, from the viewpoint briefly sketched above we can say that one central feature in the modern politics is the struggle for symbolic power with whose and with what kinds of symbols reality is determined at each time. The struggle over whose symbolic definition of a situation will prevail is often the symbolic battle in a political conflict and a critical determinant of its outcome. We may say that modern democracy differs from earlier political systems in that nowadays the political system presupposes and leans on the concept of *legitimacy* perhaps more than ever before – remembering that this legitimacy in a way presupposes and come from talk and from also e.g. visual artifacts. We must notice that the symbol is not only a reflection of reality, it also “refracts and structures; symbolization is always more than a process of naming. Symbol is both a cultural and subjective effort to make reality understandable and significant by defining that reality. On the other hand symbol may be a mean in a political process. Here symbol may be a mean in making sensible that is not yet known; symbol may tell about “some other reality”; a symbol may be a vehicle in aiming at some new. When the symbol is the vehicle something new, it has also its own “symbolical mode”. Political symbols, and especially their potential for manipulation, are more evident in transitional or crisis periods than in periods of relative peace. (see Pekonen, 1987).

## Conclusions

Charismatic leaders have the power and the ability to manipulate and misguide people. To prevent this misbehaving, it is important to promote processes of transformative ethical leadership. Thus, commitment, value-congruence, and communality are in the play a key positions. Charismatic leaders could be weak persons with destructive narcissist power. Good management and leadership are also central factors influencing these processes. Destructive and narcissistic leaders are, on the other hand, nega-

tive dark forces causing damage and harm in organizations. It may be that the acceptance of authoritarianism and submission to it, is a permanent characteristic of human nature, and the emergence of tyranny requires a certain kind of social upheaval.

In conclusion, I would like to set forth in this general article several elements, or phenomena, which prevail in political action and on the other hand also create and renew our common social reality as concepts. Political movements, mass movements and official political parties have become increasingly active in the 2020s. It may be that the acceptance of authoritarianism and submission to it is a permanent characteristic of human nature, and the emergence of tyranny requires a certain kind of social upheaval. Major political events, such as the war in Ukraine, have created new phenomena to be studied, such as information warfare, widespread influence of opinion, and the diversification of war. War is no longer a battle on the front lines, but war permeates the whole society. It is present everywhere. Rhetorics, fake news, propaganda and post-truth argumentation are an integral part of information transmission especially in war societies. This is why it is important to reveal and study these phenomena also in academic research, which has traditionally strived for genuine truthfulness.

What could be the solution? For example, Niemi and Houni (2018, p.284) present as the solution the so-called negotiation journalism. Here, the focus is not on opposing populism, but on producing publicity that does not feed populist claims about understanding the people and manipulating the elite media. The means are clarifying the tension, listening and maintaining trust. Different types of media react differently to populist rhetoric. The meanings attached to populism create a division between the popular and the daily press, the entertaining afternoon press believes in populism as the “voice of the people” and the daily papers, in turn, emphasize populism as a threat to democracy. Post-truth argumentation are an integral part of information transmission especially in war societies. This is why it is important to reveal and study these phenomena also in academic research, which has traditionally strived for genuine truthfulness.

I agree with Delanty (2023) when he put forth that the focus of academic analysis must be different compared with old: toward more global issues, and I will add the study of wars, in this list. One of the major changes is that the old socio-political theory that dominated in the 1970s was very western. The Frankfurt School tradition for example, which as Delanty said was his chief inspiration, was extremely Eurocentric in its concerns, with almost no concern whatsoever with questions relating to colonialism. Habermas's major reconstruction of critical theory in the Theory of Communicative Action was exclusively concerned with problems in western societies. This is also the case with regard to the work of Bourdieu and Foucault. The concern with New Social Movements and political emancipation in Habermas and other theorists was conceived entirely from the perspective of the post-industrial societies of the western world. Then, there is the absence of any adequate theorization of nature, at least nothing that is in anyway relevant to current issues. It is true of course that Foucault brought about a massive transformation in theory, right across the social and human sciences concerning how we think about power, the self and history. Foucault's work opened new visions beyond the limits of western history, even if that was his own preoccupation, as reflected in post-politics and post-colonialism. (see Social theory: Legacies and future directions – An interview with Gerard Delanty.)



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## Kirjoittaja

Emeritus Professor Tuomo Takala is a Doctor of Business Economics (1991), Philosophy (2012) and Sociology (2013). He has been acted long time as a Professor in charge of Management and Leadership discipline and has also had several administrative duties, e.g. Vice Dean of the faculty (2001-2003) and Dean of the Faculty (2003-2004) in the University of Jyväskylä, School of Business and Economics. His research areas include Responsible Business & Administration, Leadership & Narratives and Charismatic Leadership.

# Societal Impact: Beyond Frameworks

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## Abstract

Our research maps the quickly evolving discourse regarding how organizations (corporate, non-profit, and governmental) should define human and environmental impacts and metrics used to assess impact. Our approach is cross-disciplinary, examining empirical work from social scientific scholars and practitioners. Likewise, the sources we reviewed are multinational and multicultural. We identify five categories of societal impact frameworks currently in use: human rights-based frameworks, environment/climate change-based, hybrid frameworks, business-centric frameworks, and frameworks specifically designed to assess the societal impact of research. We nonetheless offer two recommendations. First, we make a meta-ethical claim that two principles are common to the five categories of frameworks. The principles are: 1) support and advance human rights and 2) attend to environmental issues. By articulating underlying principles, we suggest shifting how societal impact may be defined. Rather than define societal impact using a framework, which our research identifies as the most common approach among empirical sources, we suggest that societal impact may be defined in terms of principles underlying multiple frameworks. Second, we recommend praxis, describing a method for designing metrics that may be associated with multiple frameworks.

**Key Words:** Societal impact, frameworks, human rights, environmental issues

## Introduction

Practitioner and academic discourse regarding organizations' societal impacts occurs in a broader context, which includes an emerging new theory of the firm. For example, 36 U.S. states now have a particular category of corporation, the Benefit Corporation. Investors in benefit corporations agree that managers should sometimes subordinate profit maximization to maximizing some other social good (or minimizing harm).

This broader context involves exploring meta-questions, such as whether the firm functions as an individual, with an individual's negative and positive duties (beyond profit maximization). This broader context involves rethinking the formulas of classical economics, such as the ways economists measure growth and progress. While answers to such questions will inform the decisions organizations make, exploring these topics is beyond the scope of our current research.

We organized this paper around the following research strategy: review and analysis of primary and secondary scholarly sources; and review and analysis of practitioner sources, i.e., think tanks and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Our research found that approaches to defining organizations' societal impact are often praxis-oriented, taking the form of a framework, i.e., a specific plan to create societal impact. Such frameworks may focus on how an organization's work affects people (physical well-being, exercise of rights), the environment, or both.

A particular framework may also articulate the metrics an organization should employ to measure its progress in achieving specific societal impacts. Metrics may be used within the organization to adjust the framework and externally to provide relevant stakeholders with information.

To be sure, some frameworks are more mature than others, meaning some frameworks are developed to a greater degree of specificity than others. In our estimation, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are the most comprehensive and mature framework. Nonetheless, even a cursory internet search for definitions of societal impact yields references to other frameworks, often represented by the acronyms ESG and CSR. References to these frame-

works similarly circulate widely in academic and practitioner literature related to societal impact.

Recognizing the differences between SDG, ESG, and CSR can be helpful. SDG refers to the specific societal impact framework developed by the United Nations. The UN's SDGs are ultimately grounded in the UN's 1947 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

While SDG refers to the UN's specific framework, the definition of "sustainable" is evolving. A decade ago, "sustainable" explicitly referred to addressing the impact of an industry on the environment, e.g., reducing a firm's carbon footprint. Increasingly, "sustainable" refers to an industry or specific organization's human and environmental impacts. This shift has occurred because efforts to reduce ecological effects have sometimes created negative human impacts, e.g., building a more environmentally friendly factory may have displaced a village of several hundred farmers, who are then deprived of a livelihood and are reduced to poverty. (Diez-Spelz and Ramirez-Garcia, 2022, pp. 77-98)

In contrast to SDG, ESG and CSR do not refer to a single specific framework. ESG essentially refers to three variables – environment, society, and governance – that businesses should (and increasingly, legally must) consider when creating a societal impact strategy and implementation plan. In the literature, several different frameworks may be labeled "ESG." (Esposito and Antonucci, 2022, pp. 609-619)

De facto, a particular ESG framework developed by a company might have goals similar to the UN SDG goals. De jure, however, the ESG acronym de-links societal impact from the United Nations and the UN's specific focus on protecting and promoting universal human rights. The business-centric frameworks we identified in the academic literature (described below) are each a particular articulation of an ESG framework. These frameworks, rhetorically at least, continue to assert maximizing stakeholder value as of primary importance, with protecting human rights and the environment in service of this ultimate good.

Like ESG, CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) does not refer to a specific framework. In the literature, several different frameworks may be labeled "CSR." Frameworks labeled CSR are generally based on the idea that firms, like individuals, have a social responsibility. The debate about the validity of this idea continues in academic literature. In the past 40 years, many companies have developed a strategy for conducting themselves responsibly (although definitions of what actions qualify as socially responsible vary widely).

In general, we found that ESG frameworks endeavor to create a more systemic societal impact than frameworks labeled CSR. For example, an organization might require employees to volunteer at a food pantry as a CSR initiative. In contrast, a company's ESG framework might articulate the way that the company can reduce food dependence or hunger so that there are fewer socio-economic situations requiring food pantries. In simplest terms, CSR initiatives are often about "giving back," essentially supporting the status quo. In contrast, ESG frameworks are oriented to create systemic changes, addressing long-term economic and/or environmental challenges.

As of the writing of this paper, some practitioner sources are moving away from the ESG label because it may not provide enough distance from the social and political ideologies sometimes attributed to the UN's SDGs. Due to the fluidity among (and reaction to) the definitions and usages of the terms ESG, CSR, framework, and ranking, we propose defining societal impact in terms of underlying principles common to all iterations of frameworks we found.

## Findings from Primary and Secondary Scholarly Sources

By analyzing the theoretical underpinnings of the various frameworks, we identified among scholarly and practitioner sources, we identified five categories: human rights-based, environment/climate change-based, business-centric, hybrids of human rights, and environment/climate change-based, and specifically focused on business school research. Human rights-based frameworks (Table 1, p. 12) tend to define societal impact as efforts and initiatives that advance human rights (typically rights as defined by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, although a specific source may not necessarily refer directly to the UN declaration). Environment/climate change-based frameworks (Table 2, p. 12) tend to define societal impact as efforts and initiatives that address climate change and reduce or eliminate other forms of environmental degradation. Other concerns, such as protecting human rights, are subordinated to preserving the environment and seeking to manage climate change. Hybrid frameworks (Table 3, p. 13) place equal emphasis on protecting and promoting human rights, managing climate change, and reducing or eliminating other forms of environmental degradation. Business-centric Frameworks (Table 4, p. 14) tend to define societal impact as initiatives that advance the interests of businesses and, in some cases, free enterprise more generally. These frameworks often take a broad view of business interests, employing a stakeholder rather than a stockholder theory of the firm. In these frameworks, other concerns, such as protecting the environment and human rights, are subordinated to safeguarding business interests. However, specific sources argue that protecting the interests of businesses also protects human rights and the environment. An unexpected finding is the fifth category of frameworks: frameworks specifically designed to assess the societal impact of business school research (Table 5, pp. 14-15). Our research reveals there is currently a robust scholarly discussion related to the methods business schools should use to determine the value of research in achieving societal impact. (Siguroarson, 2019, 71-78)

The scholarly sources we reviewed did not include metrics and often expressly indicated they could not because a specific organization's interests often drive the performance measurement structure.

## Practitioner Sources

We examined two types of practitioner sources: think tanks and non-governmental organizations (see tables 6-10, pp. 15-18). We analyzed the research priorities and publications of 50 globally influential think tanks. We identified think tanks by cross-referencing three sources: The University of Pennsylvania Library's Global Think Tank Index, the Wellesley College Career Education Center Think Tank Index, and The London School of Economics Think Tank Index.

Although think tanks produce publications, their work differs fundamentally from academic sources. Think tanks tend to publish responses to current political or economic situations. Their publications appear similar to "Op-Eds" when compared with scholarly sources. Think tanks also produce data, e.g., unemployment rates in a given region, for use by policymakers. Many think tanks explicitly state that their mission is to provide data supporting policymakers' work, but not to advocate for specific policies (such as a particular framework). Therefore, our review of think tank research and publications did not provide societal impact frameworks, as did the academic literature review.

<b>Human Rights-based Frameworks</b>		
These frameworks focus on the severity and magnitude of the challenges to global human rights. Although some are quite comprehensive (e.g. SDGs), other frameworks are more narrow in scope (e.g. TEFCE Toolbox).		
<b>Framework</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Reference (selection)</b>
United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	The Sustainable Development Goals or Global Goals are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future".	<a href="https://sdgs.un.org/goals">https://sdgs.un.org/goals</a>
The European Framework for Community Engagement in Higher Education (TEFCE)	TEFCE Toolbox is a reference tool to understand the dimension of community engagement in a university context. It is a framework for universities to determine how well they perform according to each dimension and where they can improve.	Farnell & Culum Ilic, 2021
Social Quality Configuration of Ontological, Epistemological and Procedural Frameworks	Economic development (including ending extreme poverty), social inclusion, environmental sustainability, and good governance (including security).	Nijhuis, van der Maesen, 2021
Framework for Civil Rights, Environmental Justice, and Health Equity	To promote equal access to publicly funded resources and prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, income, gender, disability, and other factors.	Garcia et al, 2018

Table 1. Human Rights-based Frameworks.

<b>Environment/Climate Change-based Frameworks</b>		
These frameworks provide a conceptualization for an organized exploration of environmental/ecological issues. Theoretical underpinnings can be found in decision theory, game theory, systems science, and sustainability science.		
<b>Framework</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Reference (selection)</b>
Driver, Pressure, State, Impact, Response (DPSIR)	Develop an improved understanding of, indicators for, and appropriate responses to impacts of human activities on the environment along with casual chain drivers-pressure-state-impact-response.	Carr et al. 2007, Svarstad et al. 2008, Binder et al, 2013
Earth Systems Analysis (ESA)	Focus on the global interactions in and dynamics of the earth system as well as its sustainable evolutions.	Schellnhuber 1998, 1999, Schellnhuber et al. 2005, Binder et al, 2013
Ecosystem Services (ES)	Analyzes the integral, dynamic, and complex interactions of biotic and abiotic components of an ecosystem concerning the supply of services this system provides to support life on Earth.	Costanza et al. 1997, Daily 1997, de Groot et al 2002, Limburg et al. 2002, Binder et al, 2013
Material and Energy Flow Analysis (MEFA)	Analyzes the metabolic profiles of societies. Analyzes the material and energy flows as representing the metabolism of a society, region, or nation.	Ayres 1978, Baccini and Bader 1996, Haberl et al. 2004, Brunner and Rechberger 2005; Binder et al, 2013
Management and Transition Framework (MTF)	Focus on understanding water systems, management regimes, and transition process toward more adaptive management; enable comparative analyses of diverse case studies; and facilitate the development of simulation models based on empirical evidence.	Pahl-Wostl 2009, Knieper et al. 2010, Pahl-Wostl and Kranz 2010; Binder et al, 2013
The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises-PSR framework)	Provides an overview of the pressures of human activities on the environment, the state of the environment and natural resources, and the responses of economic and environmental agents to the state of the environment.	Tapio & Willamo, 2008

Table 2. Environment/Climate Change-based Frameworks.

<b>Hybrid Frameworks</b>		
Perhaps the largest group of frameworks, most incorporate both environmental and human rights themes. Few frameworks are laser focused and most intertwine aspects from a sustainability and vulnerability perspective.		
<b>Framework</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Reference (selection)</b>
Social-Ecological Systems Framework (SESF)	Provide a common language for case comparison for organizing the many variables relevant in the analysis of SES into a multitier hierarchy that can be unfolded when needed and for facilitating the selection of variables in a case study.	Ostrom 2007, 2009
Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA)	Analyze which combination of livelihood assets enables the following of what combination of livelihood strategies with sustainable outcomes.	Ashley and Carney 1999, Scoones 1998
The Natural Step (TNS)	Provides a framework for planning toward sustainability based on constitutional principles (how the system is constituted), outcomes (principles for sustainability), and processes to reach this outcome (principles for sustainable development).	Burns and Katz 1997, Robèrt 2000, Upham 2000, Missimer et al. 2010
Vulnerability Framework (TVUL)	Analyzes who and what are vulnerable to multiple environmental and human changes and what can be done to reduce these vulnerabilities.	Turner et al 2003a,b
Human Environment Systems Framework (HES)	Provide a methodological guide or template for analyzing the structure of social-ecological systems and understanding the processes and dynamics between the social and ecological systems and with different scales of the social system.	Scholz and Binder 2004, Scholz et al. 2011a
Framework for Sustainable Finance	Incorporates interactions between the economy (financial return and risk), and the impact on society-environmental factors.	Schoenmaker, 2017
Global Environment Outlook (GEO-4)	Encourages the understanding of interactions between human society and the environment across scales and over time.	Bakkes et al, 2022
Citizen Science Evaluation Framework	Examines three core dimensions: scientific, participant, and socio-ecological and economic.	Kieslinger et al, 2018
Global Reporting Initiative (GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards)	The GRI Standards allow an organization to report information that covers all its most significant impacts on the economy, environment, and people or to focus only on specific topics, such as climate change or child labor. GRI recommends reporting under the GRI Standards.	<a href="https://www.globalreporting.org/">https://www.globalreporting.org/</a>
The International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC International Framework)	Established guiding principles and identified capitals by the IIRC: financial capital, manufactured capital, intellectual capital, human capital, social and relationship capital, and natural capital. Together they represent stores of value that are the basis of an organization's value creation.	<a href="https://www.integratedreporting.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/InternationalIntegratedReportingFramework.pdf">https://www.integratedreporting.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/InternationalIntegratedReportingFramework.pdf</a>

Table 3. Hybrid Frameworks.

<b>Business-centric Frameworks</b>		
Theoretical underpinnings can be found in ESG principles where business organizations are viewed as entities that have responsibility to the world in which they live. However, there appears to be no general agreement about its definition nor a common method of quantifying CSR at the firm level.		
<b>Framework</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Reference (selection)</b>
Business School Impact Survey (BSIS)	A tool designed to determine the extent of a school's impact on its local environment.	Shenton, 2014
Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Principles	A focus on ensuring that a business endures, with societal support, in a sustainable, environmentally viable way.	Tierney, 2022
Well-Being In the Nation (WIN) with Business Framework	Outlines contributions that businesses can make to the well-being of people, places, and equity and racial justice.	Well-Being In the Nation (WIN) Network, <a href="https://winnetwork.org/">https://winnetwork.org/</a> , Pitts et al, 2022
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)-several specific frameworks exist	Theoretical foundations in stakeholder theory, legitimacy theory, and particular contract theory. The responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society.	For various frameworks see Raczkowski et al, 2016
United Nations Global Compact (Communication on Progress)	It consists of nine principles, distilled from key environmental, labor, and human rights agreements, that businesses must abide by. An initiative where CSR and BHR (Business and Human Rights) converge.	Ramasastri, 2015
Framework to Study Grand Challenges	Explores the study of grand challenges from an organizational and management perspective.	George et al, 2016
International Organization for Standardization (ISO 26000 Guidance on social responsibility)	ISO 26000:2010 is intended to assist organizations in contributing to sustainable development. The framework encourages organizations to go beyond legal compliance, recognizing that compliance with the law is a fundamental duty of any organization and an essential part of their social responsibility.	<a href="https://www.iso.org/iso-26000-social-responsibility.html">https://www.iso.org/iso-26000-social-responsibility.html</a>

Table 4. Business-centric Frameworks

<b>Research Impact Frameworks</b>		
Many frameworks view research quality by its social impact. The expectation is that publically funded research deliver benefits to the wider community rather than simply its impact on academia. These frameworks emphasize the growing interest in higher education institutions and the role that scholars hold in creating impactful research.		
<b>Framework</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Reference (selection)</b>
UK Research Excellence Framework (REF)	Three distinct elements are assessed: the quality of outputs (e.g., publications, performances, and exhibitions), their impact beyond academia, and the environment that supports research.	<a href="https://www.ref.ac.uk/">https://www.ref.ac.uk/</a>
Responsible Research in Business and Management (RRBM) Network	Dedicated to transforming business and management research toward achieving humanity's highest aspirations for a better world.	<a href="https://www.rrbm.network/">https://www.rrbm.network/</a>
Australian Research Quality Framework (RQF)	A framework for assessing research quality and the impact of research and ensuring that public funding is being invested in research that would deliver real benefits to the wider community.	<a href="https://www.business.unsw.edu.au/">https://www.business.unsw.edu.au/</a>
New Zealand Performance-Based Review Fund (PBRF)	Designed to increase the quality of research by encouraging and rewarding excellent research in New Zealand's degree-granting organizations. It does not fund specific research projects directly but provides bulk funding to support an organization's research capability, including postgraduate-level teaching support.	<a href="https://www.tec.govt.nz/funding/funding-and-performance/funding/fund-finder/performance-based-research-fund/">https://www.tec.govt.nz/funding/funding-and-performance/funding/fund-finder/performance-based-research-fund/</a>

Italian Peer Review Assessment	Assesses research output, teaching, administrative performance, social impact, and university student competence.	Akbaritabar et al, 2021
European Performance-Based Research Funding	Programs vary widely. Some consider socio-economic impact or diversity-related assessments. Both quantitative and qualitative assessments are utilized.	Zacharewicz et al, 2019
Model of Interweaving Scholarship and Practice	Provides a conceptualization of interweaving scholarship and practice and how impact can emerge.	Spencer et al, 2022
Framework for Qualitative Analysis based on the Distinction between Three Dimensions of Societal Impact	Examines epistemological, artefactual, and interactive-institutional dimensions. Addresses the relevance gap in academic research.	Miettinen et al, 2015
Responsible Innovation Complex	Expansion on RRI. Provides an analytical model for a context-sensitive understanding of responsible innovation. Innovation that meets economic, social, ethical, and environmental goals.	Jakobsen et al, 2019
An Analytical Framework and Operational Framework for Scientific and Societal Impact of Research	Incorporates individual, organizational, and process-context factors to explain distinct configurations of scientific and societal impacts from research.	D 'Este et al., 2018

Table 5. Research Impact Frameworks.

<b>Think Tanks with a Human Rights Focus</b>		
The political perspectives and policy analysis areas of these think tanks vary. But, they share an emphasis on protecting and advancing human rights, essentially as defined by the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as the ultimate objective of both domestic and international public policies.		
<b>Think Tank</b>	<b>Research Emphasis</b>	<b>Website</b>
Brookings Institution - US	Covers a wide range of specific policy topics related to climate change, economic development, civil liberties; specifically support UN SDG framework	<a href="http://www.brookings.edu">www.brookings.edu</a>
Fundacio Getulio Vargas – Brazil	Poverty reduction	<a href="https://portal.fgv.br">https://portal.fgv.br</a>
Peterson Institute for International Economics – US	Monetary policy	<a href="http://www.piie.com">www.piie.com</a>
Woodrow Wilson Center – US	Humanitarian issues, such as refugee resettlement, healthcare, economic impacts of globalization	<a href="http://www.wilsoncenter.org">www.wilsoncenter.org</a>
Center for American Progress – US	Racial equity, healthcare access, economic impacts of climate change	<a href="http://www.americanprogress.org">www.americanprogress.org</a>
Konrad Adenauer Foundation – Germany	European unity, education	<a href="http://www.kas.de">www.kas.de</a>
Cato Institute - US	Protecting civil liberties defined from a politically conservative perspective (liberal individualism)	<a href="http://www.cato.org">www.cato.org</a>
Carnegie Middle East Center	Extending Enlightenment/liberal view of human rights in traditional cultures that tend to be patriarchal	<a href="https://carnegie-mec.org">https://carnegie-mec.org</a>
Observer Research Foundation - India	Extending Enlightenment/liberal view of human rights in India	<a href="http://www.orfonline.org">www.orfonline.org</a>
Human Rights Watch – US	Internationally, documenting politically motivated abuses of human rights among vulnerable populations: migrants and asylum seekers, women, children, the elderly	<a href="http://www.hrw.org">www.hrw.org</a>
African Center for Constructive Resolution of Disputes	Extending Enlightenment/liberal view of human rights in African nations	<a href="http://www.accord.org.za">www.accord.org.za</a>
Barcelona Center for International Affairs	Sustainable development (does not specifically endorse UN SDG framework)	<a href="http://www.cidob.org">www.cidob.org</a>
American Enterprise Institute - US	Protecting civil liberties defined from a politically conservative perspective (liberal individualism)	<a href="http://www.aei.org">www.aei.org</a>

Amnesty International – Great Britain	Arms control, documenting politically motivated abuses of human rights, migrants, and asylum seekers,	www.amnesty.org
German Development Institute	Specifically embraces UN SDG framework	www.idos-research.de
Institute for Economic Affairs – Ghana	Extending Enlightenment/liberal view of human rights in African nations	https://ieagh.org
Imani Center for Policy & Education - Ghana	Extending Enlightenment/liberal view of human rights in African nations	http://imaniafrica.org
London School of Economics – Ideas Think Tank	Specifically embrace sustainable development as defined by the UN SDG framework	www.lse.ac.uk
Urban Institute - US	Race relations, equal access to economic opportunities and economic development	www.urban.org
Food Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Network – South Africa	Food security; managing natural resources; environmental issues; sustainable development	http://fanrpan.org
African Economic Research Consortium - Kenya	Specifically embrace sustainable development as defined by the UN SDG framework	https://aerafrica.org

Table 6. Think Tanks with a Human Rights Focus.

<b>Think Tanks Focused on Environment/Climate Change</b>		
<p>These think tanks address policy areas ranging from economic development, to healthcare access, to global security. However, they share a focus on supporting policies that prioritize addressing climate change and other environmental issues, as the keystone for addressing other challenges, such as sustainable economic development and international security. They distinguish climate change from other environmental issues. For example, a clothing manufacturer may pollute a water source with its dyes. This is an environment issue, which does not directly relate to climate change. Conversely, addressing climate change would not address specific environmental issues, e.g., safely storing radioactive compounds used to treat cancers.</p>		
<b>Think Tank</b>	<b>Research Emphasis</b>	<b>Website</b>
Center for Strategic and International Studies - US	Environment as it relates to energy policy; migration; defense	www.csis.org
French Institute of International Relations	Climate change; human health; healthcare	www.ifri.org
Council on Foreign Relations - US	Climate change; globalization; spread of authoritarian governments	www.cfr.org
Asian Development Bank - Japan	G-7 developing nation engagement; economic development in developing Asian countries that account for climate change, and other environmental issues; sustainable food production	www.edb.org
Kiel Institute for the World Economy - Germany	International economic policy from the perspective of environmental economics	www.ifw-kiel.de

Table 7. Think Tanks with an Environment/Climate Change Focus.

<b>Think Tanks with a Business-Centric Focus</b>		
<p>These think tanks address policy areas ranging from economic development, to domestic and international monetary policy, to micro- and macro-economic analysis. They share a focus on supporting policies that prioritize the success of businesses above other concerns (e.g., human rights and environmental issues /climate change)</p>		
<b>Think Tank</b>	<b>Research Emphasis</b>	<b>Website</b>
Fraser Institute - Canada	Embraces ESG framework	www.fraserinstitute.org
Korea Development Institute – Korea	Economic trend forecasting	https://kdi.re.kr
Center for Economic Policy Research - UK	Embraces ESG framework	https://cepr.net
Center for European Policy Studies – Belgium	Economic development of the EU, e.g., regulations related to international trade, intellectual property, regulating the internet	www.ceps.eu
East Asia Institute – South Korea	Advancing democracy and market economy in East Asia	www.eai.or.kr

Table 8. Think Tanks with a Business-centric Focus.



<b>Think Tanks with a Security Focus</b>		
None of these think tanks address societal impact as a specific policy or research area. However, their research area and publications imply that they define societal impact as policies that promote global peace and security (e.g., reduction of conflicts and suppression of terrorism). Their specific areas of research may include human rights/treatment of refugees, climate change, environmental issues, and economic development, but the value of these is consistently assessed as they enhance or reduce global security.		
<b>Think Tank</b>	<b>Research Emphasis</b>	<b>Website</b>
Chatham House – UK	Impact of trade imbalances, environmental issues and climate change on national security, with a focus on the UK and Western Europe	<a href="http://www.chathamhouse.org">www.chathamhouse.org</a>
International Institute for Strategic Studies – UK	Defense strategies; analysis of militaries, armed conflicts, international power shifts, the impact of changing cultures, norms, values, alliances	<a href="http://www.iiss.org">www.iiss.org</a>
RAND Corporation – US	US National Security, particularly as impacted by energy supplies and human health	<a href="http://www.rand.org">www.rand.org</a>
Japan Institute for International Affairs	International political, economic and security issues such as global power shifts, nuclear non-proliferation, regional integration, terrorism, and energy	<a href="http://www.jiia.or.jp">www.jiia.or.jp</a>
Friedrich Ebert Foundation – Germany	Foreign affairs, economic and labor relations, and progressive politics	<a href="http://dc.fes.de">http://dc.fes.de</a>
Clingendael – The Netherlands Institute for International Relations	Armed conflict; trade and globalization; sustainable development; migration	<a href="http://www.clingendael.org">www.clingendael.org</a>
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace	Security policy; nuclear nonproliferation; Russia; economic policy	<a href="http://www.carnegieendowment.org">www.carnegieendowment.org</a>
Center for International Governance Innovation – Canada	Impact of digitalization on global security, trade, IP laws, innovation	<a href="http://www.cigionline.org">www.cigionline.org</a>
Stockholm International Peace Research Institute	Impact of trade (real or perceived trade imbalances) on global conflict	<a href="https://sipri.org">https://sipri.org</a>
Danish Institute for International Studies	Armed conflicts; migration; managing natural resources; economic development	<a href="http://www.diis.dk">www.diis.dk</a>
Italian Institute for International Political Studies	Climate change/environmental issues, as these impact security, mainly in Western Europe	<a href="https://ispionline.it">https://ispionline.it</a>
Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis – India	International relations, defense	<a href="http://www.idsa.in">www.idsa.in</a>
Hudson Institute – US	Assessing the impact of various ideologies (religiously based and secular) on global security	<a href="http://www.hudson.org">www.hudson.org</a>
Bonn International Center for Conversion – Germany	Non-violent conflict resolution research	<a href="http://www.bicc.de">www.bicc.de</a>
Atlantic Council – US	Economics, business, energy, environment, resilience, and society	<a href="http://www.atlanticcouncil.org">www.atlanticcouncil.org</a>
Transparency International – Germany	Anti-corruption in finance, banking, and business	<a href="http://www.transparency.org">www.transparency.org</a>
International Crisis Group – Belgium	Gather and analyze data related to ongoing global conflicts	<a href="http://www.crisisgroup.org">www.crisisgroup.org</a>
Royal United Services Institute – UK	Military defense; armed conflicts	<a href="http://www.rusi.org">www.rusi.org</a>
German Council on Foreign Relations	Economics, business, public administration, military	<a href="https://dgap.org">https://dgap.org</a>
Istituto Affari Internazionali	Defense, energy and climate, global government and multilateralism	<a href="http://www.iai.it">www.iai.it</a>

Table 9. Think Tanks with a Security Focus.

Think tanks, nonetheless, have underlying perspectives and philosophies that align with the categories identified in academic literature. Moreover, several of the most prominent think tanks, such as Brookings and LSE's Ideas, specifically support UN SDG goals.

Analysis of think tank research areas and publications suggests a category for defining societal responsibility not found in academic literature. For many think tanks, societal responsibility is a question of maintaining global security (human rights and environment/climate change are filtered through the question "What erodes or protects global security?").

The think tanks we reviewed did not publish or otherwise recommend metrics, which aligns with their overall stated mission of providing data and informed opinions to policymakers rather than articulating or recommending specific policies.

In addition to analyzing the work of 50 global think tanks, we analyzed the initiatives and publications of two types of non-governmental organizations. We identified the NGOs by cross-referencing The University of Pennsylvania Library's index of NGOs, the United States Library of Congress's Research Guide to Intergovernmental Organizations, and a list of the ten most influential global NGOs maintained by the non-profit Development Aid. NGOs identified by these sources are of two types: 1) para-government organizations, i.e., established by a coalition of national governments; 2) independent non-profit organizations (Table 10, p. 18).

Our analysis found that para-governmental organizations define societal impact using a Corporate Social Responsibility Framework. Independent non-profit organizations, several of whom focus on ending poverty, tend to explain societal impact using a human-rights-based approach, although not always specifically UN SDGs.

A rich body of scholarly literature examines the relationships between NGO types and their interactions with business. This literature is a subset of a broader discipline, Social Impact Assessment (SIA). Researchers and scholars in this field have formed a professional association, the International Association of Impact Assessment ([www.iaia.org](http://www.iaia.org)).

## Measuring Societal Impact

Our purpose in this section is not to specify metrics but to suggest guidelines for creating quality societal impact metrics. Scholars in the field of Social Impact Assessment define social impact mainly in terms of human rights. "The SIA community of practitioners considers that all issues that affect people, directly or indirectly, are pertinent to social impact assessment." (Frank Vanclay, "International Principles for Social Impact Assessment," *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, vol. 21,

number 1, March 2003, p. 7) Such issues include "people's way of life, their culture, their community, their political systems, their environment, their health and wellbeing, their personal property rights, their fears and aspirations." (Vanclay, 2003, p. 8)

In 2010, the European Union commissioned a study of how member states measure societal impact. The study found, among other things, that "social IA is still in its infancy in most European IA systems. Where it takes place at all, the assessment of social impacts is often less well developed than the assessment of economic or financial impacts." (Study on Social Impact Assessment, European Commission, June 2010, p. 1).

The study also found a "tension between the quantitative ambitions of most IA systems and the qualitative reality of most social IAs." The study concluded, "it is important to set realistic expectations as to which kinds of social impacts can more easily be quantified, and for which the analysis will in most cases have to remain qualitative, and to facilitate thorough and robust qualitative social IA for the latter." Developing accurate societal impact metrics requires a robust conception of "what constitutes qualitative 'analysis' (as opposed to just a cursory mention)," and expanding "the available evidence base through wider and better use of stakeholder consultation." (Study on Societal Impact Assessment, 2010, pp. 3-4)

Since then, research regarding societal impact assessment has evolved. The most "significant recent change in international understandings around projects is the growing prominence of human rights," as articulated in the 2011 United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. (Frank Vanclay, "Reflections on Societal Impact Assessment in the 21st Century," *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, vol. 38, number 2, March, 2020, p. 126; cf., J.P. Smith and L.K. Hessels, (2021). The production of scientific and societal value in research evaluation: a review of societal impact assessment methods. Oxford University Press, 30 (3), 323-25.) Nonetheless, consequences of climate change, climate change mitigation and adaptation actions for people "remain under-developed and deserve more attention." (Vanclay, 2020, p. 128)

Given the state of social impact assessment, we propose that referring to guidelines developed by The Global Reporting Institute (GRI) will be helpful for institutions creating a system of societal impact measurements. The GRI has developed a flexible, modular approach to creating metrics designed to be implemented by many organizations. (A. Toppinen, & K. Korhonen-Kurki, "Global Reporting Initiative and societal impact in managing corporate responsibility: a case study of three multinationals in the forest industry," *Business Ethics: Environment and Responsibility*, 22(2), 2013, pp. 202-217.)

The GRI emphasizes that all metrics should be based on eight principles: accuracy, balance, clarity, comparability, completeness, sustainability context, timeliness, and verifiability. (GRI Standards, Foundation, 2021) Furthermore, it recommends organizing measurement systems around three standard types: Universal, Sector, and Topic.

As the name suggests, Universal Standards apply to all types of organizations and involve "disclosures that the organization uses to provide information about its reporting practices and other organizational details, such as its activities, governance, and policies." (Consolidated Set of GRI Standards, 2021) Sector Standards and Topic Standards, defined by GRI, are based on an organization's material topics.

The GRI articulates a four-step process an organization may use to identify its material topics: 1) understand the organization's context; 2) identify actual and potential impacts (positive

Para-governmental NGOs	Independent NGOs
International Monetary Fund	BRAC International
World Bank	Doctors Without Borders
World Trade Organization	Open Society Foundations
World Health Organization	Ashoka
North Atlantic Treaty Organization	Danish Refugee Council
European Union	Mercy Corps
African Union	JA International
	Landesa

Table 10. NGOs.

and negative); 3) assess the significance of the impacts; 4) prioritize the most significant impacts for reporting. (GRI Standards, Material Topics, 2021).

Our proposal does not necessarily mean that all organizations conform to GRI's Sector and Topic standards. Instead, we suggest that GRI's method of establishing levels of standards and allowing organizations to adopt standards based on their material topics would be helpful for organizations regarding their measurement of societal impacts. Moreover, the eight principles would be an effective way to ensure integrity in measurement and reporting.

## Conclusion

Our research began with a question of praxis: how can organizations' social and environmental impacts be assessed (and possibly changed)? To answer this, we analyzed empirical scholarly and practitioner sources from around the globe. Our research revealed a complex landscape of terms, criteria, perspectives, and priorities. Based on our discoveries, our question became: how can this vast discourse be mapped or systematized to provide clearer answers to praxis questions like that with which we began?

In our subsequent effort to systematize, we turned to ethical theory as a tool. Based on our literature review, we assert that definitions of societal impact and related frameworks we analyzed share two general underlying principles: protecting and advancing human rights and addressing environmental/climate-change issues. As Giddings, Hopwood, and O'Brien (2002, p. 191) noted, "Nearly all our actions have an impact on the environment." Inescapably and intertwined with environmental impact is the concept of human rights.

Regardless of how societal impact is conceptualized, we argue that, at its core, the notion centers around these two underlying principles. In other words, an organization may assess and improve its societal impact by applying two *prima facie* principles: protect and advance human rights and address environmental and climate change issues. Like other pluralistic, principle-based approaches to applied ethics (e.g., biomedical and some business ethics), we maintain that these two principles emerge from "ordinary, shared moral beliefs" found in the empirical sources we examined. (Beauchamp and Childress, 2012, p. 100)

Although there is ongoing debate among philosophers regarding the status and content of specific human rights, we found in the empirical cross-cultural literature wide acceptance of the concept of rights as inalienable and inherent to all humans. Moreover, our mapping of sources found that human rights are often specified as basic standards for a life of dignity and the notion that all humans are created equal. While there is debate in the philosophical literature regarding the definition (and thus usefulness) of human dignity, in the social science and practitioner literature we examined, dignity and equality are inescapably interconnected and scarcely controversial. Our analysis found that other actions derived from the principle of protecting and promoting human rights include promoting and protecting freedoms, respect for others, non-discrimination, and tolerance. While acknowledging that conceptions of rights are still developing in ethical and legal thought, we want to highlight that attending to rights is a principle that emerges across empirical sources as a specific action guide organizations should use to make decisions.

The other principle common to the frameworks examined addresses environmental and climate change issues. The schol-

arly and practitioner sources we reviewed share that policy mechanisms are necessary to modify human behaviors that can negatively impact the physical environment, which ultimately has adverse implications for humans. Indeed, Giddings et al. (2002, p. 191) note that "human life itself depends on the environment." The principle of addressing environmental and climate changes is often specified as sustainable production, protection of both natural resources and ecosystems, balance and synergy in human development activities and natural systems, corporate responsibility for the continued viability of biological systems, and building a knowledge base that supports a greater understanding of the environment.

Further philosophical analysis can clarify how these two principles may be specified and balanced. As in other principle-based approaches to applied ethics, these *prima facie* principles may conflict when applied to specific cases, e.g., when a decision to protect an ecosystem would negatively affect the rights of the people living in or near that ecosystem. Such analysis is crucial but beyond the scope of our research.

Because our research began as an examination of the ways the human and environmental impact of organizations could be assessed, we also considered several questions relevant to leaders of organizations, such as the evolving understanding of the purpose of the firm and the relationship between the global economy and the two underlying principles. Further research can also explore the relationship between economic effects and the two primary principles we have presented here. The fact that the economy directly impacts people (i.e., business profits ultimately affect individuals' standard of living) and the environment (i.e., firms' decisions can significantly impact the environment) suggests a dynamic relationship between the global economy and what we propose as the principles of societal impact. We provide the following illustration of our conclusion (Figure 1, p. 19).

While many organizations are increasing attention to their social and environmental impact, business models, in particular, are shifting. Indeed, our research supports the notion of creating a balance between profit maximization and societal impact. Although profit maximization is still important, businesses realize they do not operate in a vacuum. Instead, business entities are a part of a larger global society, with impacts on the economy leading to direct and/or indirect effects on human rights and the environment. Similarly, organizations are increasingly pressured by stakeholders of businesses, governments, and non-profits to address various societal problems.

As our research shows, societal impact can be defined in multiple ways. Many entities use the concept of societal impact as an umbrella term to cover many types and forms of activities that can positively impact society. Many organizations desire to

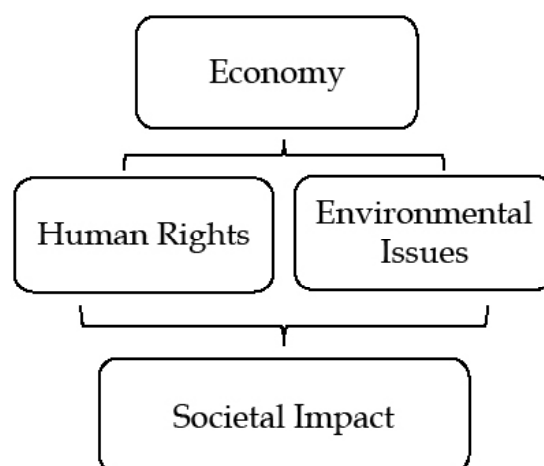


Figure 1. Factors Affecting Societal Impact.

show their positive impact on the world around them. Being “a force for good,” which includes human-rights-based issues and

environmental matters, coupled with attention to profits, may become the new *modus operandi* of tomorrow’s organizations.

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# Tomorrow's Physicians' Perceptions of How Physicians Should Be Led and Their Interest in Pursuing Leadership Positions

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## Abstract

This qualitative study investigated tomorrow's physicians' - medical students' - perceptions of how physicians should be led and their interest in pursuing leadership positions as these issues have never been studied in Finland. In 2020, an online questionnaire was distributed to final-year medical students (n = 162, response rate 110/68%). Students' level of interest in working as physician leaders in the future was also investigated. An inductive content analysis by thematization was the chosen method. To make leadership successful in the medical profession, both leadership and management skills are required. Physicians should be seen as individuals and should be led by a trustable, reachable, innovative, and visionary physician leader who participates in patient work in addition to leadership work with good social, communication, and problem-solving skills as well as common sense and emotional intelligence. Furthermore, a good leader ensures that physicians can focus on their medical work with appropriate resources in well-functioning conditions. Our study revealed three novel results: (1) A good physician leader reflects the virtues of a good physician; (2) physicians' workload should be customized according to factors such as physicians' diversity and work

competence; and (3) the interest in future leadership among medical students was greater compared to the findings of previous literature.

**Key Words:** Physician, physician leadership, medical student, medical education

## Introduction

Leadership competence is expected to become a great priority for physicians in medical education as well as healthcare settings (Lindgren and Gordon, 2016; Rotenstein et al., 2019, 2021). Furthermore, physician engagement in healthcare leadership has been associated with improved organizational performance and patient care (Goodall, 2011; Sarto and Veronesi, 2016; Tasi et al., 2019) and demonstrated to have a positive impact on workforce and patient outcomes (Onyura et al., 2019) as well as staff well-being (Päätaalo and Kauppi, 2016).

Even though not every physician will pursue a formal leadership position in health organizations, most will likely serve as informal leaders in their community or practice (Maddalena, 2016) and will consequently influence their organizations as informal leaders (Huikko-Tarvainen, 2022; Wilson et al., 2020). Surprisingly, however, it has been found that numerous medical students are not particularly interested in leadership work (Abbas et al., 2011). Moreover, resident physicians do not consider formal leadership positions as very appealing, primarily due to the competing duties of physicians and leaders, as they feel that one can be either a skilled physician or a skilled leader, but not both. Such contradictory logic may lead to situations in which promising younger physicians with leadership qualities turn down offers of taking on leadership positions as they are a threat to the identity of a practicing physician. (Styhre et al., 2016.)

Nevertheless, medical students have emphasized the need to incorporate leadership and management into undergraduate education (Abbas et al., 2011; Alzaharani et al., 2021) but simultaneously, they have identified associated obstacles, such as a lack of given time, competing educational demands, and a potential disinterest in leadership skills and training by some students and faculty (Abbas et al., 2011). These results are in line with the study on working-age physicians (n = 1,233), which revealed that although 22% of women and 25% of men were in-

terested in leadership, more leadership training was required (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health., 2020). To inform and improve the leadership curriculum in medical education, considering that generational perceptions change over time, the voices of medical students—tomorrow's physicians and leaders—should be heard in terms of how they expect themselves to be led and what they expect from their leaders.

## Theoretical Framework

### Good physician leadership in light of previous literature

Numerous leadership studies reveal the importance of both leadership and management in the leadership work. The goal of managing is to achieve efficiency, predictability, and order, while that of leading is to achieve change—the importance of each also depends on the case. In leadership, subordinates are influenced by a leader to understand and accept what needs to be done as well as to make concerted efforts to accomplish it. (Kotter, 1990, pp. 4–5; Yukl, 2013, pp. 22–26.)

Nevertheless, in physician leadership, the leader's role is often a hybrid role that combines not only leadership and management work but also requires a knowledge of medicine (Berghout et al., 2017, 2020; Huikko-Tarvainen, 2022; Huikko-Tarvainen et al., 2021; Quinn and Perelli, 2016; Sartirana et al., 2019; Spehar et al., 2015). Physicians who possess an appropriate balance of medical skills and a proper work ethic and etiquette have been seen to succeed more in the role of a physician leader. Further, physician leaders are also expected to be trustworthy, fair, empathic, sociable, and communicative, with a capacity to provide proper feedback, show collegial respect, and display emotional intelligence. Beyond this, they must be familiar with the impacts that the daily work of physicians has on physicians' lives. (Alzahrani et al., 2021; Huikko-Tarvainen, 2022). In addition, good physician leaders must master a wide variety of leadership styles as well as have sufficient knowledge to select which leadership approach is appropriate in each situation (Huikko-Tarvainen, 2022; Saxena et al., 2017).

In most professional organizations, the people being led and those who are leading them are both experts (Mintzberg, 1998). Consequently, working-age physicians prefer leaders who are also physicians (Berghout et al., 2017; Goodall, 2011; Huikko-Tarvainen, 2022), and numerous medical students state that physicians should be leaders of multi-professional teams in the health care (Abbas et al., 2011). The characteristics of good physicians—as perceived by physicians, medical students, medical teachers, and patients—include good social communication and leadership skills as well as a strong and consistent moral character. Furthermore, physicians ought to be compassionate, empathic, honest, humble, responsive, persistent, trustworthy, and inspirational. Additionally, they must be those who employ clinically sound practices, are good listeners, are patient-oriented, contribute to scientific knowledge of medicine, and possess the most current knowledge in their general and specialized fields. (Chen et al., 2017; O'Donnabhain and Friedman, 2018; Schattner et al., 2004; Sehiralti et al., 2010; Warm et al., 2022.)

To succeed in fast-paced work and, simultaneously, be capable of accomplishing long-term goals, physicians with leadership intentions must possess interpersonal skills (team leading, active listening, conflict resolution, and the capacity to provide constructive yet fair feedback), systems management skills (the abilities to analyze processes and improvements, oversee logistics and supply chains, offer incentives, administer organizational planning, and perform measurements and data analytics), and effective communication and planning skills (the abilities to

communicate, plan, discuss, make decisions, devise strategies, cultivate a beneficial work culture, and handle contingencies). (Rotenstein et al., 2021.)

However, research on medical students' perceptions of physician leadership is rare and partially controversial. On one hand, medical students have been found to have a traditional understanding of leadership and followership, according to which followers—as receivers of leadership—operate in accordance with the leader's vision and goals. (Gordon et al., 2015). Similarly, hospital-based second-year medical residents have been found to perceive a clear separation between leadership and management as well as consider management inferior to leadership, which reflects a more traditional perception of the two domains (Barrow et al., 2011). On the other hand, medical students consider communication, ethics, conflict resolution, time organization, managed care, management priorities, bookkeeping, quality development, public speaking, and risk control to be more important in determining good physician leadership than the capacity to negotiate, write proposals, and investment principles (Abbas et al., 2011; Mintz and Stoller, 2014; Varkey et al., 2009).

## Methods

An online questionnaire was sent to 162 final-year medical students at the University of Oulu, Finland in November 2020. The response rate was 68% ( $n = 110$ ). We also collected relevant background information (Table 1, p. 25). Initially, the potential participants received an invitation letter, which provided detailed information on the purpose of the study. The letter clearly indicated that their participation would be entirely voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time as well as deny access to the use of their data. Anonymity was also guaranteed. All the participants gave permission for their data to be collected and used for research purposes. This study was conducted in accordance with the instructions of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity and in compliance with European Union's data protection regulations as well as the established research practices of the University of Oulu and its Faculty of Medicine. Full consideration was given to matters related to data protection in accordance with the ethical principles applicable to research subjects (Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity, 2012).

A qualitative approach (Gibbs, 2018) was employed because the goal of the research was to further our understanding of what constitutes good leaders and good physician leadership according to final-year medical students. The participants were asked to freely respond to three main questions: (1) How should physicians be led? (2) How would you describe a good physician leader? (3) Would you be interested in working as a physician leader in the future? The answers to these questions were digitally saved and coded to make the data more analytically accessible. The answers yielded data that was equivalent to nine A4-sized pages (Arial font, 12 point, single spacing).

An inductive content analysis utilizing thematization was selected, as this method is well suited for qualitative research. The purpose of the content analysis was to obtain descriptions of the phenomenon that would enable us to connect the findings to a wider context and compare them to those of prior studies. The analysis was based on the systematic examination of the collected data and focused on relevant themes and patterns by selecting common or exceptional statements or viewpoints. (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008.)

The analysis was conducted sequentially. First, we familiar-



ized ourselves with the data by iteratively reading the content until we were confident that we had gained a thorough understanding of it. The elemental codes (words and phrases)—which represented the most basic form of the raw data—were grouped, combined, and organized into categories that indicated the expectations of (1) a good physician leader and (2) good physician leadership. In the next step, these findings were categorized to create potential subcategories. Then, the subcategories were reviewed and refined until they became consistent and identifiable distinctions appeared between them. Next, the sub-themes were named: (1) traits, (2) education, (3) communication and support, (4) working culture, and (5) workload. These sub-themes were combined into main themes to create a unifying concept: (1) virtues of a good physician leader and (2) working conditions. These themes were analyzed both separately and in the context of the overall thematic structure. Our data-driven analysis was repeated twice by the first author and then evaluated by all the authors to avoid bias. During the analysis and coding phases, the first author met regularly with the other authors to receive feedback on the coding system. At the end of the process, we added the carefully selected and anonymized excerpts to the findings to illustrate our interpretations (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008) and arranged the material in tabular format (see Table 2, pp. 26-27).

## Results

The information of the participants is provided in Table 1 (p. 25).

Female	53% (n=58)
Male	46% (n=51)
No indication of gender	1% (n=1)
Worked as a doctor during medical studies	98% (n=108)
<25 years of age	8% (n=9)
25-30 years of age	65% (n=71)
31-35 years of age	14% (n=16)
36-40 years of age	4% (n=4)
>41 years of age	9% (n=10)
High school as the highest educational background	70% (n=77)
A prior higher educational background	30% (n=33)
Interested in working as a physician leader	32.0% (n=33)
Might be interested in working as a physician leader	20.4% (n=21)
Not interested in working as a physician leader	47.5% (n=49)
Did not expressed interested in working as a physician leader	0.1%% (n=7)

Table 1. The information of participants.

Our study generated two main thematic categories: (1) virtues of a good physician leader and (2) working conditions. The virtues of a good physician leader were divided into three sub-themes: (1) traits, (2) education, and (3) communication and support. The main theme of the working conditions was divided

into two sub-themes: (1) working culture and (2) workload (Table 2, pp. 26-27).

The results pertaining to what makes leadership successful in the medical profession reveal that both leadership and management skills are required. The led physicians should be seen as individuals and be led by a trustworthy, approachable, innovative, and visionary physician leader who participates in patient work alongside leadership work and possesses good social, communication, and problem-solving skills as well as common sense and emotional intelligence. Furthermore, a good leader ensures that physicians can focus on their medical work by providing them with appropriate resources in well-functioning conditions. Thus, a good physician leader reflects the virtues of a good physician.

## Discussion

In the following account, the results of our study are discussed in more detail in the light of the three novel findings of the study.

### Virtues of a good physician leader

According to our findings, when good physician leadership is in place, the led physicians should be viewed as individuals and should be led by a trustworthy, approachable, and visionary physician leader who possesses good social, communication, and problem-solving skills as well as emotional intelligence, common sense, and an innovative mindset. The leader participates not only in leadership work but also in clinical patient work. A good physician leader is visible without drawing attention to themselves and voluntarily pursues leadership positions. Moreover, the participants considered collegiality and professionalism as mandatory. These findings are in line with those of previous literature (see e.g., Abbas et al., 2011; Alzahrani et al., 2021; Huikko-Tarvainen, 2022; Mintz and Stoller, 2014).

Although a medical background and participation in patient work were seen as requirements for leaders, they were not considered sufficient on their own; an additional leadership training was considered necessary. Leaders understand the functioning of healthcare organizations, economics, and law and know how to prioritize but do not lead only by looking at costs. Leadership work is based on evidence-based information, and the culture of work is built on trust. These findings resemble those of previous studies, which have found that good physician leaders need to possess the capability of mastering a wide variety of leadership styles as well as to select the appropriate approach for every situation (Huikko-Tarvainen, 2022; Saxena et al., 2017).

Considering that the participants were medical students with limited experience of working as physicians, their expectations regarding the virtues of good leaders were, interestingly, rather similar to those expressed by more experienced physicians (Abbas et al., 2011; Huikko-Tarvainen, 2022; Mintz and Stoller, 2014) and partially comparable to those revealed in studies of general leadership (see e.g., Yukl, 2013, p. 18). In all these contexts, the expectation was that (good) leaders should possess good communication and social skills and should be honest, fair, and empathic; they should also provide constructive feedback, maintain a collegial attitude, and possess emotional intelligence (see e.g., Abbas et al., 2011; Huikko-Tarvainen, 2022; Mintz and Stoller, 2014).

It is already well known that physicians prefer their leaders to be physicians (Berghout et al., 2017; Goodall, 2011; Huikko-Tarvainen, 2022) and that medical ethic and work etiquette, combined with the appropriate balance of medical skills, are a good foundation for success in physician leadership (Huikko-

MAIN THEMES	SUB-THEMES	RESULTS	EXCERPTS
<b>VIRTUES OF A GOOD PHYSICIAN LEADER</b>	<b>Traits</b>	<p>Good leaders are trustworthy, honest, empathetic, easy to approach, reachable, open-minded, collegial and have good social and problem-solving skills. They also possess proper etiquette, are visible without drawing attention to themselves and pursue leadership positions voluntarily.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- [The leader] makes himself/herself visible... asks how employees are doing, and about the work situation – for example, are there enough appointment times and enough time for office work?</li> <li>- [The leader] is interested in the well-being of employees and occasionally appears, even in the coffee room, without isolating herself/himself in her/his office.</li> <li>- Expert, good role model, approachable, well behaving, reliable, collegial.</li> <li>- The leader should voluntarily approach [the leading position] and not be forced [to be a leader].</li> </ul>
	<b>Education</b>	<p>The classic characteristics of a good physician are a model for a good physician leader. Most participants believed that to understand subordinates better and be able to teach and coach, physician leaders should have both a medical education and work experience as physicians in addition to possessing updated medical knowledge. Leaders' medical background and participation in patient work were seen as mandatory but not sufficient solely; leadership training was also expected. Good leaders have a good knowledge of economics, law and research, and their work must be both effective and efficient in terms of costs to the public. Knowledge of how to prioritise healthcare costs is expected, but leading only with cost in mind is not accepted; evidence-based information should be used. Good leaders act both as role models and peers for physicians, but they are also expected to serve as a bridge between physicians and the administration of the healthcare organisation. This requires an understanding of the healthcare organisation not only as a whole but also in terms of its multiple levels and professional features.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- [A good leader has] pretty much the same qualities as a good doctor. They listen and strive to solve problems and do not avoid difficulties.</li> <li>- [A good leader leads] with determination and professionalism.</li> <li>- The leader must understand the peculiarities of doctors' work but also possess leadership training.</li> <li>- [A good leader] understands both medicine and economics.</li> <li>- Leading is not driven only by saving from the costs and leading is not separated from reality.</li> <li>- [A leader is] thorough, endowed with good social skills, fair and efficient, but they do not lead only based on financial considerations.</li> <li>- In healthcare, the supervisor/leader must understand not only jurisprudence and economics but also leadership and management.</li> <li>- [A leader] understands economics, medicine and how things work in real life.</li> <li>- In addition to leadership work, leaders also participate in clinical work. This way, they know how the work community and workplace operate and how to relate doctors' development proposals to the administration.</li> </ul>
<b>WORKING CONDITIONS</b>	<b>Communication and support</b>	<p>Good leaders use communication, facts, common sense, and evidence-based information as the foundations of their decisions and do not lead just by feelings. Responsibility and readiness to explain one's decisions are required. In certain situations, it might be advisable for leadership to be shared with peers. Even though physician leaders should respect their peers as human beings and experts – that is, respect their autonomy and opinions – they should also provide clear and confident guidance and supervision when and if asked by them. Leaders should give their subordinates sufficient time to complete their work and show an interest in their well-being and success. Good leaders do not just hear their employees – they listen to them. This encourages employees to feel heard and valued. Good leaders support subordinates in their work and careers and back them in tough situations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leadership based on facts and wisdom rather than emotions. Leaders must be able to justify their opinions.</li> <li>- By listening to doctors, the leader gains a (preferably personal) comprehensive understanding of the realities of their work.</li> <li>- [A leader is] part of the team, an experienced clinician with up-to-date knowledge and a background in research work.</li> <li>- [A leader] leads with evidence-based management and actively participates in necessary research.</li> <li>- Adequate resources must be allocated to workplace well-being, the rational pace of work and, especially, the training and guidance of young colleagues. Therefore, it would be good if the leader was also a doctor.</li> </ul>

<b>WORKING CONDITIONS</b>	<b>Working culture</b>	The development of a well-functioning work community and working culture built on trust – including understanding physicians' autonomy – was expected. This could be achieved by taking the lead in operations but also respecting other people by understanding each person's mindset and capability to work. The leadership approach should be flexible and patient but also firm when needed. Alongside respecting others and their ideas, leaders must retain and enforce their authority; thus, their leader role should be strengthened in tight or demanding situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- [Leadership work should be done] collegially but firmly. Fair manner. Purposefully. Innovatively. By listening to others.</li> <li>- There must be certain common rules for the work; however, at the same time, doctors must be given an autonomy in their decision-making.</li> <li>- [A leader] strives to create an organisation that works as smoothly and cost-effectively as possible without burdening the employees.</li> </ul>
	<b>Workload</b>	Good leaders organise working conditions in ways that properly allocate time, resources, and tasks, thereby bolstering organisational performance and outcomes. Physicians must be allowed to focus on their own specialised work; that is, physicians should not be assigned duties related to other fields or departments of the healthcare organisation (e.g., the work of secretaries, nurses, cleaners, or IT staff). It is necessary for good leaders to appreciate and to take into account physicians' diversity and work competence. In practice, this means considering each employee's workload and educational needs. Consequently, a fair and equal workload allocation is the preferred aim, as is correcting imbalances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In physician leadership, frameworks for the work must be provided, development ideas must be heard, and operations must be developed.</li> <li>- [A good leader] does not tolerate physicians being burdened with the work of others (nurses, practical nurses, secretaries, cleaners, and IT staff).</li> <li>- [A good leader should treat] everyone equally, but the characteristics of individuals should be taken into account.</li> <li>- Every doctor is different. Not everyone should be required exactly the same, e.g., have the same schedule.</li> <li>- A good physician leader takes into account employees' personal preferences for the job and is able to offer different job descriptions while always considering the legal obligations.</li> </ul>

Table 2. The perceptions of the participants.

Tarvainen, 2022). But when results of the current study are compared to those of the previous literature, it is a novel finding of our study that expected virtues of a good physician leader resemble the classic characteristics of a good physician (see e.g., Chen et al., 2017; O'Donnabhain and Friedman, 2018; Schattner et al., 2004; Sehiralti et al., 2010; Warm et al., 2022). In practice, this implies that when medical students are being taught how to be good physicians, they are simultaneously being educated on those elements that are vital to serving as a good leader.

Going beyond the general definition of leadership as “an influential process for facilitating the performance of a common task” (Yukl, 2013, p. 36), the participants believed that good physician leaders (1) participate in clinical patient work, (2) provide them with teaching and coaching, and (3) respect them as both individuals and peers, which aligns with the previous definition of physician leadership, according to which physician leadership combines general leadership and management with medical expertise (see e.g., Berghout et al., 2017; Huikko-Tarvainen, 2022; Quinn and Perelli, 2016; Spehar et al., 2015).

Moreover, the finding that physician leaders should have not only a medical education but also experience working as a physician appears to be a universal, intrinsic requirement for all physicians, regardless of the length of their medical career (see e.g., Berghout et al., 2017; Huikko-Tarvainen, 2022); therefore, as a common demand, must be associated with the medical profession. This is not entirely surprising because, in most professional organizations, the people being led and those who are leading them are both experts (Mintzberg, 1998).

Further, the finding of our study for that leaders must master both leadership work and physician work resembles the previous studies on the hybrid roles of physician leaders (see e.g., Berghout et al., 2020; Huikko-Tarvainen, 2022; Huikko-Tarvainen et al., 2021; Sartirana et al., 2019) and emphasizes the need to possess both leadership and management skills, which

is also supported by previous literature (see e.g., Yukl, 2013, pp. 22–26).

#### A physician's work with a customized workload

Based on our study, flexible and functional working conditions are expected, and the led physicians should be allowed to focus on their own specialized work. In other words, physicians should not be assigned duties related to other fields or departments of the healthcare organization (e.g., the work of secretaries, nurses, cleaners, or IT staff). In addition, the workload should be customized to respect the diversity and work competence of the led physicians, which represents the second novel finding of our study.

These results are contradictory to the previous findings in which residents made a clear distinction between management and leadership or considered management as inferior to leadership (see e.g., Barrow et al., 2011), and had a traditional understanding of leadership where followers, as receivers of leadership, act in accordance with the leader's vision and goals (see e.g., Gordon et al., 2015). Instead, the medical students in this study wanted the voices of the led physicians to be heard and heeded. That is, our study emphasizes the need for leaders to possess both leadership and management skills to maximize the likelihood that their work as leaders will be successful, which is supported by previous literature on the perceptions of more experienced physicians (see e.g., Huikko-Tarvainen, 2022; Rotenstein et al., 2019, 2021).

#### Greater interest in physician leadership

A majority of the participants (98%,  $n = 108$ ) had already worked as physicians during medical school, thereby implying that they were exposed to leadership and met physician leaders in person and, thus, had an informed perspective on what to expect from a leader and leadership in general. Unlike in most prior studies (see e.g., Abbas et al., 2011; Styhre et al., 2016),

a significantly high proportion (52%) of the medical students in our study were interested in or might consider a formal leadership position in the future, which was the third novel finding of our study. Greater interest in leadership is a desirable trend among medical students because, as noted by most of the participants, one foundation of successful physician leadership is that the physician leaders are also physicians themselves. Greater interest in future leadership may also help overcome, or at least mitigate, possible challenges confronting the hybrid work of physician leaders (see e.g., Berghout et al., 2020; Huikko-Tarvainen et al., 2021; Sartirana et al., 2019)

Based on our study, it is recommended that—even though an education of a good physician provides a good role model for a good physician leader—leadership education (including leadership and management skills) should be provided in medical school, as has also been noted in previous literature (see e.g., Abbas et al., 2011; Alzahrani et al., 2021; Gordon et al., 2015; Huikko-Tarvainen et al., 2021). This indicates that good leaders and leadership skills will continue to be valued in the future. Thus, leadership education should play a prominent role in the medical curriculum.

### Limitations and future research

The findings of our study are limited because our sample was derived from a single cohort of Finnish final-year medical students. However, the sample was sufficiently large, and the response rate was excellent. In the future, it would be worthwhile to repeat our study every year and compare the results over a long period of time. It would also be useful to compare the perceptions of medical students from different grades as well as of physicians at different career stages and from different specializations. This would enable a broader, more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon coupled with more in-depth insights into the perceptions of medical students who are also digital natives. Finally, even though the foundations of health-care organizations worldwide are similar, contextual effects may influence the transferability and/or generalizability of our findings on leadership practices (Onyura et al., 2019).

### Conclusion

Our study reveals that the perceptions of what constitutes a good leader and good leadership among final-year medical students are wide-ranging and somewhat similar to the findings of previous studies on the topic. Beyond this, our study also produced

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three novel results. Although it is well known that physicians prefer their leaders to come from the medical profession (see e.g., Berghout et al., 2017; Goodall, 2011; Huikko-Tarvainen, 2022), the notion that the classic characteristics of a good physician can serve as a model for a good physician leader—our first novel finding—has thus far received little or no attention.

Our second novel finding was that good leadership entails tailoring workloads to the individual strengths and skills of physicians, which requires considering physicians' diversity and work competence. Therefore, the medical students who participated in this study were not traditional followers—receivers of leadership—who act only in accordance with their leaders' visions and goals (Gordon et al., 2015); instead, they wanted physicians' voices to be heard. Finally, the third novel finding of our research was a greater interest in leadership work among medical students compared to that in earlier studies (see e.g., Abbas et al., 2011; Ministry of Social Affairs and Health., 2020; Styhre et al., 2016).

### Ethics approval and consent to participate

The research was carried out in accordance with the instructions of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity, in compliance with EU data protection regulations and the research practices of the University of Oulu and the Faculty of Medicine. The permission for the study was granted by the Faculty of Medicine in accordance with current policies.

### Availability of data and materials

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

### Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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# Hylianismin Narratiivit ja Kaupallinen Semiotiikka

Esa Mangeloja

## Abstract

The Legend of Zelda video game series demonstrates intriguing developments in storytelling and its relationship with the utilization of religious themes. As the series progresses, it incorporates elements from various religious traditions, including Judeo-Christian symbolism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. The strong presence of nature-based religions and Eastern philosophies remains a significant thematic element throughout the series, contributing to its narrative and global popularity. Contemporary media fosters religious syncretism within society. It can be assumed that the religious diversity in Zelda games promotes players' openness to different religious perspectives and accepting attitudes toward syncretism. The convergence of social media and games may also lead to the development of individual religious beliefs that may no longer adhere strictly to traditional religious teachings. Among Zelda players, an increase in religious openness and the acceptance of combining and adapting various religious views can be expected. However, it is unlikely that the Legend of Zelda series carries a significant religious agenda. While it may enhance players' syncretistic attitudes and general religious tolerance, the main character "Link" is unlikely to transform players into committed religious actors, especially not in the context of Christianity. In contrast, "The Pilgrim's Progress: The Video Game" explicitly aims

for religious education. This study suggests that the religious references in the Legend of Zelda series primarily serve the purpose of maximizing the game's commercial success. The religiosity in these games should be interpreted as a commercial addition, especially when compared to a game like "The Pilgrim's Progress: The Video Game," where Christianity plays a more central and meaningful role. The Legend of Zelda games utilize religious imagery as a ritualistic element primarily to ensure the commercial success of the series. The article employs theoretical tools from the narrative analysis and economic studies. The narrative and development of the Zelda series are fundamentally driven by economic objectives. The explicit symbols, such as the crucifix, reincarnation, and the trinity, reflect a broader sociological and societal context. In essence, the religious references in the Zelda series should be understood as an attempt to maximize the commercial success of the video game.

**Key Words:** Commercial semiotics, narrative analysis, video games, Zelda

## Johdanto

Videopelejä käsittelevä akateeminen tutkimuskirjallisuus on viime vuosina lisääntynyt huomattavasti ja myös niiden uskonnollisiin elementteihin on kiinnitetty lisääntyvää huomiota. Erityisen tunnettuja ovat uskontotieteen professori Rachel Wagnerin ja kirjallisuustieteen professori Joseph Campbellin kehittämät uskonnollisen kuvaston käyttöä populaarisessa digitaalisessa mediassa ja eri mytologioiden tutkimuksessa strukturoivat työkalut (Wagner 2011).

Espen Aarseth (2003) on formuloinut kolme metodologista tapaa, joiden kautta videopelien analyysia voi harjoittaa. Ensinnä voi tutkia pelin sääntöjä, designia ja pelimekaniikkaa. Toiseksi voi havainnoida muiden hahmojen käyttäytymistä pelissä ja pelin aikana, sisältäen myös muiden pelaajien raporttien ja arvostelujen lukemista. Kolmanneksi peliä voi tutkia pelaamalla peliä itse. Aarseth (2003) pitää viimeksi mainittua kaikkein tärkeimpänä videopelien analyysin menetelmänä. Tässä tutkimuksessa on Zelda pelisarjaa analysoitu käyttäen kaikkia kolmea lähestymistapaa.

Artikkelissa keskitytään erityisesti Zelda -videopelissä esiintyviin uskonnollisiin viittauksiin ja niiden käyttöön taloudellisen hyödyn maksimoinnin välineenä. Artikkelissa analysoidaan Legend of Zelda -videopelisarjan generoimia merkityssignaaleja narratiivisen taloustieteen, digitaalisen mediakulttuurin ja uskontososiologian näkökulmista. Narratiivisen tutkimusperinteen mukaisesti tulkitaan videopelien ikonografiaa, uskonnollista viitekehystä ja samalla uskonnollisia merkityksiä peilataan osana laajempaa taloudellista, sosiologista ja yhteiskunnallista narratiivia. Zelda-pelisarjan uskonnolliset viittaukset tuleekin nähdä vain yrityksenä maksimoida videopelin kaupallista menestystä.

Artikkeli valaisee Zelda-pelien suhdetta eri uskontoihin ja uskonnollisen kuvaston hyödyntämisen ritualistista luonnetta, jonka varsinaisena päämääränä on pelisarjan kaupallisen menestyksen varmistaminen. Analyysi hyödyntää mytologioiden tutkimuksen teoreettisia välineitä, joilla Zeldan narratiivi ja tarinankehitys paljastuvat olennaisesti luonteeltaan taloudelliseksi. Pelisarjan eksplisiittisesti havaittavat symbolit ja metodit, kuten krusifiksi, jälleensyntyminen ja kolminaisuus, peilautuvat laajemman sosiologisen ja yhteis-

kunnallisen kontekstin impliittiseksi välittäjiksi.

Zelda-pelisarja ja sen sankarihahmo Link voidaan nähdä edustavan jossain määrin myös kristinuskon viitekehystä, sillä pelisarjassa esiintyy useita kristinuskon symboleja. Kun näitä Zeldan uskonnollisia ominaisuuksia verrataan toiseen peliin, ”The Pilgrim's Progress: The Video Game”, paljastuu Zeldan ”kristillisyyss” kuitenkin vain rekvisiitaksi ja päälle liimatuksi kaupalliseksi kuorutukseksi. Uskontoa käytetään vain resurssina, taloudellisten päämäärien saavuttamiseksi (Thames 2014, 189). Viimeksi mainitussa videopelissä kristinuskoo saa valtaisesti merkittävämman ja keskeisemmän roolin, jopa uskonnollisena pedagogina, vaikka pelien perusasetelma ja genre muistuttavatkin melko laajasti toisiaan. Narratiivit avaavat näkökulmia juuri ydinkysymyksiin siksi, että narratiivit välittävät merkityksiä inhimillisestä kokemusmaailmasta. Narratiivit rakentavat tapahtumien ja toimintojen merkityksiä myös videopeleissä. Tässä tutkimuksessa sovellamme mm. Polkinghornen (1988) narratiivista analyysia yksinkertaistettuna apuvälineenä muodostaessamme narratiivista selontekoa Zelda -videopeleistä. Kaupallisen semiotiikan tutkimuksissa käytetään yleensä kieli- ja kirjallisuusteorian malleja, joista erityisesti Jakobsonin viestintämalli on varsin suosittu (Jakobson, 1960). Tässä artikkelissa sovellan Jakobsonin viestintämallia Zelda-pelisarjan narratiivisten sisältöjen ja tarkoituserien analyysissa. Kokonaisuudessaan tämä artikkeli pyrkii avaamaan näkökulmia siihen, kuinka uskonnollisia viittauksia käytetään videopeleissä taloudellisten päämäärien saavuttamiseksi ja kuinka narratiivit voivat välittää merkityksiä videopelien harrastajille.

## Zelda - videopelien legenda

”The Legend of Zelda” on Nintendon kehittämä ja julkaisema toimintaseikkailua ja mytologista fantasiaa yhdistelevä toimintaseikkailu- ja toimintaroolipelisarja. The Legend of Zelda on yksi maailman menestyksekkäimmistä ja vaikutusvaltaisimmista pelisarjoista. Sarjan ensimmäinen peli, ”The Legend of Zelda” julkaistiin 1986 Japanissa ja vuotta myöhemmin USA:ssa ja Euroopassa. Pelisarjan päähenkilö ja konsolilla pelattava hahmo on nimeltään Link. Sarjaan on ilmestynyt jo 19 peliä ja lukuisia ”remake”-versioita ja niitä on myyty kymmeniä miljoonia kappaleita. Pelit sijoittuvat Hyrulun fantasiamaailmaan, jossa päähenkilö Link tyypillisesti pelastaa prinsessa Zeldan pelisarjan pääantagonistilta, Ganondorf -velholta. Tunnusomainen osa pelisarjaa on myös pelimaailmassa vaikuttava ”Triforce”, jumalaista alkuperää oleva kolmivoima (The Legend Of Zelda Encyclopedia, 2018).

Zeldan pelimaailman, eli Hyrulun vallitseva uskonto, ”hylianismi”, sisälsi varsinkin pelisarjan varhaisimmissa osissa elementtejä, jotka pohjautuvat judeo-kristilliseen maailmankuvaan ja kristinuskoon, mutta pelisarjan kuluessa vaikutteita on lisääntyvästi tihkunut juutalaisuudesta, kreikkalaisesta mytologiasta, egyptiläisestä tarustosta, buddhalaisuudesta, islamista ja hindulaisuudesta. Zeldan uskonnolliset vaikutteet tulevat siis monesta erilaisesta uskonnollisesta taustasta ja ne pelisarjan edetessä sulautuvat synkretistisesti yhdeksi kokonaisuudeksi.

Zeldan kehittäjä on japanilainen Nintendolla työskentelevä Shigeru Miyamoto. Hän on syntynyt vuonna 1952 Sonobessa. Miyamoton uskonnollisista aatteista ei julkisuuteen ole välittynyt tietoja, mutta voinee olettaa, että hän edustaa uskonnollisilta käsityksiltään tyypillistä modernia japanilaista, joka etupäässä kunnioittaa perinteisiä shintolaisia arvoja. Pelisarjaan sisältyvä synkretismi on luultavasti harkittua ja kaupallisista syistä perusteltua. Hylianismi on teistinen, syklisen aikakäsityksen sisältävä ritualistinen uskonto, joka ilmentää globaalia synkretististä ten-

denssiä (Walls 2011).

Modernin median ominaispiirteisiin kuuluu vaikutteiden moninaisuus. Uskonnollisissa elementeissä painotetaan synkretismia, jossa sekoitetaan yhdeksi kokonaisuudeksi eri uskontojen ja henkisten virtausten vaikutteita. Tämä vaikutteiden moninaisuus on ainakin taloudelliselta kannalta hyödyllistä. Kaupallisuus tähtää mahdollisimman laajaan asiakaskuntaan, joten minkään uskonnon harjoittajia ei haluta lähtökohtaisesti rajata potentiaalisten peliä ostavien asiakasryhmien ulkopuolelle. Siksi medioissa ja peleissä sekoitetaan uskonnollisia aineksia monista ilmansuunnista. New-Age tyylliset virtaukset ovat tästä tendenssistä hyvä esimerkki. McClure (2016) on osoittanut, että nykyaikainen media ja sen välittämät uskonnolliset vaikutteet lisäävät median kuluttajien uskonnollista synkretismia ja sallivampaa asennoitumista eri uskontoihin ja niiden yksilölliseen sekoittamiseen.

## Jakobsonin viestintämalli

Jakobsonin viestintämallissa kielen viestinnälliset tehtävät on jaettu kuuteen pääfunktioon. Nämä ovat referentiaalinen, emoottinen, poeettinen, konatiivinen, faattinen ja metalingvistinen. Näitä vastaavat viestinnän perustekijät, joita ovat seuraavat: Konteksti, lähettäjä, viesti, vastaanottaja, kontakti ja koodi. Kuten Mäyrä (2005) osoittaa, on Jakobsonin malli käytökelpoinen myös videopelien tutkimuksessa. Siinä huomioon tulee otetuksi moninainen merkityksentuotanto laajemmassa inhimillisen toiminnan kokonaisuudessa. Videopelit ovat viestinnällisiä tuotteita, jotka luovat merkityksiä moniulotteisessa digitaalisessa ja kulttuurillisessa maisemassa.

Videopelejä, kuten Zelda-pelisarjaa, voidaan analysoida Jakobsonin mallin avulla. Pelin julkaisija on samalla viestin lähettäjä, joka emoottisen funktion kautta ilmaisee aikomuksensa myydä maksimaalisesti videopeliä ja tarjoaa sen kuluttajille mahdollisimman houkuttelevassa muodossa. Tähän kaupalliseen kokonaisuuteen sopivat erinomaisesti uskonnolliset viittaukset, jotka synkretistisessä muodossa koskettavat potentiaalisten pelinostajien tunnemaailmaa (Mäyrä 2005, 334). Viestin vastaanottaja on pelaaja, joka ostaa pelin ja viettää sen parissa tyypillisesti satoja tunteja aikaansa. Vastaanottajalla on konatiivinen vaikuttamistehtävä, sillä peli on saanut pelaajan aktivoitumaan.

Jacobsonin mallissa viesti sisältää poeettisen tehtävän, joka pelimaailmaan sovellettuna viittaa pelin perusolemukseen ja sen toimivuuteen (Vainikkala 1991). Uskonnot ovat Zelda-peleissä apuvälineitä, jotka toteuttavat poeettista funktiota auttaen pelaajaa edistymään pelissä ja ratkaisemaan sen haasteita. Pelimaailma kokonaisuutena toteuttaa referentiaalista viittaustehtävää. Suuret maailmanuskonnot toimivat Zeldassa stereotyyppioina heijastaen todellista inhimillistä maailmaa, jossa uskonnoilla on tärkeä rooli. Uskonnot luovat kontekstin, jossa pelaaja toimii, sekä todellisessa että virtuaalisessa maailmassa.

Peleissä syntyy kontakti eri toimijoiden kesken ja tämä toteuttaa Jakobsonin mallin mukaista faattista tehtävää. Kontakti merkitsee samalla, että peli ”koukuttaa” pelaajansa ja pelaaja kokee immersion pelin luomaan todellisuuteen. Uskonnot ovat tässä faattisessa funktiossa merkittävässä asemassa, sillä uskontojen avulla luodaan mystinen, psyykkinen ja jopa hengellinen side pelaajan ja pelimaailman välillä. Zelda-pelisarjassa tämä ilmiö korostuu erityisesti, sillä niissä luodaan aivan uutta uskonnollista kulttuuria ja todellisuutta, sillä Zelda-peleissä on oma uskontonsa, ”hylianismi”. Tämä vahvistaa kontaktia Jakobsonin mallin mukaisesti (Testa, 2014).

Viimeisenä funktiona Jakobsonin mallissa on metalingvisti-



nen tehtävä, joka peleihin sovellettuna merkitsee pelin suhdetta muihin peleihin eli pelin genreä. Zelda on genreltään tyyppinen seikkailupeli, joka sisältää myös uskonnollista mystiikkaa. Tämä pelaajille tuttu koodi sisältää symboliikkaa, kuten uudelleensyntymät, jotka ovat seikkailupeleissä tyyppisiä mekaniikkoja ylläpitää pelikokemusta kuolettavien taisteluiden jälkeen. Oheinen taulukko 1 (s. 33) esittää Zelda-pelisarjan uskonnollisen viitekehyyksen tulkittuna Jacobsonin mallin mukaisesti.

## Narratiivit taloudellisessa käyttäytymisessä

Yalen yliopiston kansantalouden professori Robert J. Shiller on kirjassaan "Narrative Economics" määritellyt narratiivit ihmisten parissa liikkuviksi ja tarttuviksi tarinoiksi, suuriksi kertomuksiksi, joilla on vaikutusvaltaa muuttaa ihmisten taloudellista käyttäytymistä. (Shiller 2019, 3). Uskonnot edustavat narratiivista vaikuttamista vahvimmillaan, jolla epäilemättä on taloudellista vaikutusvaltaa kuluttajiin.

Näkemyks, jonka mukaan ihminen ei ole puhtaasti rationaalinen toimija, vaan on altis erilaisille häntä koskettaville tarinoille, perustuu Walter Fisherin (Fisher 1987) narratiiviseen teoriaan. Videopelit voidaan nähdä tarinallisena kerrontana, jossa pelaaja altistuu pelin narratiiveille. Narratiivien faattinen tehtävä on erityisen tärkeä, sillä sen mukaan narratiivit luovat yhteensuoruvuutta ja ylläpitävät suhdeverkostoja. Kulttuurillisella ja siten myös uskonnollisella ympäristöllä ja kontekstilla on merkittävä rooli narratiivien faattisen tehtävän onnistumisessa, sillä uskonnot luovat yhteensuoruvaisuutta ja rakentavat yhteisöllisyyttä (Griffin 2009). Kulttuurit ja uskonnot luovat yhteistä identiteettiä. Narratiivien merkitys korostuu erityisesti psykologisen yhteyden vahvistamisessa.

Narratiivien käyttö taloudellisen hyödyn saamiseksi liittyy erityisesti ns. "kaupallisen semiotiikan" tutkimusalaan (engl. "commercial semiotics"). Videopelien julkaisijoiden tarkoituksena on myydä mahdollisimman paljon pelejä, ja siksi valjastaa myös pelien tarjoamat narratiivit houkuttelemaan potentiaalisia kuluttajia (Lemon 2018).

Modernien mediaalioimien taustalla voidaan havaita ns. "bricolage"-kehitys, joka ilmenee eri kulttuurillisten aineiden yhdistelyä ja edelleen muokkauksena toteuttamaan taloudellisia tai yhteiskunnallisia tarpeita. (Testa 2014, 257). Vuosituhannen alusta lähtien uskonnollisuutta on hyödynnetty tarinallisesti myös videopelitaloudessa. Zelda-pelisarjan sisältämät erilaiset uskonnolliset vaikutteet ovat mainio esimerkki tällaisesta kulttuurillisten ainesosien yhdistämisestä.

Uskontojen ja uskonnollisuuden rooli "kulttuurin markkinapaikkana" syntyi Yhdysvalloissa jo 1800-luvulla pyrkimyksenä edistää ja toisaalta estää erinäisten hyödykkeiden myyntiä.

Uskontojen hyödyntämistä viihdetarkoituksessa on etenkin kristillisen mutta myös muiden uskontojen tarinaperimän käyttö peli-, TV- ja elokuvateollisuudessa. Kyseessä voidaan siis sanoa olevan uskonnollisten tarinoiden kaupallistaminen kulttuurin globaalilla markkinapaikalla. Etenkin Yhdysvalloissa valtaosa ihmisistä tunnustaa yhä olevansa uskonnollisia. 1990-luvulla yli 90 % väestöstä kertoi kuuluvansa johonkin uskontokuntaan (Moore 1994, 3–6, 20, 24, 25, 32.) Nykyisin Yhdysvalloissa 49 % pitää uskontoa "hyvin merkityksellisenä" elämässään. Vain 25 % katsoo uskonnon olevan "ei erityisen merkityksellinen" (Jones 2021).

Narratiivisuus on noussut esiin myös liiketaloustieteellisessä tutkimuksessa vuosituhaten alkupuolella niin yksilöiden, yhteisöiden ja organisaatioiden pienten kertomusten kuin yhteiskuntien suurten kertomusten tarkastelun viitekehyyksenä (Auvinen, Mangeloa & Sintonen 2011). Narratiivisuus soveltuu erityisen hyvin erityyppisten toimijoiden rationaliteettien eli toimintaa ohjaavien perimmäisten merkitysten ja tarkoituksien läpinäkyväksi tekemiseen. Narratiivisuus pyrkii tilastolisten syy-seuraussuhteiden ja kausaalimallien sijaan ymmärtämään inhimillisen toiminnan pehmeämpinä pidettyjä puolia, kuten kulttuuriympäristöä arvo- ja tunnemaailmoinen (Auvinen, Mangeloa & Sintonen 2011, 291). Polkinghornen (1988) narratiivinen analyysi on liiketaloustieteissä tunnettu ja vakiintunut tutkimusmenetelmä, jonka keskiössä on tutkijan aineistonsa pohjalta konstruoima juonellistettu esitys tutkimuskohteenaan olevasta asiasta tai tapahtumasta. Aineisto voi koostua hyvinkin erityyppisistä inhimillisesti tuotetuista kielellisistä selonteista, esimerkiksi videopeleistä.

Tässä tutkimuksessa puhumme narratiivisuudesta käsitteen laajassa merkityksessä, eli käyttämme käsitteitä narratiivi ja kertomus synonyymeina viitattessamme tietynlaisiin diskursiivisiin merkityksyksikköihin, eli menneisyyden tapahtumiin, joissa tapahtumilla on kiinteä kronologinen juonirakenne episodisine syy-seuraussuhteineen. Syy-seuraussuhteita ei ole kuitenkaan syytä sekoittaa tilastotieteellisiin kausaalisuhteisiin, sillä kertomuksen syy-seuraussuhteita ei arvioida objektiivisesti. Olennaista on se, että syy-seuraussuhteet on inhimillisesti tuotettu. Toisin sanoen kertoja tuottaa juonirakenteen ja koska kyseessä on kertojan kokemusmaailma, objektiivinen (tilastotieteellinen) faktojen arviointi ei ole olennaista. Tiivistettynä kertomus on selonteko aiemmista tapahtumista, jotka ovat tapahtuneet kertomuksen henkilöihahmoille.

## Videopelien rooli mediateoriassa

Caillois (2001) määrittelee videopelin "digitaaliseksi/interaktiiviseksi pelattavaksi narratiiviseksi tekstiksi, joka sisältää

Viestinnän perustekijä	Viestinnän funktio	Sovellus videopelien maailmaan	Uskonnon rooli
Lähtöjä	Emoottinen	Pelin julkaisija	Edistää myyntiä
Viesti	Poettinen	Pelin toimivuus	Auttaa pelissä
Vastaanottaja	Konatiivinen	Pelaaja	Tyydyttää uskonnollisia tarpeita
Konteksti	Referentiaalinen	Pelimaailma	Heijastaa todellisuutta
Kontakti	Faattinen	Pelin "koukuttavuus"	Luoda uusi uskonto, "hylianismi"
Koodi	Metalingvistinen	Peligenre	Mahdollistaa seikkailu ja viitata symboleihin

Taulukko 1. Jakobsonin mallin funktiot sovellettuna Zelda-pelisarjan uskonnolliseen viitekehyykseen.

sekä ludologiaa (ludus) että narratologiaa (paidia) elementtejä. Zelda-pelisarja sisältää puhtaan pelillisiä ja siten ludologiaa elementtejä, mutta myös hyvin vahvaa tarinallisuutta. Zelda-pelisarja muodostaa epäilemättä laajan narratiivin, joka tarjoaa pelaajalle vahvan immersion. Bosman (2016) määrittelee videopelin sisältävän 5 keskeistä elementtiä: Tekstin, narratiivin, pelattavuuden, interaktiivisuuden ja digitaalisuuden. Bosmanin mukaan videopelien ”teksti”-elementti viittaa siihen, että pelin avulla pelin kehittäjät pyrkivät viestimään jotakin pelaajille. Postmodernissa kontekstissa mikä tahansa objekti voidaan käsitellä tekstiksi, mikäli se välittää informaatiota kommunikatiivisesti. Videopelit välittävät merkitysjärjestelmiä, tekstin, audion, videon ja pelimekaniikan välityksellä. Juuri kommunikatiivisuus on olennaista tekstiominaisuudessa.

Digitaalisuus rakentaa videopeleille ominaista kaksisuuntaista luonnetta, sillä ne ovat interaktiivisia ja edellyttävät reaktioita ja valintojen tekemistä pelaajalta. Interaktiivisuus on olennainen osa videopelaamista. Interaktiivisuus voi videopeleissä esiintyä monella eri tavalla. Se voi olla pelin sisäistä, kun pelaaja toimii pelin maailmassa avatarinsa välityksellä. Pelaaja voi taas toimia ikään kuin pelimaailman ulkopuolisena vaikuttajana, kuten ns. ”jumalapeleissä”. Monissa peleissä pelaaja ei voi vaikuttaa pelimaailman rakenteeseen tai toimintaan, mutta joissakin mahdollisuus ympäristön muokkaamiseen on huomattavan laajaa.

Narratiivisuus on selkeästi painottunut Zelda-peleissä. Päähenkilö Link kehittyy sarjan aikana ja rakentaa hahmonsa ympärille laajentuvaa kertomusta. Niiden sujuva pelattavuus on lisäksi merkittävä pelaajia koukuttava elementti. Zelda-pelit eivät ole vaikeusasteeltaan erityisen haastavia, vaan nuorikin pelaaja pääsee niissä kohtuullisen vaivattomasti eteenpäin.

Uskonnon ja videopelien tutkimus on digitaalisen uskonnon tutkimuksen alakenttä. Amerikkalainen viestintätutkija Heidi Campbell tulkitsee videopelien synnyttävän uudenlaisia uskonnollisia kokemuksia, joka rakentuvat uudella tavalla digitaalisen median ja kulttuurien kautta (Campbell, et al. 2014, 3). Videopelit kamppailivat aikoinaan legitimitetistä kulttuurituotteena, mutta nykyään ne ovat sekä bisnestä että taidetta. Videopelit käyttävät yhä useammin uskontoa paitsi koristeena myös videopelien suunnittelun ja pelin ydinelementteinä. Pelit sisältävät moraalisia päätöksiä, luottavat keksittyihin uskontoihin ja antavat käyttäjille mahdollisuuden luoda ja kokea virtuaalisia uskonnollisia tiloja. Nykyaikaisten ja muinaisten uskontojen käsitteitä ja elementtejä esiintyy videopeleissä eri tavoin: palvontapaikat ovat osa reaaliaikaisten strategiapelien maisemaa. Kerronnallisesti pelit lainaavat joskus teemoja uskonnollisista perinteistä.

Bosman (2016) ehdottaa neljän askelman metodologiaa videopelien uskonnollisten sisältöjen analyysiin. Ensinnä hän suosittelee sisäistä lukemista (internal reading) joka merkitsee lähinnä pelin pelaamista. Bosmanin mukaa videopelaaminen on samalla pelin tutkimustoimintaa. Pelaamista ja tutkimusta ei siis ole syytä erottaa erillisiksi toiminnoiksi. Kuitenkin tässä yhteydessä pelaaminen ei tarkoita vain pelin pintapuolista läpijuoksuja, vaan pelin useaan kertaan toistuvaa läpipelaamista, tutkien erilaisia polkuja pelin varrella ja myös monien vaihtoehtoisten reittien löytämistä. Tämä edellyttää myös monien pelin sisäisten rinnakkaisten tehtävien tutkimista. Tutkijalta odotetaan lukuisten tuntien (jopa satojen) uhraamista pelaamiseen ja tutkimustoimintaan. Varhaisimmat Zelda pelit ovat varsin lineaarisia luonteeltaan, joten niissä edetään melko selkeästi kohti loppuratkaisua ja lopputaistelua, yleensä huipentuen yhteenottoon Ganondorf-velhoa vastaan. Uusimmissa pelisarjan realisaatioissa (”The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild” ja ”The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom”), on valtava määrä rinnakkaista sisältöä ja sen avoin maailma sisältää lähes loppumattomalta tun-

tuva tutkimusmateriaalia. Toinen Bosmanin (2016) ehdottama menetelmä on pelin sisäinen tutkimusmateriaalin kerääminen. Tämä sisältää pelin sisäisten informaatiopalasten järjestelmällisen keräämisen, sisältäen pelihahmojen (NPC, eli ”non-player characters”) antaman informaation, tekstilöydöt, kuvituksen ja audiovisuaaliset sisällöt. Tässäkin pelaaja toimii tutkijana pelimaailman sisällä, olettaen sen ainoaksi todellisuudeksi keräten informaatiota digitaalisesta ympäristöstään.

Kolmas Bosmanin (2016) ehdottama askel on ulkoinen luenta (engl. ”external reading”), jossa tutkija kerää tietoa pelin ulkopuolisesta todellisuudesta. Tutkija kartoittaa pelin ja sen ympäröivän genren ja muiden medioiden tarjoamaa informaatiota pelistä. Intermediaalisuus ja intertekstuaalinen lähestymistapa avaavat pelin ominaisuuksista uusia näkökulmia, kun peliä tarkastelee osana laajempaa mediakenttää. Bosman tarkoittaa tällä tasolla etupäässä pelin kehittäjien tarjoamia peliä tukevia medioita, kuten peliin liittyviä ja sitä ympäröiviä nettisivustoja, sarjakuvia, Facebook-ryhmiä ja pienoisromaaneja.

Neljäs menetelmä on ulkoinen tutkimus (engl. ”external research”), jossa kerätään kaikkea peliin liittyvää ulkopuolista informaatiota mikä ei ole pelin kehittäjien itsensä luomaa. Tärkeässä roolissa ovat peliarvostelijoiden arvostelut, pelialan lehdet ja auktoriteetit. Paljon sisältöä löytyy myös Twitchistä ja YouTubesta. Videopeleihin kuuluu siten elimellisesti interaktiivisuus, mikä edelleen edellyttää vaihtoehtojen mahdollistamista pelaajalle. Pelaajan on pelin kuluessa tehtävä valintoja ja viimekädessä tämä ominaisuus rakentaa pelin ja pelaajan välille interaktiivisen suhteen. Zelda pelisarjassa interaktiivisuus on selvästi läsnä. Pelaaja tekee koko ajan ratkaisuja reittinsä, reaktioidensa ja menetelmiensä suhteen. Zeldan on hyvin helppo tulkita myös sisältävän elimellisesti narratiivisia elementtejä. Koko sen luoma maailma koostuu kertomuksesta ja on siten läpituonevan kerronnallinen. Pelin tapahtumien voi katsoa välittävän merkityksellisiä merkitysisältöjä pelaajille.

Bosmanin (2016) mukaan uskonnollisia vaikutteita voi videopeleistä löytää seuraavilta 5 tasolta:

1. Materiaalinen taso
2. Viittauksellinen taso
3. Refleksiivinen taso
4. Rituaalinen taso
5. Metataso

Materiaalisella tasolla pelin sisällöstä löytyy selkeitä eksplisiittisiä uskonnollisia elementtejä, joita erityisesti vanhemmista Zelda-peleistä löytyy paljon. Link-hahmon suojakilven risti, kirkko, pappi ja Raamattu ovat näistä selkeitä esimerkkejä. Pelaaja pystyy helposti ymmärtämään tällaiset materiaaliset ilmenemiset uskonnollisina, vaikka pelaajalla ei itsellään olisi uskonnollista vakaumusta tai laajaa teologista tietopohjaa.

Viittauksellinen taso merkitsee pelissä esiintyviä eksplisiittisiä tai implisiittisiä viittauksia uskonnollisiin traditioihin tai objekteihin. Zeldassa esiintyy uskonnollisia rituaaleja, mm. arabiankielistä resitointia, jonka pelaaja kykenee tulkitsemaan viittauksena islamin moskeijoissa tapahtuvaan rukoilemiseen. Zeldassa jumaluus esiintyy kolminaisuuden muodossa, minkä voidaan katsoa viittaavan kristinuskon kolminaisuusoppiin.

Refleksiivisellä tasolla tarkoitetaan pelin sisällä ilmeneviä eksistentiaalisia käsitteitä, joiden voidaan perinteisesti tulkita liittyvän uskontoon. Erityisesti kerronnallisissa seikkailupeleissä on tyypillistä, että pelihahmo palvelee jotakin itseään korkeampaa tarkoituspää. Peleihin liittyy monesti useita ihmiskuntaa yhdistäviä humaaneja periaatteita, kuten ystävyys, rakkaus, uhrautuminen, syntymä, kuolema, synty, pelastus, anteeksianto

jne. Uskontojen tärkeimpiä tehtäviä on käsitellä juuri edellä kuvatun kaltaisia teemoja, samoin näin käy monissa videopeleissä. Zeldan pelien sankarillinen seikkailijahahmo, Link, saa jokaisessa pelissä messiaanisen tehtävän. Hänen kutsumuksensa on pelastaa Hyrulian maa, jota uhkaa persoonallistunut pahuus. Link tyyppillisesti pelastaa prinsessa Zeldan pelisarjan pääantagonistilta, Ganondorf -velholta. Kuoltuaan Link kokee välittömän uudelleensyntymisen ja hän voi jatkaa seikkailuaan lähes ennallaan.

Rituaalisella tasolla viitataan pelaajien pelihahmojen suorittamia uskonnolliseksi luokiteltavia toimia pelimaailmassa. Link menee eri tempeleihin ja suorittaa siellä uskonnollisia rituaaleja. Pelin kuluessa kohdataan useita meditoivia hahmoja ja osallistutaan erilaisiin uskonnollisiin riitteihin. Viides taso on metatase, jossa pelaaminen itsessään voidaan kokea uskonnolliseksi. Ilmiön voi katsoa esiintyvän erityisesti ns. jumalapeleissä, kuten ”Sims” ja ”Godus”. Mahdollisesti myös Zeldan peliuniversumi ja siihen pitkäaikainen ja syvä uppoutuminen voi pelaajalle muodostua uskonnolliseksi kokemukseksi. Pelaaja ikään kuin kokee hengellisen kääntymyksen hylianismiin.

Nämä viisi tasoa liikkuvat eksplisiittisten ja implisiittisten uskontokokemusten välillä, sekä pelin sisällä että sen ulkopuolella. Osa näistä tasoista ja niiden ilmenemisistä on pelin kehittäjän tarkoittamia ja suunniteltavia, osa on pelikokemusten omia kokemuksia. Materiaalinen taso on selkeästi avoimemmin uskonnolliseksi tulkittavissa kuin metatase. Pelin kehittäjä on yleensä tarkoittanut tietoisesti materiaalisen ja viittauksellisen tason uskonnolliseksi, mutta rituaalinen ja metatase syntyvät pelin kehittäjän tarkoituksesta riippumatta. Pelaajat ovat tyyppillisesti itse vastuussa refleksiivisistä, rituaalisista ja metatason kokemusten tulkinnoistaan. Ne voidaan tulkita pelaaja-immanenteiksi, kun taas kaksi ensimmäistä, materiaalinen ja viittauksellinen, ovat peli-immanenteja.

Ferdig (2014) määrittelee osin eri tavalla neljä komponenttia, joiden avulla uskonnon esiintymistä voidaan analysoida videopeleissä. Nämä osa-alueet ovat pelin sisältö, pelin konteksti, pelin haasteet ja kerrospääoma. Pelin sisältö voi olla selvän tarkoituksellisesti luonteeltaan uskonnollinen. Pelin suunnittelijan tarkoitus saattaa olla opettaa ja välittää uskonnollisia periaatteita, taitoja ja tietämystä, joka liittyy johonkin olemassa olevaan uskontoon. Esimerkiksi peli ”Left Behind 4: World at War” sisältää tarkoituksellista uskonnollista sisältöä, jossa pelaajan tehtävä on taistella antikristusta vastaan ja olla mukana enkelien ja demonien välisessä taistelussa. Kyseinen peli myös noudattaa avoimesti evankelisen kristillisyyden tulkintaperinteen teologisia linjauksia. Zeldassa pelin sisältö koostuu avoimen uskonnollisesta viitekehystä, mutta sen suoranaisena tarkoituksena ei voi pitää uskonnollista opettamista tai tietyn uskonnollisen näkemyksen vahvistamista, ehkä hylianismia lukuun ottamatta. Toiseksi pelin konteksti voi olla uskonnollinen. Konteksti viittaa tässä Fertigin (2014) määritelmässä pelin tarinaan, ympäristöön ja tilanteisiin, joissa ilmenee eksplisiittistä tai implisiittistä viittauksia uskontoihin. Nämä viittaukset voivat olla osa pelin fyysistä ympäristöä, osa pelin sääntöjä tai pelintekijän normistoa. Symbolit tässä viittaavat kuitenkin vain kontekstiin, ei pelin varsinaiseen pelihaasteeseen. Uskonnollinen konteksti voidaan jakaa kolmeen osa-alueeseen. Ensinnä pelin ympäristöön, mikä voi esiintyä esimerkiksi rakennusten (kirkot, temppelit) tai esineiden (risti, uskonnolliset artefaktit) muodossa. Nämä uskonnolliset esineet luovat peliin lisää realismia, sillä niitä esiintyy yleisesti (esim. kirkot) länsimaisen väestön lähiympäristössä. Toinen mahdollisuus on lisätä peliin uskonnollisia esineitä, jotka rakentavat pelin tarinaa. Näissä tapauksissa uskonnollisia elementtejä ei ole sisällytetty peliin vain realismin vuoksi, vaan olennaiseksi

osaksi pelin tarinankerrontaa. Pelin konteksti voi myös viitata tilanteisiin, joissa uskonto vaikuttaa tai suuntaa pelin sääntöjä. Pelin säännöstö ja toimintamekaniikka voi perustua uskonnolliseen moraalikoodeksiin. Pelaajan käyttäytyminen pelin eri tilanteissa ja moraaliset valinnat voivat ohjata pelin tapahtumia.

Pelin konteksti voi myös viitata pelihahmon omaamiin ylläluonnollisiin kykyihin. Monissa roolipeleissä pelaajan ohjaama hahmo voi käyttää magiaa tai taikavoimia, joita voi tehostaa vaikkapa meditoimalla tai taikaesineillä. Zeldassa esiintyy varsin paljon taikavoimia ja ylläluonnollisia pelihahmojen ominaisuuksia. Link löytää taikaesineitä ja voi valmistaa taikajuomia, joiden antamat kyvyt ovat selkeän maagisia.

Kolmanneksi pelin asettamat haasteet voivat luonteeltaan olla uskonnollisia. Tällä tarkoitetaan pelin todellisia tavoitteita ja oletettuja päämääriä, joiden tarkoituksena saattaa olla uskonnollisen tiedon lisääminen tai uskonnollisen käyttäytymisen tukeminen. Haasteet voivat tarjota pelaajille mahdollisuuden ajatella ja toimia uskonnollisesti. Tähän kategoriaan kuuluvat myös pelit, joissa pelin keskushahmolla on selkeän messiaanisia tavoitteita. Hayse (2010) on analysoinut videopelien messiaanisista viitteistä ja Link voidaan selvästi nähdä messiaanisena hahmona, jonka päämääränä on toimia jumalatarten lähettiläänä ja pelastaa Hylia. Kuten Hayse (2010) toteaa, erityisesti seikkailupelien tehtävissä on selvästi uskonnollisia tavoitteita. Pelihahmon tehtävänä on pelastaa maailma käyttäen normaalia vahvempia voimia. Videopelien messiaanisissa viitteissä voidaan nähdä yhtymäkohtia kristinuskon sanomaan, mutta vain varsin rajoitetusti. Link voittaa vastustajansa väkivallalla, ei kristillisellä laupeudella tai jumalallisella armolla. Zeldassa voitto saavutetaan vahvemman oikeudella.

Pelaajan pääoma kuvastaa sitä panosta, jonka pelaaja itse sisällyttää pelikokemukseen. Moraaliset kysymykset saattavat ilmetä jo pelin valinnan vaiheessa. Esimerkiksi väkivaltaiset pelit vaativat pelaajaa ainakin tiedostamattomalla tasolla hyväksyvän väkivallan ongelmanratkaisukeinona. Zeldan pelit eivät kuitenkaan ole kärjistetyt väkivaltaisia. Tutkimusta siitä, miten paljon Zeldan pelaaminen pystyy muokkaamaan pelaajien uskonnollisia käsityksiä ei ole tehty, mutta ainakin pelaamisen myötä herää kysymyksiä jumaluuden luonteesta ja ylläluonnollisen todellisuuden olemassaolosta. Zeldan suhteen voi myös arvella, että pelisarjasta kehittyi joillekin harrastajille uskonnollinen kokemus. Pelisarja rakentaa monipuolista tarinaa, joka kehittää pelaajalle vahvan immersion. Internetin Zeldaharrastajien monet info-sivustot, harrastajien nettifoorumit ja kohtuullisen laaja Zeldakirjallisuus genre ovat todisteita Zeldan kyvystä kehittää harrastajille pitkäaikainen, jopa uskonnolliseksi luokiteltava, suhde.

## Uskonnollisuus Zeldassa

Uskonnolla tarkoitetaan yleisesti henkilön tai yhteisön uskomusjärjestelmää, joka keskittyy henkilön tai yhteisön henkilökohtaisiin uskomuksiin todellisuuden perimmäisestä luonteesta ja eettisiin arvoihin. Uskonnot ovat usein ankkuroituneita jonkinlaiseen pyhään tekstiin tai oppineiden opetuksiin, ja ne olettavat tyyppillisesti jonkinlaisen jumaluuden tai jumalien olemassaolon. Hyrulesä uskonto yhdistää ja myös erottaa eri rotujen ja ympäristöiden muiden maiden asukkaita ja viestittää jotain olennaista heidän perustavaa laatua olevista olemassaoloista selittävästä käsityksistään.

Hyrule (japaniksi ”Hairaru”. Ensimmäisessä pelissä esiintyy vanha suomennus ”Heraldia”) toimii Zeldan pelisarjan tapahtumapaikkana. Hyrule tarkoittaa tässä yhteydessä sekä Hyrulien kuninkaallisen perheen hallitsemää kuningaskuntaa, että koko Zeldan maailmaa. Peleissä esiintyy myös useita rinnakkaisma-

ilmoja, kuten ”A Link between Worlds” pelin Hyrulen peilikuvamaailma Lorule.

Hyrullessa asuu lukuisia eri rotuja, joista merkittävimmän muodostavat hylialaiset. He ovat ihmisen kaltaisia, mutta suippokorvaisia Hyrulen asukkaita. Hyrulen kuninkaallinen perhe on perinteisesti hylialaista alkuperää. Suippojen korvien sanotaan olevan merkinä kuuliaisuudesta jumalille ja hylialaiset ovatkin uskonnollista ja legendoihin uskovaa kansaa. Heidän veressään sanotaan magian virtaavan ja jotkin heistä omaavat vahvoja taikavoimia. Kaikki Hyrulen ihmistä muistuttavat asukkaat eivät kuitenkaan ole hylialaisia. Vain suippokorvaiset ja haltian olemuksen omaavat voivat olla aitoja hylialaisia. Merkittäviä hylialaisia ovat esimerkiksi pelin päähahmo Link ja prinsessa Zelda.

Hyrulen uskonnon mukaan alussa vallitsi tyhjiydessä vallitseva kaaos. Maailman loivat kolme jumalatarta, nimiltään Din, Nayru ja Farore. He loivat Hyrulen maan, kasvit ja eläimet ja fysiikan lait. Din, ”voiman jumalatar”, loi maan. Nayru, ”viisauden jumalatar”, loi järjestyksen. Farore, ”rohkeuden jumalatar” loi kaiken elämän. Jumalattaret nousivat luomistyönsä päättyessä taivaaseen ja jättivät jälkeensä kolme kultaista kolmiota eli mystisen ”kolmivoiman” (Triforce). Din antoi kolmiolle voiman, Nayru viisauden ja Farore rohkeuden. Voima liittyy punaiseen väriin, viisaus siniseen ja rohkeus vihreään väriin. Yhdessä kolmiot muodostavat kultaisen entiteetin, joka edustaa kaikkea Hyrullessa esiintyvää voimaa, viisautta, rohkeutta ja magiaa. Kolmivoima sijaitsee ulottuvuudessa, joka tunnetaan nimellä ”kultainen maa” (engl. ”Golden Land”) tai ”Sacred Realm” eli pyhä valtakunta.

Näiden kolmen kultaisen jumalattaren kultti muodostaa Hyrulen hallitsevan uskonnon. Se ei kuitenkaan ole sen ainoa uskonto. Monet muut Hyrulen asukkaat palvovat omia uskomusjärjestelmiänsä tai jumaliaan, kuten seitsemää sankaria (engl. ”Seven heroines”) pelissä ”Breath of the Wild”. Näitä muita jumaluuksia palvovia rotuja kultaisten jumalattarien kultti kutsuu hieman halventavasti ”pienempien jumaluuksien palvojiksi”. Kyseiset kolme kultaista jumalatarta (engl. ”Golden Gooddeesses”) loivat maailman ja kaikki elämänmuodot ja luonnonlait, joita kaikkien eliöiden on noudatettava. Din, Nayru ja Farore ilmaantuivat ensimmäisen kerran vuonna 1992 ilmestyneeseen peliin ”A Link to the Past”. Heidät kuvataan kolmen kauniin naisen muodossa. Heillä on hallinnassaan valtavia voimia ja he asuvat taivaissa.

Kultaisten jumalattarien palvonta on ylivoimaisesti suosituin uskonto Hyrullessa. Sen kannattajia löytyy lukuisten rotujen joukosta, etenkin hylialaisista. Hyrulen lakien mukaisesti kaikkien sen asukkaiden on palvottava jumalattaria, mutta tämä ehto on saattanut heidät konfliktiin monien muiden ympäröivien rotujen kanssa. Muita jumalattarien palvoja löytyy esimerkiksi Gerudojen, Goronien, Zoran, Kokirin, Sheikahin ja Ooccan roduista.

Jumalattaren palvonnan käytäntö vaihtelee hieman eri rotujen välillä. Vaikuttaa siltä, että Hyrulen kuningaskunta noudattaa erityisen fanaattista kultaisten jumalattarien oppia (engl. ”Strict Goddess Worship”), eli Hyrulen viisaiden laatimaa säännöstöä.

Kolmen jumalattaren palattua taivaaseen, kolmivoima ja koko maailma uskottiin jumalatar Hylian haltuun. Prinsessa Zeldasta muodostui Hylian maanpäällinen reinkarnaatio. Voinee jopa väittää, että Hylian palvonnasta syntyi Hyrulen valtakunnassa harhaoppinen kultti. Hylialaisista tuli Hylian suojelijoita ja lopulta he palvoivat häntä jopa kultaisia jumalattaria enemmän. Hylia-kultin asema on vaihdellut eri Zelda-peleissä voimakkaasti ja välillä se oli jopa häviämässä pelin maailmasta. Myös ateismia esiintyy Hyrullessa. Tästä esimerkkinä on Labryna, jonka asukkaat uskovat vain deduktiivisen päättelyn voimaan ja tieteeseen. Monet rodut ovat myös liian kehittymättömiä, jotta niillä olisi

uskonnollisia arvoja. Näitä ovat esimerkiksi Eclipsen hirviöt.

Zelda-pelisarjan uskonnollinen kenttä on siten varsin laaja ja monipuolinen. Se ei keskity vain yhden uskonnollisen tulkinnan ympäristöön, vaan pelimaailmassa kohdataan erilaisia jumaluuksia, henkiä ja uskonnollisia tulkintoja. Se muistuttaa siis monipuolisuudessaan ja uskonnollisten tulkintojen heterogeenisyydessään todellista maailmaamme. Zeldan uskonnollisuus ja sen esiintymismuodot eivät ole syntyneet pelintekijöiden mielikuvituksessa, vaan osa niistä on selvästi kopioita ja vähintäänkin vaikutteita todellisen maailmamme uskonnoista. Seuravassa käydään läpi näitä reaali maailman uskontojen heijastumia Zeldan maailmassa.

## Reaali maailman uskonnot Zeldassa

Hylianismin kolme jumalatarta (Nayru, Farore ja Din) muistuttavat monoteistisen kristinuskon opettamaa kolmen itsenäisen persoonan jumaluuden ilmenemismuotoa, mutta sittenkin enemmän hindulaisuuden kolmea keskeistä jumalaa, erityisesti Brahmaa, Vishnua ja Shivaa. Nämä hindulaisuudessa esiintyvät kolme jumaluutta symbolisoivat luomakuntaa (viisaus), ylläpitoa (rohkeus) ja tuhoa (voima). Näissä suhteissa Hylian ja hindulaisuuden käsitykset ovat selvästi yhteneväiset ja Zeldan käsitys jumaluuden olemuksesta on etupäässä hindulaisuuden mukainen (Walls 2011).

Toinen selvästi hindulaisuuteen viittaava ominaisuus on se, että Zeldan aikakäsitys on kehämäinen, eikä länsimaiseen tapaan lineaarinen. Aika kiertää ikuista kehää. Kolmanneksi Link jälleensyntyä aina kuollessaan, aivan kuten hindulaisuudessa Vishnu-jumala reinkarnoituu kuolevaiseksi aina uudelleen taistelemaan pahaa vastaan. ”Majora's Mask” pelissä esiintyvän Terminan maan yllä kumottava kuu muistuttaa suuresti hindulaisuuden ”rahu” ja ”ketu” jumaluuksia (kuun pohjois- ja etelänavat) kun niiden pelätään tuhoavan Terminan keskellä sijaitsevan kellokaupungin ja koko Terminan maan. Alkuperäisessä Zeldassa esiintyi yhdessä kartassa myös manji-symboli eli käänteinen hakaristi, mikä sekin kuuluu hindulaisuuden kuvastoon.

Shintolaisuus ja buddhalaisuus ovat Japanin kaksi suurinta uskontoa. Ne elävät ja vaikuttavat Japanissa verrattain sopuisasti rinnakkain. Shintolaisuus on animistinen uskonto, jonka mukaan kaikissa luonnonilmiöissä ja elollisessa vaikuttaa lukuisia henkiä ja jumaluuksia. Sen mukaan on olemassa ainakin 8 miljoonaa erilaista henkeä (”kami”). Vastaavasti Zeldassa on paljon ”kamia” muistuttavia henkiä, esimerkiksi ”suuri Deku-puu” on metsän henki, ”Jabu-Jabu” veden henki, ”Volvagia” Kuolleen Vuoren henki, ”Valoo” taivaan henki ja ”Jabun” meren henki. Lukuisat ja lähes kaikissa peleissä esiintyvät ”Korogut” ovat selvästi myös henkiolentoja.

Zelda-pelisarjan ehkäpä vahvin symboli on kolmesta kolmiosta koostuva kolmivoimaa kuvaava Triforce-symboli. Japanilaisessa kulttuurissa vastaava symboli esiintyy voimakkaan Hojoklaanin kilvessä. Zelda peleissä kolmivoima (Triforce) yhdistyy olennaisesti kolmeen jumalattareen. Japanilaisen mytologian mukaan kolme jumaluutta (Amenominakanushi, Takamimusubi ja Kamimusubi) loivat maailman ja sen jälkeen piilottivat ruumiinsa. Myöhemmin nämä jumalat ilmestyivät jälleen ja jatkoivat keskeytynyttä luomisprosessiaan ja sälyttivät tämän tehtävän reinkarnaatioilleen. Vastaavasti Zelda-peleissä kolme jumalatarta loi maailman kaaoksesta ja sälytti maailman täydellistämisen tehtävän jumalatar Hylialle, joka reinkarnoituma on prinsessa Zelda (Walls 2011).

Peleissä esiintyy viitteitä myös islamiin. ”Ocarina of Time” pelissä esiintyi Gerudon vaakuna (Gerudo crest) kaiverrettuna useassa esineessä (mm. taikapeilissä ”Mirror shield”), lipuissa

ja arkuissa. Alkuperäisissä ”Ocarina of Time” pelin versioissa vaakuna muistutti hyvin suuresti puolikuuta eli Islamien symbolia. Vaakuna tosin poistettiin pelin myöhäisemmistä versioista. Samaisessa ”Ocarina of Time” pelissä, sen varhaisissa versioissa, Linkin seikkaillessa ”tulitempelissä”, taustalla kuuluu resitointia, josta pystyi melko vaivatta erottamaan ”Allah” nimen ja joka muistuttaa moskeijan äänimaailmaa. Taustaan poistettiin tosin pelin myöhemmistä versioista ja korvattiin pelkällä syntetisaattorimusiikilla.

## Kristinuskon symbolit Zeldassa

Kahden ensimmäisen Zelda-pelin (”Legend of Zelda” ja ”Adventure of Link”) pelimaailmassa esiintyi paljon ristisymboleita. Linkin kilvessä oli suurikokoinen risti ja lisäksi hautausmaiden hautakivissä oli ristit. Linkin suojakilpi muistuttaa vahvasti ristiretkeläisten käyttämää ristin muotoa (myös väritykseltään) ja Nintendon tarkoituksena luultavasti oli sen avulla vahvistaa keskiaikaista tunnelmaa pelissä. ”Adventure of Link” pelissä risti toimii lisäksi maagisena aseena, jonka avulla pelaajan on mahdollista nähdä näkymättömiä aaveita. Kun Link pitelee ristiä edessään kädessä, näkymättömät viholliset tulevat näkyviksi.

Ensimmäisen pelin japaninkielisessä versiossa pelissä oli löydettävissä ”loitsukirja” (engl. spell book) jonka avulla oli mahdollista ampua tulta, mikäli samanaikaisesti myös taikasauva oli käytössä. Tuo kirja oli japanilaisessa versiossa nimellä ”Raamattu” (engl. ”Bible”). Pelin länsimaihin (erityisesti USA) suunnatuissa versioissa kirjan nimi oli muutettu muotoon ”spell book”. Luultavasti Nintendon tiimi pelkäsi Raamatun samaistamisen taikuteen herättävän ärtymystä. Kolmannessa Zelda pelissä (”A Link to the Past”) pelin alussa Link polvistuu krusifiksin edessä. Link saa ohjeita pappia muistuttavalta henkilöltä ja vierailee selvästi kirkkoa muistuttavassa rakennuksessa.

Zelda-pelien keskushahmo ”Link” eroaa usealla tavalla puhtaasti kristillisestä sankarista. Kristillisen sankarin arkkityypin voidaan pitää John Bunyanin kirjasta ”Kristityn vaellus” löytyvää päähenkilöä, jonka nimi kirjassa on kuvaavasti ”Kristitty”. Bunyanin kirja julkaistiin vuonna 1678 ja sen painosmäärä on valtaisa. Kirja on käännetty yli 200 kielelle, suomeksi useaan kertaan. Se lienee Raamatun jälkeen maailman eniten painettu kirja.

Kirjan teemasta on julkaistu myös videopeljä, tunnetuimpana niistä Scott Cawthonin ja Hope Animation yrityksen vuonna 2011 julkaisema ”The Pilgrim's Progress: The Video Game” (jatkossa lyhennettynä: PP). Peli on tasohyppely, jossa pelaaja ohjaa ”Kristitty” nimistä pelihahmoa, alkuperäisen Bunyanin kirjan mukaisesti. Pelin tarina mukailee hyvin uskollisesti ”Kristityn vaellus” kirjaa, josta pelin hahmot ja tapahtumat on rakennettu. Peli on uskollinen kirjan teemalle ja vaikka pelissä on paljon taisteluita, ne läpäistään ”hengellisillä aseilla”, ei fyysisellä voimalla. Ulkonaaisesti Link ja PP:n pelihahmo ”Kristitty” ovat hyvin samankaltaisia. Molemmat saavat ylleen pelin edessä haarniskan ja perinteiset ritarin varusteet. Molemmilla on kilpi, jonka kannessa on suuri kristillinen risti (Linkillä symboli korvautuu tosin myöhemmin Kolmivoimalla) ja molemmilla on kädessään miekka (Linkillä välillä myös esim. jousi tai nuija). Link ja Kristitty kohtaavat matkallaan monia vihollisia, joita vastaan näiden on taisteltava. Myös pakeneminen taisteluista on molemmille mahdollista. Link ja Kristitty eroavat kuitenkin hyvin olennaisesti toisistaan. Kristitty on selkeästi kristinuskon mukainen arkkityyppi kristinuskon harjoittajasta ja tämän toimintamekanismit noudattavat perinteisen kristillisyyden arvoja ja etiikkaa. Kristitty ei varsinaisesti taistele, vaan hän käyttää ”hengellisiä aseita”, vastustaa vihollisia hengellisillä elementeillä (usko, toivo, lupaukset, jne.), rukoilee parantumista ja lisävoi-

mia, käyttää hänelle suotuja siunauksia ja rukoilee. Kristitty ei siis lyö vihollista miekalla, vaikkakin faktisesti taistelut näyttävät myös PP-pelissä melko perinteisiltä kaksinkamppailuilta, joskin väkivallattomilta. Kristitty kuolee kirjassa vain kerran, eikä reinkarnaatio ole mahdollinen. Molemmista peleissä pelaaja kuitenkin voi kuolla ennen pelin läpipelaamista, jolloin pelihahmo palaa takaisin henkiin. PP-pelissä tämä henkiinherääminen tapahtuu ”Jumalan ihmeenä”, Zeldassa Link reinkarnoituu temppeleihin.

Link saa paljon ohjeita ja hyödyllisiä vinkkejä tapaamiltaan hahmoilta. Zelda-peleissä olennaista on keskustella kaikkien tavattujen hahmojen kanssa, sillä jokaisella saattaa olla jotakin merkityksellistä kerrottavaa. Kristityn on valikoitava tarkemmin ne, joiden kanssa kommunikoi ja joilta ottaa neuvoja ja ohjeita. Kristityn kohtaamat hahmot ovat etupäässä passiivisia uskonnollisen käännätyksen tai hengellisen avunannon ja laupeudentyön objekteja (esirukous, rohkaisu, Raamatun lahjoittaminen, ruuan tarjoaminen). Monesti Kristittyä neuvovat NPC:t (engl. ”non-player character”) johtavat pelihahmoa harhateille. Kristitty on yksin vastuussa omista päätöksistään ja tämän on luotettava lähinnä vain Jeesuksen ja Evankelistan neuvoihin. Kristitty on myös haarniskoitu ja käyttää miekkaa. Usein pelastus löytyy kuitenkin Kristitylle jo pelin alussa annetuista siunauksista, ei oman taisteluvoiman ansiosta. Kristitty kyllä kehittyy pelin kuluessa, hänen hengellinen kestävyytensä lisääntyy, mutta taisteluissa tämän on käytettävä tälle jo alussa annettuja kykyjä. Tehtäviä suorittamalla Kristitty saa tekemistään hyvistä töistä muistoksi erivärisiä ristejä, mutta niiden hyödyllisyys taisteluissa on melko vähäinen. Link toimii Zelda-peleissä tyypillisenä messias-hahmona, joka lähtee vaatimattomista lähtökohdista, saa tehtävän ja lähtee sitä toteuttamaan. Matkan varrella hahmo kehittyy, sekä fyysisesti että henkisesti ja hankkii itselleen lisätaitoja ja uusia kykyjä. Lopulta pelihahmo kehittyy niin vahvaksi, että selviytyy lopputaistelusta voimiensa ja kykyjensä avulla. Lopputuloksena on maailman pelastuminen ja usein prinsessa Zeldan pelastuminen. Kristitty ei sitä vastoin ole messias-hahmo. Hän ei pelasta koko maailmaa, vaan korkeintaan itsensä. PP-pelin messias-hahmo on Jeesus, joka alkuperäisen Kristityn vaellus-kirjan mukaisesti tapaa Kristityn matkan varrella joitakin kertoja. Kristityn tehtävä on pelissä seurata tämän messiaan ennalta osoittamaa tietä. Taulukossa 2 on tiivistettynä merkittävimmät erot Zelda- ja PP-pelien välillä (Taulukko 2, s. 38).

Zelda-pelien ”kristillisuus” on päälle liimattua rekvisiittaa, joka toimii lähinnä tunnelman luojana antamassa keskiaikaista viitekehystä pelisarjalle. Se on siis nähtävä ennen kaikkea kaupallisista motiiveista rakennettuna houkuttimena, jolla ei ole mitään uskonnollisia tavoitteita tai pyrkimyksiä. Mikäli Zelda-pelisarja edistää jotakin uskonnollista käyttäytymistä tai ajattelua, on se lähinnä muokkaamassa pelaajien arvoja myönteiseksi synkretistiseen uskonnolliseen ideologiaan. Uskonnolliset viittaukset Zelda-peleissä ovat lukuisat, mutta ne tuovat syvempää tarinalisuutta peleihin ja toimivat ulkoisina mausteina peleissä. Niiden käyttö liittyy lähinnä vain kaupallisten tavoitteiden maksimoimiseen.

Kaupallisuuden korostuminen Zeldassa tulee näkyväksi, kun sitä verrataan PP-peliin, jonka tavoitteena on selkeästi toimia kristillisen elämän ja uskonnollisuuden edistäjänä. PP-pelissä hahmojen kanssa käydään keskusteluja teologisista asioista ja niissä Bunyanin ”Kristityn vaellus” kirjan mukaisesti opastetaan pelihahmoa syvempään ja vahvempaan kristillisyyden harjoittamiseen. Yleisiltä pelimekaniikoiltaan molemmat pelit edustavat melko samaa genreä, pelaaja ohjaa pelihahmoa (joka muistuttaa keskiaikaista ritaria) joka kehittyy pelin kuluessa, taistelee vihollisia vastaan ja lopuksi saavuttaa päämääränsä lopputaistelussa. Uskonnolliselta viitekehyseltään peleissä on samankaltaisuutta

	Zelda	PP
<b>Pelireitti</b>	melko lineaarinen	lineaarinen
<b>Viholliset</b>	vihollisrodut, demonit	synnit, demonit
<b>Aseet</b>	perinteiset (miekka, jousi)	hengellinen varustus
<b>Magia</b>	taikajuomat, loitsut	rukous, siunaukset
<b>Reinkarnoituminen</b>	kyllä	kyllä
<b>Risti-symboli</b>	rekvisiittaa, maaginen esine	muistutus hyvistä töistä
<b>NPC:t</b>	informaattori	auttamisen objekti
<b>Messiaanisuus</b>	Link	Jeesus, ei Kristitty
<b>Kristinusko</b>	rekvisiittaa	pelin ydin

Taulukko 2. Zelda ja PP pelien väliset erot.

(molempien pelihahmot voidaan nähdä ainakin pintapuolisesti kristittyinä), mutta niiden uskonnolliset tavoitteet ja kristinuskon sisäistämisen syvyys eroaa erittäin merkittävästi. PP-peli on kristinuskon läpituokemaa ja sen ydintavoitteeksi voidaan nähdä pelaajan uskonnollisen vakaumuksen syventäminen, joskin viihteellisen ja tarinallisen pelaamisen oheistuotteena. PP noudattaa selkeästi perinteisen kristillisyyden (so. herätyskristillistä baptismissia) oppirakennelmia ja kasvattaa pelaajaa kohti kristillistä vakaumusta ja sen mukaista elämää.

Zelda- ja PP-pelien uskonnollisuutta voidaan analysoida lopuksi myös Bosmanin (2016) ja Ferdigin (2014) luomien jaotteluiden avulla. PP-pelissä uskonnollinen viitekehys on löydettävissä kaikilla tasoilla. Kristinusko on Bosmanin (2016) rakennajaottelun mukaisesti läsnä materiaalisella, viittauksellisella, refleksiivisellä, rituaalisella ja myös metatasolla. Samoin Ferdigin (2014) jaottelua mukaillen, PP-pelissä uskonnollisuus on läpituokuvan olennaista pelin sisällössä, pelin kontekstissa, pelin haasteissa ja lisäksi pelaajan omassa pelipääomassa.

Zeldassa uskonnollisuus, varsinkin kristinusko, esiintyy vain pintapuolisesti. Uskonnolliset viitteet toimivat lähinnä materiaalisella ja viittauksellisella tasolla (Bosman 2016) ja pelin kontekstissa (Fertig 2014). Zeldaa ei voi siis pitää mitenkään erityisen ”kristillisenä” vaan korkeintaan synkretismin ja modernin uususkonnollisuuden edustajana, joka kaupallisen menestyksen saavuttaakseen on sisällyttänyt pelaajia stimuloivia uskonnollisia viittauksia pelin universumiin. Muistaen Zelda-pelisarjan valtuisan globaalin menestyksen, voikin todeta Nintendon onnistuneen tässä tavoitteessaan erinomaisesti.

## Loppusanat

Legend of Zelda-pelisarjan tarinankerronnassa ja sen suhteessa uskonnollisten merkityssisältöjen hyödyntämiseen voidaan nähdä mielenkiintoisia kehitystrendejä. Pelisarjan edetessä judeo-kristillinen symboliikka saa rinnalleen elementtejä mm. hindulaisuudesta, buddhalaisuudesta ja islamista. Vahva luonnonuskontojen ja itämaisten filosofioiden viitekehys säilyy pelisarjassa olennaisena merkityssisältönä ja tarinankuljettajana koko pelisarjan ajan. Zelda-pelien narratiivinen eksegeesi kykenee paljastamaan digitaalisen tarinankerronnan taustalla vaikuttavia synkretistisiä signaaleja vahvistavia elementtejä, joiden osuus pe-

lisarjan kronologisessa kehityksessä ja myös niiden nauttimassa globaalissa suosiossa on olennaisen merkityksellistä.

McClure (2016) on tutkimuksessaan osoittanut, että nyky-aikainen media lisää yhteiskunnassa vaikuttavaa uskonnollista synkretismia. Voidaan siis olettaa, että Zelda pelien uskonnollinen moninaisuus lisää pelaajien avoimuutta eri uskonnollisia näkemyksiä kohtaan ja lisää synkretismia hyväksyviä asenteita. Sosiaalinen media ja pelien synkretismi voi johtaa myös yksilöllisten uskonnollisten käsitysten lisääntymiseen, jotka eivät välttämättä enää ole perinteisten uskontojen ja niiden opetusmukaisia. Myös Zeldan pelaajien keskuudessa voi olettaa lisääntyvän uskonnollisen avoimuuden ja käsityksen, että on hyväksyttävää yhdistellä ja muokata eri uskontojen näkemyksiä. Zelda-pelisarjan tuskin voi kuitenkaan katsoa sisältävän merkittävää uskonnollista agendaa. Se voi lisätä peliharrastajien synkretistisiä asenteita ja yleistä uskonnollista suvaitsevaisuutta, mutta Link-hahmo tuskin onnistuu kasvattamaan pelaajasta sitoutunutta uskonnollista toimijaa. Vertailukohtana toiminut PP-peli sen sijaan pyrkii selkeästi uskonnolliseen kasvatukseen. Sen tavoitteena on välittää kristinuskon (sen klassisen baptismin mukaista uskonnollista tulkintaa) tarjoamaa maailmanselitystä ja kasvattaa pelaajasta pelihahmonsa eli ”kristityn” mukaista uskonnollista toimijaa, joka rukoilee, evankelioi ja käy hengellisiä taiteluita syntiä ja paholaista vastaan.

Tämän tutkimuksen mukaan Zelda-pelisarjan uskonnollisten viittausten ja symbolien funktio on ennen kaikkea maksimoida pelin kaupallista menestystä. Näiden pelien uskonnollisuutta on syytä tulkita lähinnä liiketaloudellisista motiiveista syntyneenä lisäyksenä, kun sitä verrataan toiseen peliin, ”The Pilgrim's Progress: The Video Game”, jossa kristinusko saa keskeisemmän ja merkityksellisemmän roolin. Zelda-pelit hyödyntävät uskonnollista kuvastoa ritualistisena elementtinä, jonka keskeinen tarkoitus on toimia kaupallisen semiotiikan välineenä. Analyysi hyödyntää mytologioiden tutkimuksen teoreettisia välineitä, joiden avulla Zelda-pelin kertomus ja tarinankehitys paljastuvat keskeisesti taloudelliseksi tavoitteiksi. Pelisarjan eksplisiittiset symbolit, kuten esimerkiksi krusifiksi, jälleensyntyminen ja kolminaisuus, heijastavat laajempaa sosiologista ja yhteiskunnallista kontekstia. Zelda-pelisarjan uskonnolliset viittaukset tuleekin nähdä vain yrityksenä maksimoida videopelin kaupallista menestystä.

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